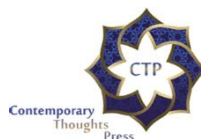


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Enhancing Arabic Word Stemming Using the Char Stemmer Deep Learning Model

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ABSTRACT:

Original Paper

The stemming of Arabic words is a crucial step in several text processing tasks, including text mining, information retrieval, and natural language processing. Arabic stemmers face many challenges, mainly due to the complex nature of Arabic words and their different writing styles. To address these challenges, this paper presents a novel approach integrated into a Python module for improving conventional Arabic stemming. The proposed approach employs neural network architectures to achieve high accuracy in Arabic text stemming. We utilize a Bi-LSTM architecture to extract Arabic stems and construct sequence-to-sequence stemming models. The proposed model is named Char Stemmer. To evaluate this model, we use a benchmark dataset of Qur'anic words and classical Arabic texts. Extensive experiments were conducted to evaluate the model, including comparisons with several well-established Arabic stemmers, namely Khoja, Light-10, P-Stemmer, Tashaphyne, and Al-Khalil. The experimental results show that the proposed model achieves a stem accuracy of 93.88%, substantially outperforming conventional rule-based and light stemming methods. The results demonstrate the effectiveness of deep learning sequence models for Arabic stemming and highlight the potential of character-level models for capturing complex morphological structures. The proposed model is generalizable, scales well, and can serve as a domain-independent solution for a wide range of Arabic NLP applications. Furthermore, the model can be directly integrated into Arabic information systems for tasks such as automated text normalization, intelligent search, and knowledge extraction in applied computing environments.

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1. Introduction

Natural Language Processing (NLP) is a major branch of artificial intelligence that focuses on enabling computers to understand, process, and generate human language. Given that language is central to human communication, the creation of models able to use natural language has been a long-standing goal in computing (Kamath et al. 2019). Nowadays, NLP approaches are extensively used in various fields such as information retrieval, text categorization, machine translation, and intelligent decision support systems. One of the most basic techniques in NLP is stemming, which is used to find the stem of a word. Stemming reduces the size of an index, makes matching more efficient, and improves the performance of downstream NLP tasks by minimizing morphological variation. Hence, stemming is important in applications like information retrieval, text categorization, question answering, and text mining (Alshalabi et al. 2022).

Arabic is also a challenging language for NLP due to its complex morphology, rich and highly productive morphological system with large numbers of word forms, complex orthography, and a high degree of speech ambiguity. Arabic words are usually inflected into a stem derived from one of ten well-established triconsonantal or (rarely) quadrilateral roots, to which various affixes and, rarely, circumfixes may be added, encoding additional syntactic information, but not necessarily meaning. Also, Arabic orthography permits the existence of several readings for the same surface form and correspondingly gives rise to homographs and context-sensitive meanings. These features make stem extraction much more difficult and reduce the efficiency of standard stemming approaches.

Several Arabic stemming methods have been introduced in the literature, including rule-based heavy stemmers and light statistical ones (Galal et al. 2019; Kanan et al. 2022; Hamza et al. 2021). Though these methods have performed with different degrees of success, most of them are based on manually created linguistic rules and pre-defined lists of affixes that limit their adaptability and robustness in dealing with irregular cases and ambiguous word formation. This does not, however, apply to processing classical Arabic text, which exhibits more complex word morphology and

orthographic variation than Modern Standard Arabic.

Recent developments in deep learning, especially in sequence modeling architectures, have achieved impressive results across many NLP tasks. Character-level seq2seq models, in particular, demonstrate a strong capability in learning fine-grained morphological regularities without being explicitly fed with linguistic rules. These advances motivate the current research, which investigates deep learning for Arabic stemming and considers a data-driven character-level approach.

To formulate the research hypothesis for this paper, we pose the following question: Is it feasible to design a model that accurately extracts the stem of an Arabic word, and what method yields the best results? To address this research question, we hypothesize that deep learning can enhance the accuracy of word stemming. Specifically, we propose using a sequence-to-sequence (seq2seq) model. Seq2seq models, commonly used in tasks like machine translation, handle inputs and outputs of varying and unaligned lengths. The standard approach involves an encoder-decoder architecture with two main components: an encoder, comprising several recurrent neural networks (RNNs), to encode the input word sequence of characters, and a decoder, also comprising several RNNs, to generate the corresponding output sequence.

The contributions of this work can be summarized as follows:

- **Character-level Seq2Seq model for Classical Arabic stemming:** This paper presents a character-level seq2seq stemming model based on Bidirectional LSTM (BiLSTM) as an encoder and LSTM as a decoder. The model is specifically applied to classical Arabic texts, which are known for their rich and complex morphological structures.
- **Application to Qur'anic and Classical Arabic Morphology:** Unlike many previous studies that focus on Modern Standard Arabic, this work evaluates the model on classical Arabic data, including Qur'anic text, providing insights into handling traditional morphological patterns.
- **Unified Preprocessing and Evaluation Framework:** The proposed model applies a consistent normalization and preprocessing pipeline across all experiments, ensuring a fair comparison between the proposed model and baseline stemmers.
- **Comparative Evaluation with Widely Used Arabic Stemmers:** The model is evaluated against several well-known Arabic stemming approaches, including Khoja, Light-10, P-Stemmer, Tashaphyne, and

Al-Khalil, using the same dataset and evaluation metrics.

2. Literature Review

We organize Related Works into two sections to cover research and ideas related to our paper.

2.1. Using seq2seq to extract stemming

Abuein et al. (2024) proposed a new deep learning (DL)-based Arabic sarcasm detection framework for Twitter, called ArSa-Tweets, comprising five different deep learning models. A new robust preprocessing phase was introduced to improve the performance of the proposed sarcasm detection model. Further, this work presented a new golden corpus called ArSa-data to support sarcasm analysis of Arabic Twitter, which was considered a publicly available sarcastic corpus for researchers in this domain. Baseline experiments were conducted by deploying five NLP models: LSTM, Multi-headed CNN-LSTM-GRU, BERT, AraBert-V01, and AraBert-V02. To validate the proposed Arabic sarcasm detection system, several preprocessing steps were conducted in the proposed ArSa-Tweets system to enhance performance.

A recent study introduced a lemmatization algorithm based on Recurrent Neural Network (RNN) models specifically designed for the Urdu language. The model was tested on two datasets: the Universal Dependencies Corpus of Urdu (UDU) and the Urdu Monolingual Corpus (UMC). Lemmatization was performed using RNN models, with semantic and syntactic embeddings generated through the Word2Vec model and edit trees. Various models were tested under specific hyper parameters, including Bidirectional Long Short-Term Memory (Bi-LSTM), Bidirectional Gated Recurrent Units (Bi-GRU), Attention-Free Encoder-Decoder (AFED), and Bidirectional Gated Recurrent Neural Network (Bi-GRNN). The experimental results demonstrated that the Attention-Free Encoder-Decoder model achieved accuracy, recall, precision, and F-score values of 0.96, 0.95, 0.95, and 0.95, respectively, surpassing the performance of existing models (Hafeez et al. 2023). Das et al. (2023) investigated the effectiveness of various machine learning methods, including deep learning and hybrid models, for text categorization in Bangla and English. The study focused on sentiment analysis of comments from DARAZ, a well-known Bengali e-commerce platform containing reviews in both Bangla and English. Seven machine learning and deep learning models, including Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM), Bidirectional LSTM (Bi-LSTM), Convolutional 1D (Conv1D),

and a hybrid Conv1D-LSTM model, were implemented. To improve model accuracy, preprocessing techniques were applied to a modified text corpus.

Shahade et al. (2023) proposed a deep learning approach for multilingual opinion mining, utilizing a hybrid fine-tuned Smith algorithm combined with the Adam optimizer (HFS-AO). This approach supported three languages—English, Marathi, and Hindi—which were selected through a web scraping algorithm. The collected data were annotated using the Zero-shot instance-weighting technique and underwent comprehensive preprocessing, including noise removal, data cleaning and reduction, transformation, stop-word removal, tokenization, stemming, lemmatization, and Part-of-Speech (POS) tagging. Al-Khatib et al. (2023) presented an Arabic light stemming algorithm, called Tashaphyne 0.4. This algorithm extracted the most roots and stems from words in Arabic text. Thus, the algorithm acted as a stemmer, root extractor, and segmentation tool simultaneously. The model consisted of three phases: Preparation, Root Extraction, and Stem Extraction. Kanan et al. (2022) introduced an improved P-stemmer by integrating it with various classifiers. Due to a shortage of Arabic datasets, the authors created an Arabic dataset from diverse online news sources to evaluate performance.

Almanaseer et al. (2021) applied a Deep Belief Network (DBN) for Arabic text diacritical restoration. DBN, a deep learning algorithm consisting of multiple Restricted Boltzmann Machines (RBMs), demonstrated effective data modeling and feature extraction. The approach utilized greedy layer-wise training followed by fine-tuning to achieve competitive classification performance. Ezhilarasi and Maheswari (2021) designed a lemmatizer for analyzing 11th-century paleographic stone inscriptions. Their approach utilized a Bi-LSTM Sequential Model for POS Tag Classification, effectively categorizing and predicting tags for new script words through tag assignment and prediction. Nuțu (2021) proposed a deep learning sequence-to-sequence method to advance automatic Romanian lemmatization. This study compared 24 systems using various combinations of recurrent, attention, and convolutional layers, with input consisting of word-lemma pairs at word and trigram levels. Two scenarios were explored for trigrams: predicting the lemma for each word in the sequence or only for the middle word. The lemmatizers were evaluated on two Romanian datasets: the belletristic subset of the CoRoLa corpus and the Romanian Explicative Dictionary (DEX).

Bounhas et al. (2020) focused on creating a morpho-semantic knowledge graph from Arabic vocalized corpora. The authors employed a tool suite to analyze and disambiguate classical Arabic texts, incorporating short

diacritics to reduce ambiguities. The morphological analysis combined MADAMIRA and the Ghwanmeh stemmer to extract multiple lexicons. Alnaied et al. (2020) introduced the Arabic Morphology Information Retrieval (AMIR) system for extracting Arabic stems. AMIR applied a set of rules related to Arabic letter relationships to identify stems for text indexing in Arabic retrieval systems. The system was evaluated using the EveTAR (2016) dataset, covering various Arabic event detection types. Galal et al. (2019) introduced a model called GStem to gather similar words that share the same root based on the Arabic extra letters as a preprocessing layer for the CNN. To evaluate the model, the authors collected an Arabic news dataset and used it in the experiments. They tested the WE from scratch using the collected training samples, and did not rely on any pre-trained data for word2vec or for GStem. The experiments showed that using GStem as a preprocessing step increased the accuracy of the CNN model because the number of distinct words was reduced.

Zalmout and Habash (2017) employed Bidirectional LSTM (Bi-LSTM) models for morphological tagging and language modeling, utilizing the outcomes of these models to rank the analyses of a morphological analyzer. The study incorporated various sub-word and morphological features at different linguistic levels in the tagger, including both word-based and character-based embeddings, and compared this system to a state-of-the-art benchmark. The dataset used for this study was the Penn Arabic Treebank (PATB parts 1, 2, and 3). Abdelali et al. (2016) introduced a new stemmer called Fast and Accurate Arabic Word Segmentation (FARASA). FARASA employs Support Vector Machine (SVM)-based ranking to determine the optimal segmentation of words into prefixes, stems, and suffixes. Hammo (2007) introduced a morphological analysis of Qur'anic texts, showing the Arabic morphology for some surahs from the Qur'an. This study also focused on comparing and contrasting English and Arabic morphology to determine the points where they differ by conducting morphological analysis for both languages.

2.2. Existing Datasets

Noor Dataset comprises over 260,000 unique words sourced from a variety of materials, including the Holy Qur'an and classical Arabic texts.

3. Methodology

In the domain of computational linguistics, particularly within the context of Arabic natural language processing, the development of robust

and efficient algorithms for text normalization and stemming is crucial. To address these challenges, the proposed method introduces a novel approach implemented as a Python module using PyTorch, a popular deep learning library. The method leverages neural network architectures, specifically Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks, to achieve high accuracy in stemming Arabic texts. The proposed model aims to improve preprocessing quality for downstream natural language processing tasks such as machine translation, sentiment analysis, and text classification.

3.1. Data Preparation and Preprocessing

3.1.1. Dataset Description

The dataset utilized in this study consists of Arabic word–stem pairs. It is derived from the Noor dataset, which includes classical Arabic texts and Qur'anic vocabulary, totaling approximately 260,000 words. This dataset provides a rich and diverse representation of Arabic linguistic patterns, particularly those found in classical Arabic, making it suitable for training and evaluating stemming models. Each instance in the dataset is represented as a pair of words stored in a text file, where each line contains a tab-separated pair: the original (unstemmed) word and its corresponding stem. This structure allows the model to learn a direct mapping between surface word forms and their normalized stem representations in a supervised learning setting.

Before proceeding, it is important to clarify the meaning of the term "stem" as used in this paper. In Arabic NLP, there is often confusion between root extraction and stemming. Root extractors aim to identify the root (typically consisting of three letters), for example, K-T-B from *maktabah*. Our task is different. We follow the light stemming approach, where the stem is a surface form that can stand as a word after removing affixes. For example, the stem of *al-maktabāt* is *maktabah*, not K-T-B.

For the experiments conducted in this work, a subset of the dataset was used, specifically the file *QuranWords2.txt*, which contains word–stem pairs extracted from Qur'anic texts. This subset was intentionally selected due to its morphological richness and complexity, providing a challenging benchmark for evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed model. The dataset was divided into 90% for training and 10% for testing. This split ensures that the model is evaluated on unseen data to assess its generalization capability. The dataset includes a wide range of morphological variations, including prefixes, suffixes, and inflectional

patterns commonly found in classical Arabic.

It is important to note that the dataset focuses on classical Arabic; therefore, the model's performance may be domain-dependent, and further evaluation on other Arabic text domains is required to assess its generalizability.

3.1.2. Normalization and Tokenization

Before feeding the data into the model, it undergoes normalization. The Normalizer Builder class from the Piraye library is employed to perform several normalization tasks:

- **Alphabet Normalization:** Converts all Arabic characters into a consistent form, addressing the issue of character variability across different Arabic scripts.
- **Digit Normalization:** Standardizes Arabic digits to ensure numerical data is uniformly represented.
- **Punctuation Handling:** Removes or standardizes punctuation marks, which are generally not required for the stemming process.
- **Diacritic Removal:** Deletes diacritical marks that are extensively used in Arabic for disambiguation but are often omitted in everyday typing and text messaging and are therefore not crucial for stemming.
- **Whitespace Management:** Eliminates extra spaces to ensure consistent separation between words.

These normalization steps help reduce the variability in the dataset, which could otherwise lead to an unnecessarily large model size and overfitting due to the high dimensionality of the input data. The dataset was divided into two main sets: 90% for training and 10% for testing, ensuring a reliable evaluation of the model's performance.

3.1.3. Padding Mechanism

After normalization and tokenization, each word is split into individual characters, and an end-of-sequence (EOS) token is appended. The pad sequence function takes a sequence of characters, a maximum sequence length, and a padding character.

3.2. Model Architecture

The architecture of the model plays a critical role in determining its

effectiveness and efficiency in handling the challenges of Arabic text stemming. The proposed model, named Char Stemmer, utilizes a neural network architecture that leverages the strengths of Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) networks and embedding layers.

3.2.1. Embedding Layer

The first component of the Char Stemmer model is the embedding layer. This layer transforms sparse representations of input characters (character indices) into dense, continuous vector representations with an embedding dimension of 512 in this implementation.

3.2.2. LSTM Decoder

The output from the encoder is fed into an LSTM decoder, which aims to generate the stemmed sequence of characters. Unlike the encoder, the decoder is not bidirectional but uses the concatenated hidden states from the encoder to initialize its internal state. At each time step, the decoder predicts the next character in the stemmed sequence based on its current state and the encoder's output.

3.2.3. Output Layer and Loss Function

The final component of the Char Stemmer model is the output layer. This layer maps the high-dimensional output of the decoder to the size of the vocabulary, accurately predicting the probability distribution over all possible characters at each position in the output sequence. The model then applies a SoftMax function to this output to predict the most probable next character in the stemmed word. For training the model, a Cross-Entropy loss function is employed. This loss function is appropriate for classification tasks such as character prediction, where it measures the difference between the predicted probability distribution and the ground-truth distribution.

The Char Stemmer model applies complex rules that assume the script and morphology of Arabic. Through the combination of embedding layers with bi-directional and uni-directional LSTMs, the model effectively captures both local character interactions and longer-range dependencies essential for accurate stemming. The selection of the loss function is also consistent with the goal of the model of effectively learning to predict sequences of characters. These architectural components make the proposed approach capable of addressing Arabic text stemming challenges and provide a strong framework for different NLP tasks related to Arabic texts.

The character-level processing begins with a dense embedding layer that

transforms sparse character representations into 512-dimensional continuous vector spaces. This embedding mechanism captures semantic relationships between Arabic characters, providing a rich foundation for morphological analysis. Figure 1 displays the proposed model for extracting the stems.

3.2.4. Optimization and Loss Calculation

The model uses the Adam optimizer (`torch.optim.Adam`), a popular choice for training deep neural networks due to its adaptive learning rate capabilities. This optimizer helps the model converge faster and more effectively than standard gradient descent methods. The learning rate and other parameters of Adam are set to their default values, which provide a good starting point.

The loss function utilized is the Cross-Entropy Loss, which is suitable for classification tasks such as predicting the next character in the stemming sequence. During training, the loss is calculated between the model's predictions and the ground-truth labels for each batch. This loss value indicates how well the model is performing; a lower loss implies better model predictions.

3.3. Training Procedure

3.3.1. Data Loading and Batching

The prepared and preprocessed dataset is loaded using the Arabic Stemmer Dataset class. The dataset is split into training and test subsets, with 90% of the data used for training and the remaining 10% reserved for evaluation. For efficient training, the data is batched using PyTorch's `DataLoader`. A batch size of 32 is used.

3.3.2. Model Configuration

Before training begins, the Char Stemmer model is instantiated with predefined hyperparameters, including the input size (the size of the character vocabulary), the hidden size (1024 for the LSTM layers), and the output size (equal to the input size, representing the character predictions).

3.3.3. Training Loop

The model was trained for 20 epochs, which provided a balance between convergence and computational cost. An embedding dimension of 512 and

a hidden layer size of 1024 were used to capture complex morphological patterns. A batch size of 32 was selected to ensure stable training. The dataset was split into 90% for training and 10% for testing to evaluate generalization performance. A detailed summary of all hyperparameter settings is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Hyperparameter settings of the proposed model

Hyperparameter	Value
Embedding Dimension	512 units
Hidden Layer Size	1024 LSTM units
Batch Size	32 sequences
Training Epochs	20 (with early stopping)
Optimizer	Adam (default parameters)
Loss Function	Cross-entropy with label smoothing
Learning Strategy	Mixed-precision training

The model was trained on an NVIDIA GPU for approximately 12 hours. For early stopping, a patience of 5 epochs was used based on the validation loss. Dropout of 0.3 was applied after each LSTM layer to prevent overfitting. Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrate the proposed model for Arabic stemming.

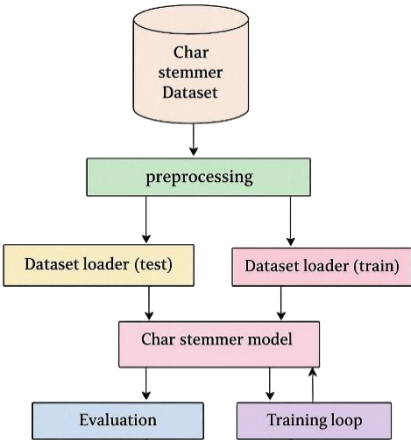


Figure 1. The proposed model (Char Stemmer)

The training procedure for the Char Stemmer model is designed to ensure robust learning without overfitting. By carefully managing data loading, model configuration, optimization, and iterative learning through epochs, the procedure lays a strong foundation for the model to learn the complex mappings required for effective Arabic text stemming. This structured approach not only optimizes the training phase but also provides a foundation for comprehensive evaluation and deployment in practical NLP applications.

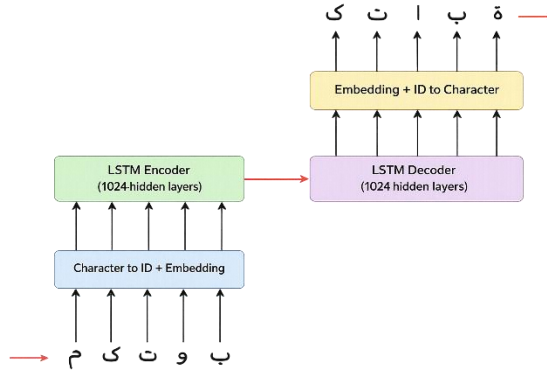


Figure 2. The architecture of the Char Stemmer model

4. Experiments and Results

Assessing the performance of the proposed model is critical to understanding its effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. This section discusses the metrics used to assess the model's performance and provides an analysis of the results obtained after training on a dataset composed of classical Arabic texts.

4.1. Evaluation Metrics

The performance of the proposed model is evaluated using several key metrics:

- **Accuracy:** Measures the percentage of correct predictions over all predictions made.
- **Precision, Recall, and F1-score:** These metrics provide deeper insight into the model's performance, especially in handling class imbalances that are common in character-based tasks.

4.2. Results Analysis

The final training epoch yielded a training loss of 0.2748 and an accuracy of 93.88%. The model was evaluated on unseen data, resulting in a test loss of 0.2889 and an accuracy of 93.88%. These results indicate that the model effectively learned the stemming task with a high degree of accuracy and minimal overfitting. Table 2 summarizes these results.

Table 2. The result of char stemmer model

Stemmer	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F-measure
Char Stemmer	0.93	0.82	0.70	0.75

However, the precision (82.01%), recall (70.46%), and F1-score (75.28%) on the test data suggest some challenges in the model's ability to generalize across all aspects of the data. While the precision is relatively high, indicating that the model's predictions are usually correct when it predicts a character, the lower recall and F1-score point to difficulties in consistently identifying all correct characters, especially in more ambiguous or rare stemming scenarios found in classical texts.

In our experiments, the model was trained for 20 epochs, which provided a balance between training time and convergence without overfitting. We used an embedding dimension of 512, allowing the model to capture rich character-level representations while keeping the computational cost manageable. The hidden layer size was set to 1024 units to enhance the model's capacity for learning complex morphological patterns in Arabic words. The batch size was set to 32, offering a compromise between stable gradient updates and training speed. The dataset was divided into 90% for training and 10% for testing, ensuring that the model was evaluated on unseen data to assess its generalization performance. Figure 3 illustrates the confusion matrix for the Char Stemmer model.

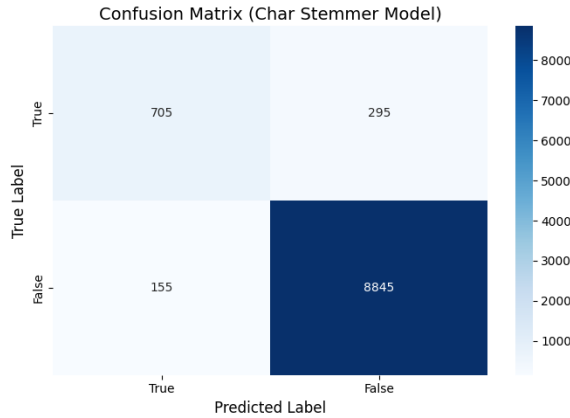


Figure 3. Confusion matrix for the Char Stemmer model

The performance evaluation of the Char Stemmer model demonstrates its effectiveness in processing and stemming classical Arabic texts with high accuracy. However, the detailed metrics also highlight areas for potential improvement, particularly in enhancing recall without sacrificing precision. Future work could explore more sophisticated model architectures, richer contextual embeddings, or advanced training techniques such as transfer learning from classical to modern texts to further refine the model's performance.

The Char Stemmer model, as detailed in the previous sections, presents a novel approach to stemming Arabic text, particularly focusing on the complexities of classical Arabic morphology. This discussion explores the reasons behind the model's effectiveness, its limitations, and the theoretical implications of the chosen methodology.

4.3. Error Analysis

The Char Stemmer model attained an overall accuracy of 93.88%, with precision and recall of 82.01% and 70.46%, respectively. Despite its strong performance, errors primarily stem from the morphological richness of Qur'anic Arabic. Complex affixation patterns and irregular inflections challenge the model's ability to identify correct stems. Ambiguities arise when words share surface forms but differ in meaning or grammatical category, such as the word *malik*, which can be either a noun (king) or a verb (he has). Rare or infrequent words present additional difficulties due to their limited representation in the training data. Moreover, the absence of diacritics hampers the disambiguation of words with identical orthography but distinct pronunciations. Finally, the character-level approach limits

contextual understanding, which is vital for accurate lemmatization in ambiguous cases.

4.4. Discussion

- **Robust Preprocessing:** The model's success begins with comprehensive preprocessing steps that normalize and prepare the classical Arabic texts for machine learning.
- **Character-Level Embedding:** By transforming each character into a dense vector representation, the model captures subtle semantic and syntactic nuances of the Arabic language.
- **Bidirectional LSTM Encoder:** The utilization of a bidirectional LSTM allows the model to incorporate context from both the beginning and the end of a word when making predictions about its stem.
- **Sequential Decoding:** The LSTM decoder predicts one character at a time, using the previous character's context to influence the next.
- **Focused Loss Function:** Employing Cross-Entropy Loss ensures that the training process focuses on improving the probabilities of correctly predicted characters.

4.5. Limitations and Areas for Improvement

While the Char Stemmer achieves high accuracy, its recall and F1-score indicate room for improvement, especially in handling rare and ambiguous cases inherent in classical texts. These limitations suggest a few potential areas for enhancement:

- **Expanded Training Data:** Including a more diverse set of training examples, especially those that represent edge cases, could help improve the model's ability to generalize across less frequent morphological patterns.
- **Hyperparameter Optimization:** Further tuning of parameters such as the embedding size, the depth of LSTM layers, or the learning rate could yield improvements in model accuracy and recall.

4.6. Comparative Performance Evaluation

We selected a set of well-known stemmers for comparison. We used these stemmers because they achieved high accuracy in previous studies.

The stemmers used in the comparison are as follows:

- **Khoja Stemmer:** The Khoja stemmer removes the longest suffixes and prefixes. It then matches the remaining part with verb and noun patterns to derive the stem. It uses several linguistic data files, including lists of characters, punctuation marks, diacritics, and stop words. Khoja has two dictionaries, one for stems and another for roots. The Khoja stemmer is available as a Java implementation (Khoja & Garside 1999).
- **Light-10:** Light-10 performs the following steps for stemming:
 - It divides the text into words.
 - Normalization converts all (أ, إ, ؤ) to (إ), (ى) to (ي), and (ة) to (ه).
 - It removes the letter (و) when used as the conjunction "and".
 - It removes prefixes and suffixes from words. The prefixes used by Light-10 include (ال, وال, بال, كال, فال, و, لل), while the suffixes include (ها, ان, ات, ون, ين, يه, ية, ه, ة, ي). The Light-10 implementation is available in Java (Larkey et al. 2007).
- **Tashaphyne:** The Tashaphyne stemmer normalizes words and removes diacritics and elongation from input words. It then segments and stems the input using an affix lookup list for different levels of stemming. The Tashaphyne implementation is available in Python (Al-Khatib et al. 2023).
- **NLTK (Natural Language Toolkit):** NLTK is a collection of open-source programs for NLP. It includes over 50 corpora and lexical resources for tasks such as stemming, tokenization, classification, and parsing. NLTK was developed by Steven Bird and Edward Loper (Elbes et al. 2019).
- **P-Stemmer:** P-Stemmer, created by Kanan and Fox, is an updated version of Larkey's light stemmer. It removes only the prefixes rather than removing both prefixes and suffixes, resulting in effective and reliable stemming performance. The P-Stemmer implementation is available in Python (Kanan et al. 2019).

4.7. Comparative Performance Evaluation

Following the evaluation of the proposed model, we compared it with five Arabic stemmers using the same Noor dataset. Table 3 presents a comprehensive comparison across multiple evaluation metrics.

Table 3. Comparative performance of Arabic stemmers

Stemmer	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
Char Stemmer	0.93	0.82	0.70	0.75
Al-Khalil	0.49	0.52	0.58	0.55
Tashaphyne	0.45	0.48	0.63	0.52
Light-10	0.37	0.41	0.57	0.45
Khoja	0.24	0.48	0.67	0.56
P-Stemmer	0.68	0.71	0.83	0.77

4.7.1. The Results of the Comparison

- **Superior Accuracy:** The proposed model achieves significantly higher accuracy (93.88%) compared to other Arabic stemmers.
- **Precision-Recall Trade-off:** While the proposed model achieves the highest precision (82.01%), it shows a lower recall (70.46%) compared to the P-Stemmer (83%). This behavior reflects a precision-oriented strategy, which is preferable in downstream NLP tasks where over-stemming can introduce semantic errors.
- **F1-Score:** The proposed model achieves an F1-score of 75.28%, ranking second after P-Stemmer (77%), demonstrating balanced performance across precision and recall. Figure 4 illustrates the comparative performance of the proposed model and the other Arabic stemmers.

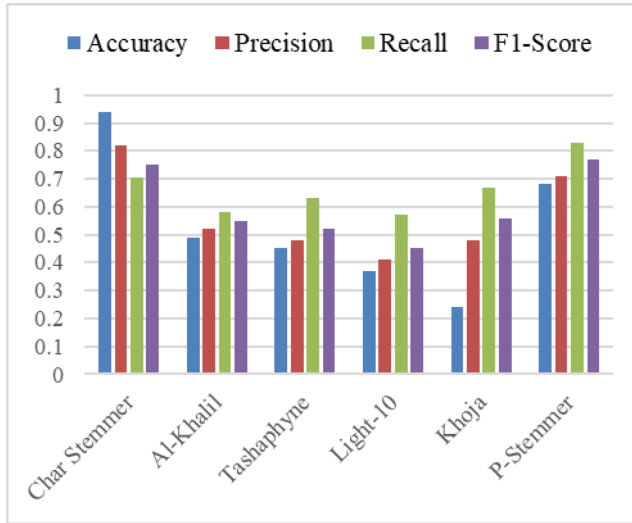


Figure 4. Comparison of the evaluated stemmers

4.7.2. Ablation Study

We also conducted a brief ablation study to evaluate the contribution of each component of the proposed model. We trained two simpler versions: one with a regular LSTM encoder instead of a Bi-LSTM (without backward context), and another without dropout. The results are shown in Table 4.

The Bi-LSTM version achieved 93.88% accuracy. When the encoder was replaced with a regular LSTM, accuracy dropped to approximately 91.2%. This result suggests that capturing contextual information from both prefix and suffix directions improves stemming performance. Without dropout, the model still performed well on the training data but showed signs of overfitting, as reflected by a larger gap between training and test losses. Therefore, the final model incorporates dropout.

Table 4. Results of the ablation study

Model Configuration	Accuracy
Full model (Bi-LSTM + Dropout)	93.88%
Without Bi-LSTM (LSTM only)	91.20%
Without Dropout	92.50%

4.8. Qualitative Analysis of Stemming Results

To further evaluate the performance of the proposed Char Stemmer model, a qualitative analysis was conducted by examining sample outputs and comparing them with selected baseline stemmers. Table 5 presents several examples of Arabic words along with their corresponding ground-truth stems, the outputs of the proposed model, and the outputs of representative baseline stemmers.

Table 5. Qualitative comparison of stemming results

Word	True Stem	Char Stemmer	Light 10	P Stemmer	Al-Khalil	Tashaphyne	Khoja
المكتبات	مكتبة	مكتبة	مكتب	مكتبة	كتاب	كتب	كتب
يستخرجون	يستخرج	يستخرج	يستخرج	خرج	يستخرج	خرج	خرج
والكاتبين	كاتب	كاتب	كتب	كتب	كاتب	كتب	كتب
المستغفرين	مستغفر	مستغفر	غفر	مستغفر	مستغفر	غفر	غفر
بالمدارس	مدارس	مدارس	مدرسة	مدارس	مدارس	مدرسة	درس

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed model represents a significant step forward in the computational processing of Arabic texts, combining advanced machine learning techniques with a deep understanding of linguistic principles. While there are areas for improvement, the current implementation provides a strong foundation for further exploration and development in Arabic NLP, particularly for classical and morphologically complex texts.

The Char Stemmer model introduced in this paper represents a significant advancement in the field of Arabic natural language processing, specifically addressing the challenges associated with stemming classical Arabic texts. The model leverages a sophisticated deep learning architecture, encompassing robust preprocessing methods, character-level embedding, bidirectional LSTM networks, and a sequential decoding process. These components collectively contribute to the model's ability to accurately and effectively predict the stems of Arabic words, demonstrating high overall accuracy in both training and testing phases.

This paper has successfully demonstrated that deep learning techniques,

particularly those based on LSTM networks, are well suited for handling the complexities of Arabic morphology and script variations. The bidirectional approach of the LSTM encoder captures contextual nuances from both directions of the input sequences, enhancing the model's sensitivity to the intricate patterns that define Arabic stemming. Furthermore, the embedding layer plays a crucial role by transforming discrete character representations into rich, continuous vector spaces, enabling the model to learn subtle linguistic distinctions.

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Declarations

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Catholic and Muslim Intellectual Perspectives on the Qur'an in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth

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ABSTRACT:

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The article examines contrasting perspectives on the Qur'an in the First Polish Republic (1569–1795), where Muslim Tatars coexisted with predominantly Christian populations. A comparative textological method was employed in the analysis. It explores two approaches: the apologetic *tefsir*, a Polish Qur'an translation from the late 16th to early 17th century, and a 17th-century polemical treatise, *The Life of Muhammad and Description of the Qur'an* by Michel Baudier, translated into Polish by an anonymous nobleman. While the *tefsir* aimed to preserve Tatar Islamic identity using local languages and Islamic exegetical sources, Baudier's treatise criticized the Qur'an as false and deceptive. This study highlights different approaches to the interpretation of the Qur'an, shaped by social and religious contexts as well as the cultural background of the European Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Our findings indicate that the Reformation period fostered a climate of multiculturalism, allowing the Polish Tatars to translate the Qur'an for their fellow Muslims without significant obstacles. In contrast, the Counter-Reformation era, marked by the growing influence of the Ottoman Empire in contemporary Europe, triggered apologetic reactions among local Catholics, who subjected the Qur'an to severe and unjust criticism.

KEYWORDS: Qur'an translation, First Polish Republic, Christian-Muslim relations, Polish Tatars, Michel Baudier, Anti-Islamic literature, *Tefsir*.

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1. Introduction

The First Polish Republic (formally known as the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) was a federative real union between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, existing from 1569 to 1795. This state, which today encompasses the territories of Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and part of Ukraine, was a remarkable phenomenon in terms of its differing attitudes and sentiments towards Islam. On the one hand, it was inhabited by Muslim Tatars, who arrived in the 14th century in the lands of the Slavs, and on the other by indigenous Christians, who in the 17th century, i.e. during the expansion of Ottoman Turkey in Europe, took a particular interest in Islam and its followers as threatening dissenters.

From the late 15th to the 17th century, the territorial and cultural identity of Europe faced a tangible threat from the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. This period witnessed a clash of two cultures: the European, rooted in Christian universalism, and the Turkish, founded on orthodox Islam. One form of defense against the threat of Islamization in Europe was the creation of anti-Islamic literature. While the focal point of historical polemics and debates was in Western European countries, similar sentiments and polemical attempts against Islam also emerged in Poland starting from the 17th century. Initially, these were directed against Islam practiced within the Tatar community and later against Ottoman Turks. Such anti-Turkish texts were called 'turcyki' (Turkish-themed writings). Their most significant development occurred in the 17th century, during the Counter-Reformation, with their decline in the second half of the 18th century.

The polemical and anti-Islamic literature of the Middle Polish period encompasses Polish writings or translations of Western European works from this or earlier periods. In 1626, a treatise by the French historian Michel Baudier, titled *Histoire générale de la religion des Turcs avec la vie de leur prophète Mahomet*, was published in Paris. This treatise was translated into Polish and disseminated in Poland from the second half of the 17th century in the form of numerous copies. It combines the characteristics of an anti-Turkish pamphlet with a critical analysis of Islamic doctrine as found in the Qur'an and traditions.

2. Methodology

This article employs a comparative textological method by juxtaposing two culturally significant texts: the first known translation of the Qur'an into Polish, produced by Polish Tatars at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries

and commonly referred to in scholarship as a *tefsir*,¹ which includes an extensive exegetical exposition, and a 17th-century polemical anti-Islamic treatise, *The Life of Muhammad and the Description of the Qur'an*, originally written by Michel Baudier and translated from French by an anonymous member of the Polish nobility. One chapter of the latter is devoted to the Qur'an and its interpretation. The purpose of this comparison is to identify similarities and differences between the two works and to contribute to the reconstruction of the reception of the Qur'an in 16th- and 17th-century Europe.

3. Exegetical Sources of the Polish Tatars

The Tatars professed Sunni Islam in a Christian setting. However, they did not actively speak the liturgical Arabic language. Thus, in order to maintain their ethnic distinctiveness and cultural identity, which was already identified by Islam alone in the 16th century, educated Tatars, most often in contact with the Muslim East, began to produce literature of a religious nature in the local, Slavonic languages, written in the Arabic alphabet. It was so-called *Aljamiado* literature. They created their texts on their own, either adapting fragments of Old Polish literature and adapting them to Islamic canons and dogmas, or translating religious texts imported from Crimea and the Middle East, especially the Ottoman Empire, into Polish and/or Belarusian.

The most representative *Aljamiado* text in Central and Eastern Europe is the Tatar *tefsir*. It is a voluminous manuscript of around 1,000 pages. It contains the continuous text of the original Arabic Qur'an, with its commentary-cum-exegetical translation into the north-eastern borderland variety of Polish placed beneath the line (interlinearly). It was created at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries. However, no protograph of the text has survived, only copies, the earliest of which dates from the 2nd half of the 17th century.² At the same time, it should be emphasised, that there was only one *tefsir* into Polish made by the Tatars of the First Polish Republic, and its copies, identified by the name of the place of copying, the place of storage or the name of the copyist or the owner of the book, differ slightly among themselves.

An important recent development has been the critical edition of the

1- Here and throughout the article, the term *tefsir* is used to denote the specific Tatar-Slavic exegetical tradition, rather than the classical Arabic *tafsir* genre.

2- 1682: in the form of glosses to the Qur'an, held at Pskov Museum (reference number KPI 34054) and 1686: The Minsk *Tefsir*, held at the Yakub Kolas Central Scientific Library of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in Minsk (reference number II16-18/Cp2 (P 214)0).

tefsir of the Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the first fully preserved Qur'an translation into a Slavic language, namely Polish, accompanied by an exegetical-commentary layer (Kulwicka-Kamińska & Łapicz 2022).¹ The basis of the edition was the 1723 *Alytus Tefsir* (hereafter TAL), one of the oldest complete copies of the manuscript tradition. As mentioned above, the critical edition identifies exegetical sources – Muslim and Christian.

Knowledge of the Qur'an and its exegesis among the Tatars was linked above all with the Ḥanafī legal school and the Māturīdī theological approach, both of which were widely disseminated in Central Asia and Anatolia from the twelfth–thirteenth centuries onwards. Despite the small number of permanent centres of religious instruction in this region, local religious literature contains references to Central Asian sources such as *Khulāṣat al-fatāwā* by the Ḥanafī scholar al-Ṭāhir al-Bukhārī (d.1147), *Jawāhir al-Islām* by Kadızade Mehmed Efendi (d.1635), *Enfesü'l-Cevāhir* by El-İzniķī, and others.

We will show them through selected examples. We point out the similarities between TAL and the Turkic tefsirs (according to Jankowski's research 2022a, 1: 501–542). The translations of the Qur'an into Turkish originated later than the eastern ones; they were made from the 13th to the mid-15th century, i.e. in the Old Turkic period. The Polish Tatars probably relied on them. Thus, selected western translations provided us as comparative texts: *Cevāhirü'l-Esdāf* (hereafter CEZ) (Zajączkowski 1937), the *Tefsir of Muhammed bin Hamza* (held at the Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum in Istanbul), as well as the *Turkish Tefsir from Bursa* (see Küçük 2014) of 1401, the *Turkish Tefsir from Damascus* (see Toker 2011–2012), and the *Turkish Tefsir from Manisa* (see Karabacak 1994–1999).

1 - The critical edition, together with a reliable historical and philological commentary, was undertaken as part of the international *Tefsir* project (<http://www.tefsir.umk.pl/>), in which most scholars of Tatar literature from 12 research centres in 5 countries (Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine and Turkey) participated. The basis of the edition, was the oldest copy of the manuscript, known amongst scholars in as the 1723 *Alytus Tefsir* (TAL) (held in a private collection in Lithuania). However, only part of the text has its genesis in the 18th century. The passages that have been corrected, supplemented or added by users, date from 1836. The manuscript has two identified scribes: Mustafa's son Izmael Jabłoński, and Ibrahim Januszewski, an imam from Vinkšnupij mečetė (mosque). The critical edition of the Tatar manuscript contains: 1. the commentary volume (in it: an instruction for editing the tefsir; a transliteration table; a metric of the manuscript; an analysis of the paper watermarks; an identification of exegetical sources – Muslim and Christian, and articles by scholars in several fields), 2. Facsimile, 3. Selected fragments of the Oriental layer in ISO transliteration and the full text of the tefsir, i.e. the Slavonic layer in the author's transliteration developed by Czesław Łapicz and Joanna Kulwicka-Kamińska, taking into account the historical achievements of Slavists in the reading of Tatar manuscripts. The idea was to make the transliteration as close as possible to the phonetic transcription, preserving and saving the historical features of borderland Polish and East Slavic languages/dialects, and thus attempting to reconstruct the ethnolect of the Tatars of the First Polish Republic. Missing or difficult-to-identify fragments were filled in on the basis of the *Józefów Tefsir* (1890) stored in the Lithuanian National Museum (reference number HMJ R-13.012).

When considering the aforementioned translations, it is CEZ that bears the closest resemblance to the TAL amplification. Thus, it can be inferred that the translator, who translated the Qur'an into Polish, used one of the copies of the Turkic translation of CEZ, by an unknown author, penned during the reign of Isfendiyar (1392–1440). According to Ananiasz Zajączkowski (1937, XV), CEZ originated in the late 14th or the early 15th century, between 1385 or 1392 and 1440, or between 1392 and 1439, as claimed by *Tarama Sözlüğü* dictionary (1963–1972). The dictionary points to manuscript No. 278 from the Nuruosmaniye Library. The text features 1499 as the date of the copy, and contains the first 18 surahs, including surah 18. It combines interlinear (often literal) translation with the tefsir translation, i.e. the translation in which a verse of the Arabic Qur'an is followed with the Turkic, exegetical, translation.

The amplification found in verse 81¹ can serve to demonstrate that CEZ was the source of expansions for TAL: *tenže bōg ūčinil dla was s tego cō stworil cen ōd drew i ūčinil dla was z gōr i skal dōmi pečōri i wčinił dla was ōzeže ze lnū i z welni stregōŋ was ōd goronca i ōzeže z želaza stregōŋ was pōdčas wojni ōtō tak spelna pōžitki swoje nad wami azalibišce bilī mušulmanmi dōbre mi* (this god has made for you from what he has created shade from trees and has made for you from mountains and rocks houses caves and has made for you garments from flax and wool guard you from the heat and garments of iron guard you during war so gives his provision over you that you may be good Muslims) – cf. *ōd drew* – *ağacalar gibi* 'like trees'; *dōmi pečōri* – *evler mağāralar gibi* 'like houses and caves'; *lnū i z welni* – *ketenden yün den* 'made of linen.' Another essential addition, which could not be found in any other translation, is the marginal note next to verse 92 *ime jej bilō rejxa* (mistake – rather than *rejta*) [the name of this woman was *Rejxa*]. The only passage in which this woman's name is spelled correctly is *adı bu 'avratuŋ Reyta idiz* in CEZ. This conclusively demonstrates the connection between TAL and CEZ.

With regard to CEZ, it is worth recalling the findings of Ananiasz Zajączkowski (1937, 108), who demonstrated that the commentarial material in CEZ ultimately derives from al-Bayḏāwī's *tafsīr* and al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*. The existence of a common source is confirmed by the examples adduced by Zajączkowski, whose wording, in the same interpretative variant as in al-Bayḏāwī and al-Zamakhsharī, also appears in the Tatar translation:

For Q. 9:74, the Tatar text reads, in paraphrase, *proroku zwalczaj*

1- The result of the exegetical translation in the TAL are textual shifts relative to the Qur'an in terms of the numbering of verses, among other things.

niewiernych szablą a obłudników językiem (O Prophet, fight the unbelievers with the sabre and the hypocrites with the tongue), which corresponds to the interpretation given by al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī (fight the unbelievers with the sword, and fight the hypocrites with the sword of the tongue) with the Tatar translator employing the culture-specific term *szabla* (sabre).

For Q. 38:52 and Q. 56:36, the Tatar *tefsir* explains the term *'atrāb* (of the same age) by describing the companions of Paradise as brides, *i dla nich będą towarzyszkami rajske panny młode piersi wielkich niemające* (whose breasts are not yet pendulous) and *tylko co zaznaczone piersi* (with breasts only just marked), which parallels al-Bayḍāwī's gloss: *Among them there is neither an old woman nor a little girl.*

For Q. 81:7, a marginal gloss states that *wierzący z aniołami a niewierni/niewierzący z szatanami* (the believers [will be joined] with the angels and the unbelievers with the devils), corresponding to al-Bayḍāwī's explanation: *that is, the souls of the believers will be joined with the houris, and the souls of the unbelievers with the devils.*

Finally, in Q. 85:3 the Tatar text is rendered as *i dla święta piątku i ramazan bajramu* (and by the feast of Friday and the Ramadan bayram), which may be compared with al-Bayḍāwī's series of *ta'wīls*, including, among others, *the Day of Sacrifice (yawm al-nahr)* and *the Day of 'Arafāt together with the pilgrims and the Friday and those gathered for the Friday prayer.*

We analysed the so-called virtues of the surahs as well, according to Jankowski's research (2022b, 1: 543–566). Enumerating the virtues of the surahs, notes were added in the margins of some Turkic *tefsirs*, at the beginning of the surahs. In the literature, they are known as *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān* (virtues of the Qur'an) or Tur., *Surelerin Faziletleri* (virtues of the surahs). An example of this can be found in the *Tefsir of Muhammed bin Hamza*, in which such notes were made next to each surah, albeit in Arabic. It can therefore be concluded that such notes were featured in Arabic *tafsirs*, used by Turkish translators. However, the comparison of many manuscripts of CEZ leads to the conjecture that the virtues were provided by the copyists as they vary in number, place, and content. In TAL, Turkic entries extolling the virtues of the Qur'anic chapters, and indicating their practical application, e.g. for the prevention of disease, misfortune, crop failure, hostile acts, or the arbitrariness of the ruler, are found in the first lines of the following surahs: 37–42, 49–60, 64–67, 69–71. An example of the virtues of surah 53 is: TAL {*marg-l sūretü'n-necm <ykr̥m> bir kez oқыalar murād hāşıl ola*} from Tur., *Sūretü'n-Necm: Yigirmi bir kez oқыalar murād hāşıl*

ola ([If] twenty [one] times they read, the wish will come true). However, they are not present in surahs: 1–36, 49–48, 57, 61–63, 68, 72–114. For reasons unknown, the copyist of TAL listed the virtues of the surahs in specific sequences, i.e. certain subsequent surahs have their virtues described, while other sequences of surahs do not. It is likely that the translator, or the copyist, did not find the virtues in other sources, but copied them from the manuscript that served him as the basis for the translation or the copy. Turkish translators did this as well.

With regard to indicating the relationship between TAL and Arabic tafsirs, several sources are identified, e.g. al-Ṭabari, al-Khāzin, al-Baghawī, al-Jalālayn, al-Samarqandī, Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Juzayy. However, some of the commentaries present in TAL can only be identified in al-Khāzin or al-Samarqandī. They are not repeated in any other tafsir, a fundamental conclusion. Examples include:

wa-ṣbir wa mā ṣabrūka illā bi-llāh wa lā taḥzan 'alayhim wa lā taku fī ḍayq mim mā yamkurūn (Q. 16:127).

TAL: *cerpliwe znōše za xamžejanejstwo cerpliwość twoja tilkō pōmōcōṇ bōžōṇ i ne frasūj še na newerenstwo jix i ne ciśni serce swoje ferasūnkem ōd tegō cō ōnī zlōsci činōṇ* (be patient! as did Ḥamzah – your patience is only through God's help; do not grieve over their unbelief, and let not your heart be constricted with sorrow over what they devise). In the margin appears an explanation related to the neologism *xamžejanejstwo* (literally, Ḥamza-like endurance): *bō prorōk xcal za xamžeja trižestū zgūbic kafirōw* (for the Prophet, thirty unbelievers were to be killed in revenge for Ḥamzah). This refers to the figure of Ḥamzah Ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the uncle of the Prophet Muḥammad, who was killed during the Battle of Uḥud in 625 CE. However, traditional Arabic tafsir literature links the story of Ḥamzah to verse 126, rather than 127. The marginal note, clarifying the coined term *xamžejanejstwo*, makes reference to the thirty unbelievers to be killed in retaliation for Ḥamzah's death. This is one of two transmitted versions of the post-battle narrative. Among classical tafsir works, only that of al-Samarqandī (1993, 2: 256) incorporates this particular account.

Wa lā taqūlū li-mā taṣifu alsinatukum al-kadhibā ḥalāl wa ḥadḥā ḥarām li-taftarū 'alā allāh al-kadhib (Q. 16: 116).

TAL: *i ne mōwce i m{m}ekkejske lūze cō wislawace jenzikem wašim klamstwo tō xelal menžōm a tō xeram newjestam wiwozōnc pōtwar na bōga klamstwo pewne* (and do not say – O people of Mecca – which with your tongues you proclaim a lie: *This is ḥalāl for men, and this is ḥarām for women*, casting slander upon God—a manifest falsehood). The amplification: *tō xelal menžōm a tō xeram newjestam* (this is *ḥalāl* for men, and this is *ḥarām* for women) appears exclusively in the tafsir works of al-Khāzin

(2004, 3: 104) and al-Samarqandī (1993, 2: 254).

In TAL *Sūrah al-Isrā'* (Q. 17), it is written in red ink in Arabic that the surah contains 110 verses (*āyāt*); however, an addition in black ink includes the word *iḥdā* (one), bringing the total to 111 verses, which aligns with the verse count in almost all classical Arabic commentaries. Only al-Khāzin reports that there are sources indicating the number of verses is 110 (2004, 3: 109). The description of Surah 17 in TAL thus corresponds exclusively with the remarks found in al-Khāzin's commentary.

Thus, a comparison of the salient features of the Polish text with the Islamic exegetical tradition reveals above all the influence of relatively early Sunni works, such as those of Abū Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 983) and Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Tha'labī (d.1035), as mediated in their later form by Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Baghawī (d.1122). The Tatars probably also drew on *Tafsīr al-Khāzin* (full title: *Lubāb al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl*), compiled by 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Baghdādī al-Shāfi'ī (d.1340), known as al-Khāzin. *Tafsīr al-Khāzin* is a compilation of earlier commentaries, primarily those of al-Baghawī (*Ma'ālim al-tanzīl*) and al-Wāḥidī (especially *al-Wajīz*). The author also adds his own explanations, particularly in matters of law (*al-fiqh*). Some of these tafsirs, such as the commentary of al-Samarqandī (later known under the title *Baḥr al-'ulūm*, were translated into Turki. (cf. Dziekan 2022, 1: 475–488).

The *tefsir* also contains numerous proper names and religious terms derived from commentary sources, including figures associated with Islamic history and culture, place names, religious concepts, and biblical figures, e.g.:

- *'Abdullah ibn ṣalam* (TAL 3: 106; 4: 159; 5: 70; 11: 20; 13: 43; 46: 9 and marg-l 3: 68; marg-r 13: 36) from Ar. 'Abd Allāh ibn Salām (the Jew who converted to Islam);
- *'Ebbas, Abu Talib* (TAL marg-r 93: 6 – 2x; marg-l 109: 1) from Ar. 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (Muḥammad's uncle);
- *Chebibe Nedždžar* (TAL 36: 19) from Ar. Ḥabīb al-Najjār (the pious man from Antioch);
- *Farsija, Fersija* (TAL 30: 2 and 30: 3) from Ar. Fāris (Persia);
- *Mosil* (TAL 11: 46) from Ar. al-Mawṣil (Mosul);
- *Me'radž* (TAL 32: 23) from Ar. al-Mi'rāj (night, on which the Prophet was summoned by God to see heaven, celebrated By Muslims as a festival on the 27th night of the month of Rajab);

- *Munk'ir* (TAL marg-r 16: 24) from Ar. Munkar wa-Nak'ir (two angels who ask the deceased in the grave);
- *Jehuda* (TAL 12: 10 and 12: 96) from Ar. Yahūdā (Judah, son of Jacob);
- *Refajel* (TAL 30: 24) from Ar. Rāfā'il (archangel Raphael).

The incorporation of specific Christian sources into the TAL reflects the views of the Tatars at the time of the Reformation. The religious beliefs of antitrinitarians, relating to extreme monotheism, were especially close to them (cf. Tazbir 1999, on The Lutherans, Calvinists and Arians, who rejected tradition, namely the Catholic interpretation of certain passages in the OT and NT, and relied only on the text of the Bible). Extreme monotheism is also a feature of Islam, as well as of Judaism (cf. Karaites), hence the views of Arians are cited in Tatar literature, and one may perceive in such works particularly the influence of Szymon Budny, a radical antitrinitarian. This can be attested by the presence of specific lexical and phraseological borrowings: *trōjčane* and *trōječnik'i* (Trinitarians), *jedinōstwo* (oneness), *spōlenčnik* (companion), *kaplan* (priest), *ōfferōwnik* and *ōffernik* (offerer) from the Budny Bible (BN). In addition, in one passage from the Tatar translation the forms of the names of the three young men in the Book of Daniel are also taken from the BN, namely *Shadrach*, *Mieszach* and *Hawed*: *a tō bili krōlōwe bōlwaxwalci cō palili šedra amešax haweda* (and it was the idolatrous kings who were burning) *šedr amešax hawed* (Biblia nieświeska 1572; Kulwicka-Kamińska & Łapicz 2022).

As far as the adaptation of Old Polish literature to the Islamic beliefs of the Tatars is concerned, one example is an extratextual gloss that records extracts from chapter 29 of Bielski's Chronicle (1564): *Cyrusowie potomki stryiwowie prorockie z Bielskie Xegia Rozdz 27 Cyrus pierwszy monarcha Perski mal cyrus oŷca książe Perskie s pokolenia semowe[g]o matka iego była corka Astiaza krola medskiego i sniło sie Astŷasowi że ż żywota corki iego koja iuż była w persie wyrosła rozga A ta rozga swemŷ gależiami zasłoniła wszytką Assŷą wykładacze tego snu powiedzieli mu Iż corka iego ma urodzić syna który wszytką Azyiā Posiądzie Posłał krol do persyieŷ nie obiewiając tego nikomu y pryiechała do oŷca Bremienną i zrodziła syna dano mu ymie Cyrus ktorego żydzi zowiā kuresz.*

The Tatars referred to chapter 27, but in fact it is chapter 29 'On Croesus.' The Tatars omitted the passage about Daniel and added a passage that corresponded to their beliefs: *He was given the name of Cyrus, whom the Jews call Quraysh.*

The Tatar tefsir is therefore a text intended for the preservation and

transmission of the religion of Islam among the Muslim ummah living in the First Republic. It could have come into being thanks to the Reformation currents prevailing in Europe at the time, which favoured religious tolerance and the translation of sacred books into vernacular languages. However, in the seventeenth century, as a result of the conquests of Europe by the Ottoman Empire and the spreading Counter-Reformation currents, attitudes towards dissenters, including Muslims, changed.

4. Poison in words: the Anti-Islamic Rhetoric of a Seventeenth-Century Treatise

As previously established, the expansion of the Ottoman Empire from the late fifteenth to the seventeenth century constituted a profound challenge to the territorial integrity and cultural coherence of Europe. This perception of threat, far from being unfounded, was substantiated by the tangible reality of Ottoman conquests, which by the fifteenth century had encompassed all of Asia Minor and a significant portion of the Balkan Peninsula. However, Ottoman geopolitical aspirations reached well beyond these initial dominions, extending to further incursions into the European continent. In response, Christian polities endeavoured to coordinate their military and political resources in a collective effort to resist what was perceived not merely as a territorial aggressor but also as an existential and religious adversary.

One of the most consequential initiatives undertaken to counter the Ottoman threat was the conclusion of the Union of Florence on 6 July 1439. Intended to heal the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches, the agreement also sought to facilitate mutual support against the expanding Ottoman Empire. However, despite its far-reaching aspirations, the union proved short-lived, effectively dissolving by 1484, thereby limiting its long-term impact. Concurrently, states in Central Europe and the Balkans pursued the formation of a broader anti-Ottoman coalition. A central role in this endeavor was played by the Kingdom of Hungary, under the rule of Ladislaus I, known in Poland as Władysław III of the Jagiellonian dynasty, which assumed leadership of the league formed to confront the Ottoman advance. In this geopolitical context, Poland's role as a symbolic 'bulwark of Christianity' gained prominence, enhancing its international standing and strategic significance.

Despite these efforts, Constantinople was captured by Ottoman forces in 1453, paving the way for further expansion in the Balkans and, ultimately, the partition of Hungary. The capture of the Byzantine capital became a watershed moment, demonstrating both the determination of the Ottoman

Empire and the limitations of the actions taken by the Christian coalitions against the growing Turkish power (Reychman 1973).

It was not only the first siege of Vienna that caused unrest in Europe, but also the Turkish incursions into Styria. The notion of a 'Turkish threat' was then well established in Central Europe. However, instead of uniting in the face of a common enemy, European states often welcomed Habsburg defeats. The reigning sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, was quick to enlist allies in the fight against the Habsburgs, with Christian powers themselves willing to enter into agreements with him. In 1535, King Francis I of France signed an act of alliance (*ahdname*) with Suleiman. This agreement met with widespread condemnation because the king had allied himself with a 'pagan' and a 'worshipper of Mohammed'. The conclusion of this pact symbolically ended the myth of a unified Christian Europe (Reychman 1973).

The reign of Suleiman the Magnificent was a watershed moment for Turkey, which became a key player in European politics. The importance of the Ottoman Empire on the international arena increased significantly, and European states began to seek the Sultan's favour. There was an atmosphere of friendliness in Polish-Turkish relations at the time. Moreover, Turkey supported the anti-Habsburg candidacies of Henryk Walesa and later Stefan Batory for the throne of Poland. Despite this support, Batory planned to organise an anti-Turkish military expedition, which, however, he ultimately failed to carry out (Reychman 1973).

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, Turkish power began to weaken noticeably. The Ottoman army could not keep up with the new warfare technologies being developed in Europe, leading to numerous defeats. In addition, the growing strength of European states limited the Ottoman Empire's possibilities for expansion. Europe gained the upper hand not only through military and political consolidation, but also through scientific and industrial achievements. From the end of the sixteenth century, Turkey gradually ceased to be an equal rival to Europe in many aspects. The truces with the Ottoman Empire concluded during this period did not yield the expected results, and European-Turkish relations remained strained. The situation in Hungary was further complicated by the ambiguous attitude of the population towards Habsburg rule. A large part of the population was critical of the dynasty and supported Ottoman ambitions. In other parts of the Ottoman Empire's border with Europe, there were also disturbing developments.

In the Polish territories, tensions were exacerbated by the actions of the

Cossacks, who were used by Polish magnates to organise expeditions to Moldavia and Turkey in order to divert attention from internal problems. Meanwhile, Turkey closely followed the situation in Poland, and after the death of Sigismund Augustus supported the candidacy of Henry of Valois for the throne. However, the newly elected king quickly left Poland. Fearing the election of an Austrian archduke, Turkey put forward a number of candidates, eventually supporting Stefan Batory, who was a Turkish vassal. However, contrary to expectations, Polish-Turkish relations deteriorated during his reign due to Cossack incursions into Ottoman territories, Tatar incursions into Polish lands, and the poor treatment of Polish deputies in Turkey (Reychman 1973).

Of greatest importance for Poland were the events related to the reign of Sultan Osman II. In response to Poland's constant interference in the affairs of Moldavia and the expeditions of the Cossacks along the Ottoman coasts, Osman II decided to launch an armed expedition against Poland. The Turks were victorious over the Poles at the Battle of Cecora in 1620, but they failed to make the most of this success, exhausting their forces during the siege of the fortress at Chocim. The war attracted the attention of all Europe. In October 1621, the Chocim Pacts were concluded, establishing peaceful Polish-Turkish relations for the next fifty years. Turkish expansion came to an end with the relief of Vienna in 1683, a watershed moment that definitively weakened the power of the Ottoman Empire. Thereafter, Ottoman power never regained its former strength. The historical and political background of the confrontation between European Christianity and Islam includes armed clashes, diplomatic correspondences, messages, and peace treaties, all of which are reflected in the writings of the period.

Between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, Europe was on the verge of losing its integrity and identity, confronting two distinct cultures: the Christian, based on religious universalism, and the Turkish, rooted in orthodox Islam. One form of resistance to the Islamisation of Europe was the production of anti-Islamic literature. Although anti-Islamic texts had appeared earlier, their most significant development occurred precisely between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. These works attacked the pillars of Islam, such as the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad, and the followers of the religion. Although the main center of historical polemics was located in the countries of Western Europe, Poland also witnessed the emergence, from the second half of the sixteenth century onward, of polemical and controversial texts against Islam, professed first by the Tatars and later by the Ottoman Turks. In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, this confrontation was both political and religious in nature, which was largely reflected in Polish-Turkish relations.

This period saw the development of various forms of anti-Turkish writing, known as 'Turkicisms'. Their peak development occurred in the seventeenth century, the era of the Counter-Reformation, while their decline began in the second half of the eighteenth century. Anti-Islamic literature produced in the Republic can be divided into the following categories: historical-geographical descriptions and travel memoirs; preachy-patriotic and political works; pamphlets; elegies of a patriotic-religious nature; general and specialized catechisms; theological-apologetic manuals; and detailed analyses of Qur'anic doctrine. Some of these texts were translations of works by foreign authors, while others were original Polish compositions.

One example of polemical writing from the seventeenth century is the manuscript treatise *The Life of Mohammed and the Description of Alcoran* by Michel Baudier, a French Nobleman. It is difficult to classify this work definitively within a single category, as it combines elements of the second, third, and fourth categories. The second group includes works of a clearly propagandistic nature, which focus on the socio-moral effects of Islamic religious doctrine on the Muslim community. The third category concerns texts that undertake a polemic against Islam from a doctrinal perspective. The fourth, on the other hand, comprises analytical doctrinal studies relating directly to the Qur'an, characterized by the highest degree of polemicism (Nosowski 1974).

Michel Baudier's *Life of Muhammad* combines the characteristics of an anti-Islamic (anti-Turkish) pamphlet with a critical analysis of the content of Islamic doctrine as contained in the Qur'an and Islamic tradition. Information about the author is fragmentary. Michel Baudier was born in 1589 in Languedoc, in southern France. He was a historian and historiographer at the court of Louis XIII. His works include *Histoire de la guerre de Flandre 1559–1609* (1615), *Histoire de l'administration du cardinal d'Amboise, grand ministre d'état en France* (1634), and *Histoire de l'administration de l'abbé Suger* (1645). He had a special interest in the Ottoman Empire and the Turks. It is not known whether he travelled to the countries he described or whether he relied on the accounts of other travellers. The fruits of this interest included *Inventaire général de l'histoire des Turcs* (1619), *Histoire générale de la religion des Turcs avec la vie de leur prophète Mahomet* (1626), and *Histoire générale du sérail et de la cour du grand Turc* (1626) (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1911).

Polish translations of Michel Baudier's treatise circulated in Poland in the second half of the seventeenth century in the form of numerous copies.

Currently, three copies of this work are known to exist. The creation of the Polish translation can be dated to 1671, as the author of the manuscript states in the introduction to the work: 'I have taken up this repeated work and translated the second author called Baudier, who described the life of this champion and the beginnings of the Turkish faith before the year forty-six, that is, in the year of our Lord 1625'. Unfortunately, little is known about the author of the translation, as none of the extant texts mention his name, apart from indicating that he was a Polish nobleman.

The treatise is composed of six books, each subdivided into chapters addressing a wide range of subjects. As indicated by its title, the original author intended to produce a didactic text aimed at informing the broader public about the Turks and the foundational tenets of Islam. Yet, within the context of the prevailing socio-political conditions, the work assumed a distinctly polemical character, serving primarily as a vehicle for criticism of both Islam and the Ottoman Empire. This shift in tone was shaped not only by Michel Baudier, the original author, but also by the likely contributors to the Polish translation—figures associated with the Jesuit order, one of the most influential intellectual and theological institutions of the early modern period.

As an order founded in response to the Reformation, the Jesuits played a key role in defending the Christian faith and countering the influence of other faiths and religions. Their activities were not limited to theological polemics; they also conducted evangelization missions and founded colleges and universities that became centers of religious education and formation. They were likewise the authors of numerous apologetic treatises in which they engaged in polemics both with Protestantism and with other religions, including Islam. The association of the author and translators of the treatise with the Jesuit milieu indicates the strategy, characteristic of that order, of defending and promoting Christianity through intellectual, educational, and literary activities (cf. O'Malley 1993).

This study focuses particularly on the sections of the treatise devoted to the analysis of the Qur'an. These passages are crucial, as they provide a starting point for both theological and critical reflections on Islam. Their content reflects not only the author's level of knowledge of Islam, but also the rhetorical strategies employed in polemical works of the period. An analysis of these sections allows for a better understanding of the aims pursued by the authors of the treatise, as well as of the broader cultural, political, and religious context in which the work was written.

At this point, Baudier's argument should be understood not as a set of scattered critical remarks, but as a coherent polemical project. I critically

interpret his line of reasoning as consistently subordinated to a single fundamental aim: the denial of the Qur'an's divine origin and the undermining of its miraculous nature. Baudier systematically shifts the focus of the discussion from the theology of revelation to a historical-rhetorical framework, presenting the Qur'an as a text shaped within a specific cultural and linguistic context. As a consequence, the stylistic excellence of the Qur'an is reduced to the category of human rhetorical skill and literary borrowing rather than, as maintained in the Islamic tradition, a sign of *i'jāz*. This approach enables him to challenge the very foundation of the Qur'an's revelatory authority.

The author begins his discussion of the Holy Book of Islam in the first chapter of Book II, entitled 'About the Alcoran'. He opens with a reference to the ancient myth of Dejanira, who inadvertently caused the death of Heracles through a poison concealed in a tunic soaked in the blood of the centaur Nessos. Through this mythological allusion, the author constructs a metaphor suggesting that humanity has long sought the most effective and dangerous poisons capable of operating destructively while remaining concealed. Within this framework, he refers to Muhammad, whom he describes as a false prophet. He compares him to the inventor of such a poison, implying that his teachings, rather than leading to spiritual renewal, were intended to bring chaos and harm to humanity. The reference to the myth and the metaphor of poison are thus employed to emphasize the negative influence that the author attributes to Muhammad and to Islam as a religion: *Muhammad the false Turkish Prophet, having invented a malignant poison with which he infected countless human souls in Asia, Africa and Europe, poured it into a Book of bawdy and bestial teaching...*

The excerpt cited above, taken from the opening pages of the chapter, already reveals the critical and polemical stance adopted by both Michel Baudier and the translator toward the Qur'an and the Islamic faith. This antagonistic perspective continues as the author proceeds to narrate the origins of Islam's Holy Book. Throughout the treatise, the Prophet Muhammad is consistently portrayed as a false prophet, while the Qur'an is presented as a text filled with alleged falsehoods. Such rhetoric directly challenges the foundational Islamic belief in the divine origin of the Qur'an, understood by Muslims as the revealed Word of God. Beyond questioning its authenticity, the author attributes to the Qur'an a manipulative function, suggesting that it was designed to deceive a credulous audience. He characterizes its contents as consisting merely of jests and fables, appealing, in his view, to individuals lacking rationality and spiritual depth. Within this interpretative framework, the followers of Islam are depicted as being

concerned primarily with the corporeal pleasures promised in the Qur'anic text. This perspective underscores the author's profoundly negative assessment of the Qur'an, an attitude that permeates both the Polish translation and the original French version of the work.

In his reflections, the author also points out that the Qur'an, in his view, is devoid of valuable content and requires external embellishment. He refers here to Muhammad's use of verbal embellishments, such as beautiful words and striking titles, which are intended to give the book an apparent value. In contrast, the author, presenting Christianity in opposition to Islam, points out that Christians are characterized by modesty and that the content of the Bible stands on its own without the need for such rhetorical devices. He also argues that Muhammad was forced to further embellish the Qur'an in order to deceive people and to give the book a meaning which, in his view, is only apparent.

It is worth noting that the author of the treatise also comments on the formal structure of the Qur'an, indicating that it consists of 124 chapters. However, this information is erroneous and is repeated both in the original French text and in its Polish translation. This factual error may suggest that the authors of the text are not thoroughly acquainted with the content of the Holy Book of Islam and that their knowledge is based on hearsay and possibly biased information. The authors are selective in their use of terminology concerning the structure of the Qur'an and place more emphasis on the appropriate expression of the treatise than on its substantive content.

The treatise expresses the author's extremely critical attitude towards the Qur'an and Islam, which he reveals from the very beginning of the text. Using the metaphor of poison, he presents Muhammad's teachings as destructive and devoid of spiritual value, describing him as a false prophet. The Qur'an, according to the author, is a book full of lies, created to deceive people who are driven by promises of pleasure. The author also criticizes the form of the Qur'an, accusing it of lacking valuable content, which is allegedly replaced by ornate linguistic devices designed to hide its emptiness. In his reflections, he cites misinformation about the structure of the Qur'an, which suggests that his knowledge of the Holy Book of Islam is superficial and based on biased accounts. The text is characterized by a strong bias and unambiguously negative rhetoric towards Islam, reflecting the unrest of the time over the expansion of the Ottoman Empire.

5. Conclusion

We attempted to reconstruct descriptions of the Holy Book of Islam and

of socio-religious relations during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation as presented by different confessions, using the example of Catholic and Muslim intellectual elites. Thus, we presented two different currents: an apologetic one, illustrated by the example of the Tatar tefsir from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century, and a polemical one toward Islam, exemplified by a seventeenth-century treatise. In both currents, we focused on the Holy Book of Islam, i.e. the Qur'an.

We found that the Reformation era was conducive to multiculturalism, allowing the Tatars of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to translate the Qur'an into the language they used in their new homeland without obstacles. In contrast, the Counter-Reformation period, along with the significant influence of the Ottoman Empire in Europe at the time, triggered polemical reactions among local Catholics, who subjected the Qur'an to harsh and unjust criticism.

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Stability without Stasis: Re-reading Qur'anic Mountains in Light of Modern Geodynamics

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ABSTRACT:

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Qur'anic verses describing mountains in relation to the prevention of *mayd* (instability or oscillation) have generated ongoing discussion concerning their possible relationship to contemporary geodynamic models. While some modern interpretations have associated these verses with geological processes, questions remain regarding how such readings may be understood within the distinct methodological and epistemological frameworks of Qur'anic discourse and Earth science. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the study analyzes the semantic domain of *rawāsī* and *mayd* in classical exegesis and compares them with insights from contemporary geodynamics. The analysis suggests that the negation of *mayd* is best understood as referring to the mitigation of persistent instability rather than the absence of motion. Geological evidence suggests that orogeny, through increases in lithospheric gravitational potential energy, crustal thickening, and enhanced mechanical strength, may act as a long-term feedback mechanism that contributes to local or temporal reductions in convergence rates over multi-million-year timescales. Early Earth geodynamic models further suggest that, prior to the emergence of stable collisional mountain belts, tectonic deformation was more vertically dominated and spatially heterogeneous. Within a comparative framework, the concept of *rawāsī* may be understood as resonating conceptually with the moderating role of collisional mountain systems within tectonic dynamics. Accordingly, the verses emphasize the moderation of instability rather than the cessation of motion, a perspective that may be considered broadly compatible with modern geodynamic insights, in an analogical sense.

KEYWORDS: Qur'an and science, Scientific interpretation, Collisional Orogens, Plate Tectonic Dynamics, *Mayd*, *Rawāsī*, Vertical Tectonics.

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1. Introduction

Some researchers, drawing on recent scientific advances, have noted similarities between certain Qur'anic expressions and empirical findings (e.g., Koutb 2022; Moghaddasi 2022; Jafari 2023; Azimi et al. 2025; Moradi & Gholampourmir 2025). On the other hand, some scholars emphasize that verses addressing natural phenomena are intended primarily to highlight Divine order and wisdom as signs of creation, rather than to provide technical explanations of the physical universe (al-Dhahabi 1986, 91). Accordingly, any correlation between Qur'anic verses and science must be approached with methodological caution to preserve the text's guiding purpose, without constraining its verses to variable scientific frameworks.

A prime example of this hermeneutical challenge is the Qur'anic portrayal of mountains. Frequently mentioned across various contexts, mountains are explicitly linked in several verses (Q. 16:15; 21:31; 31:10) to the prevention of instability (*mayd*) beneath humanity, a description that invites close scrutiny of both its precise linguistic meaning and its relationship to modern geological theories:

وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَوَسْبُلاً لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ (النحل/15)

He cast in the earth firm mountains lest it should shake with you, and [made] streams and ways, so that you may be guided (Q. 16:15).

In recent decades, Qur'anic verses concerning mountains have occasionally been discussed in relation to modern geological concepts and scientific miracle interpretations. Some critiques of such interpretations argue that associating Qur'anic descriptions of mountains with contemporary geology risks retrospective correlation and oversimplification of tectonic processes (e.g., Guessoum 2011). From this perspective, mountains are generally understood as consequences of tectonic plate motion rather than primary causes of Earth's dynamic stability. These critiques further emphasize that Qur'anic descriptions of natural phenomena primarily function within theological, rhetorical, and didactic frameworks rather than serving as technical scientific explanations (Hoodbhoy 1991; Guessoum 2011). Accordingly, attempts to establish direct equivalence between scriptural language and modern scientific models may lead to methodological difficulties and to forms of overinterpretation (Edis 2007).

According to al-Ṭabarī (1985, 14:62), *mayd* signifies the Earth's agitation and motion, and mountains provide tranquility and stability conducive to human life. He interprets these verses as expressions of divine blessing and wisdom. Al-Zamakhsharī (1986, 2:598) interprets the verse as

describing the stabilization of an initially unstable Earth through the creation of mountains. Fakhr al-Din al-Rāzī (1999, 20:190) clarifies that the prohibition of *mayd* does not imply the negation of all movement or earthquakes but rather refers to preventing overall Earth instability that would disrupt human life. He argues that earthquakes involve the movement of only a limited portion of the Earth, whereas the *mayd* under discussion concerns the stability of the Earth as a whole. Tabataba'i (1996, 12:217) explains *mayd* as the Earth's swaying and disturbance, interpreting the verse to mean that God placed mountains so that the Earth would not become unstable in a way that would disrupt human life and livelihood. He (1991, 14:280) adds that the verse indicates a special relationship between mountains and earthquakes, suggesting that without mountains the Earth's crust would become unstable.

Although exegetes have sought to explain the role of mountains in Earth's stability, such interpretations are often general in nature, have not been systematically compared with geological evidence, and tend to focus on dissociating the role of mountains from earthquakes as primary agents of instability. Moreover, previous studies have not addressed the specific role of mountains in regulating plate motion or their potential relationship with Qur'anic verses.

From a geological perspective, mountains are not merely topographic features; under certain conditions, they can play an active role in tectonic plate dynamics. Geodynamic studies indicate that mountains formed through active continental collisions can measurably reduce plate velocities (Molnar & Lyon-Caen 1988; Iaffaldano et al. 2006; England & Molnar 2022). Conversely, not all mountains exert the same influence on plate dynamics. Intraplate mountains, formed by volcanic or erosional processes or lacking active lithospheric roots, cannot overcome the main driving forces of plate motion (Iaffaldano et al. 2006). Recent geodynamic studies indicate that the increase in gravitational potential energy within collisional orogenic belts, more so than in other structures, can enhance the resistance of convergent plate boundaries and lead to a measurable reduction in the velocity of tectonic plate motion, whereas intraplate or passive mountains generally do not exert a similar effect (England & Molnar 2022).

It should be noted, however, that the influence of mountains on plate motion remains a subject of ongoing discussion in geodynamics. While many researchers emphasize that large-scale plate kinematics cannot be explained solely by the presence of mountain belts and involve multiple interacting geodynamic processes, a growing body of evidence suggests that major collisional orogens can play a significant role in modifying

lithospheric stress distribution and contributing to measurable variations in plate convergence rates over geological timescales (Iaffaldano et al. 2006; Turcotte & Schubert 2014). In this context, mountains are increasingly understood not merely as passive consequences of tectonic activity, but also as important components of the broader dynamics of convergent systems.

Geodynamic studies and numerical models indicate that in the early Earth (prior to the onset of modern plate tectonics), different tectonic regimes governed lithospheric behavior and crust formation. This aligns with the higher mantle temperatures and the unstable lithospheric behavior of the Archean, suggesting that the current plate tectonic system with rigid plates and stable boundaries did not exist at that time (Korenaga 2013; Fischer & Gerya 2016; Rozel et al. 2017). This raises the question: How did plate motion differ from the present before mountains existed?

Considering the differential influence of mountains on plate motion, this study explores the connection between Qur'anic concepts of mountains as stabilizing agents and modern geological understandings. Additionally, since mountains are features that emerged over time rather than existing from the Earth's origin, the study examines and compares their effects on plate dynamics from the past to the present. Accordingly, a geological analysis of the current role of mountains in tectonic plate motion is first presented. Next, plate motions during the early Earth, when mountains did not exist, are examined. Finally, a comparative analysis of Qur'anic verses and geological evidence regarding the creation and placement of mountains on Earth is provided.

2. Geological Analysis

Contemporary geodynamic studies indicate that the Earth consists of several major internal layers, including the crust, mantle, and core. While the crust and upper lithosphere are relatively rigid, the underlying mantle behaves over geological timescales as a thermally active and mechanically ductile medium. The lithosphere is divided into tectonic plates that gradually move over the underlying mantle due to internal geodynamic processes. These plate interactions produce major geological structures such as subduction zones, earthquakes, and mountain belts. In convergent settings, crustal thickening and lithospheric deformation contribute to the formation of collisional mountain systems and deep lithospheric roots. Geological evidence further indicates that tectonic plates continue to move gradually over millions of years, demonstrating the dynamic nature of Earth's surface (Earle 2015; Barati 2022).

Recent interdisciplinary Qur'anic studies have likewise emphasized the importance of examining Qur'anic descriptions of mountains within broader geological frameworks while maintaining a methodological distinction between exegetical interpretation and scientific explanation (Barati 2022; Barati & Salimi 2024). For illustrative purposes, a simplified schematic representation of tectonic plate interaction and subduction processes, adapted from Earle (2015) and Barati (2022), is provided in Figure 1.

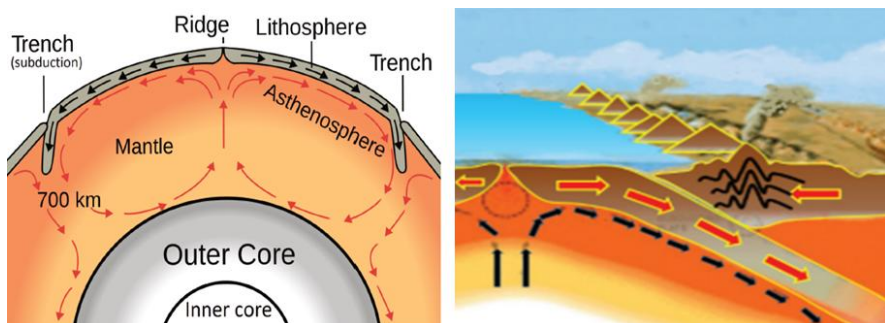


Figure 1. Simplified schematic representation of tectonic plate interaction and subduction processes (adapted from Earle 2015 and Barati 2022).

2.1. The Role of Active Collisional Mountains in Reducing Tectonic Plate Motion

Studies indicate that mountains influence tectonic plate motion through two primary mechanisms: (1) increasing gravitational load and lithospheric gravitational potential energy (GPE), and (2) enhancing the mechanical strength and rigidity of the lithosphere.

The growth of mountains is associated with the thickening of the crust and the elevation of the Earth's surface, which leads to an increase in lithospheric GPE. Studies have shown that lateral differences in gravitational potential energy (GPE) between mountainous regions and adjacent areas can generate significant horizontal stresses in the lithosphere, which numerical models typically estimate to be on the order of tens of megapascals (Molnar & Lyon-Caen 1988; Ghosh, Holt & Flesch 2009). These stresses can increase resistance to plate convergence and modify stress distribution at the plate scale, ultimately resulting in a measurable reduction in plate velocities over geological timescales of several million years (England & Molnar 1997; England & Molnar 2022).

Long-term geodynamic models that explicitly link mantle convection and lithospheric structure indicate that the surface topographic load of large

mountain belts and plateaus consumes a significant part of the driving force for plate tectonics, increasing resistive stresses at convergent boundaries and leading to measurable reductions in plate convergence rates over multi-million-year timescales (Iaffaldano et al. 2006).

Beyond gravitational effects, orogeny leads to the development of dense and deep lithospheric roots, as documented by geophysical observations and numerical models. The resulting increase in lithospheric thickness and cooling enhances the mechanical strength of the lithosphere, providing long-term support for surface topography as predicted by the “jelly sandwich” rheological model (Burov & Watts 2006). Geodynamic models demonstrate that increased continental lithospheric thickness can augment mechanical coupling with the mantle, manifesting as greater resistive forces against horizontal plate motion (Conrad & Lithgow-Bertelloni 2006). Strong lithospheric roots enhance the lithosphere’s capacity to sustain and dissipate energy associated with tectonic stresses (such as continental collision) through stable processes (e.g., flexure), rather than through rapid mechanical failure (Burov & Watts 2006).

Despite strong tectonic driving forces (e.g., slab pull), increased lithospheric resistance can significantly slow plate motion (Forsyth & Uyeda 1975; Conrad & Lithgow-Bertelloni 2002; Iaffaldano et al. 2006). In major collisional belts such as the Himalaya–Tibet, seismic and receiver-function data reveal a prominent south-dipping high-velocity interface in the upper mantle beneath northern Tibet, traceable from ~100 km to ~250 km depth, interpreted as portions of the Eurasian lithosphere underthrusting the plateau (Kind et al. 2002). This structure contributes to the long-term stabilization of the plateau by increasing the mechanical strength of the lithosphere. Enhanced strength modifies how plate convergence is accommodated, allowing stresses to be distributed over a broader lithospheric region rather than being localized at a narrow plate boundary (Molnar & Lyon-Caen 1988).

One of the strongest empirical indications of the influence of mountain building on plate motion is the temporal correspondence between the growth of major orogenic belts and a marked decrease in plate convergence rates over geological timescales. Plate kinematic reconstructions based on paleomagnetic data show that the convergence rate between the Indian and Eurasian plates declined by more than 40% between approximately 20 and 10 Ma, broadly coincident with the rapid growth of the Himalayan–Tibetan orogen (Molnar & Stock 2009). This reduction cannot be fully understood without considering the role of collisional mountains. It coincided with crustal thickening of the Tibetan Plateau, increased mean elevation, and

substantial growth in regional GPE (Molnar et al. 1993; England & Molnar 2022). Similarly, geodetic data and tectonic reconstructions indicate that, during the collision of the Arabian Plate with Eurasia, a substantial portion of the initial convergence was accommodated within the Zagros fold–thrust belt. Consequently, the effective convergence rate of the Arabian Plate was lower than its pre-collision motion (McQuarrie et al. 2003; Vernant et al. 2004). These observations indicate that the development of fold–thrust belts and crustal thickening can absorb a significant fraction of convergence internally, redistributing deformation over a broader lithospheric region rather than concentrating it solely at the plate boundary.

Another example is observed in the Andean orogeny. Reconstructions indicate that the reduction in Nazca Plate convergence relative to South America during the Miocene coincided with increased crustal thickness and elevation in the Central Andes (Iaffaldano & Bunge 2009). These observations suggest that orogeny may act not only as a consequence of plate convergence, but also as an important geodynamic feedback that can influence stress distribution and contribute to measurable reductions in convergence rates, particularly in large collisional systems.

It should be emphasized, however, that the influence of mountain belts on plate motion is understood within a broader and highly complex geodynamic system. Although mountains are not regarded as independent controls on global plate kinematics, growing geodynamic and geophysical evidence suggests that large collisional orogenic systems can significantly influence lithospheric stress distribution and contribute to variations in convergence rates over geological timescales. In this context, collisional mountain belts may be understood as important geodynamic feedbacks capable of modulating tectonic deformation and plate interactions in major convergent settings.

2.2. Vertical Tectonics in the Absence of Mountains

Modern plate tectonics is based on the horizontal motion of rigid lithospheric plates and the formation of structures such as mountain belts, subduction zones, and major fault systems. However, geodynamic evidence and geological models indicate that this tectonic regime has not prevailed throughout Earth's history. In the early Earth, high mantle temperatures and a thin lithosphere inhibited the formation of stable plates and high mountains (Korenaga 2013; Debaille et al. 2013), likely resulting in crustal deformation that was predominantly vertical and non-uniform (Bédard 2018). Vertical tectonics refers to a geodynamic regime in which uplift and subsidence of

the crust dominate over horizontal displacements. These vertical movements typically occur in response to thermal and density heterogeneities within the mantle (Rey et al. 2014; Rozel et al. 2017).

Thermal models suggest that the early mantle was significantly hotter than it is today. Elevated temperatures reduced mantle viscosity and increased convective rates, such that the lithosphere could not sustain long-term horizontal stresses (Sleep 2000). During this period, the lithosphere behaved not as a rigid plate but as a viscoelastic, deformable layer, a regime often referred to in planetary geodynamics as the deformable-lid regime. This condition may have limited stable horizontal motion and promoted tectonic regimes characterized by enhanced vertical displacement (Bercovici & Ricard 2014).

One proposed mechanism for vertical tectonics involves the upwelling of hot mantle material, which caused thermal expansion and crustal uplift. Subsequent cooling and increases in density led to widespread subsidence. These uplift–subsidence cycles, repeated over millions of years, controlled the dominant pattern of crustal deformation (Sleep 2000; Bédard 2018; Foley 2018).

In tectonic regimes where stable mountain belts and thick lithospheric roots were likely absent, isostatic balance was primarily maintained through vertical movements of the thin crust. Changes in crustal mass, particularly those associated with extensive magmatic activity, could produce more efficient and dynamically responsive vertical adjustments than those observed at present (Sleep 2000; Rey et al. 2014). Dome–greenstone structures in Archean cratons are often interpreted as evidence of vertical tectonics. In these models, lighter and hotter materials rose to form domes, while denser units were displaced laterally and downward, without involving continental collisions or classical orogeny (Thébaud & Rey 2013; Roberts & Tikoff 2021).

The relative scarcity of extensive fold–thrust belts and deep lithospheric roots in ancient rocks has been interpreted by some researchers as suggesting that stable, high mountain belts were less developed or absent during parts of early Earth history (Korenaga 2021), and that deformation was predominantly vertical and localized. With the gradual cooling of the Earth, the lithosphere became thicker and mechanically stronger, enabling the concentration of horizontal stresses, the formation of stable plate boundaries, and, eventually, the development of mountains. Many studies suggest that this transition occurred gradually and likely episodically (O'Neill et al. 2007).

It should be noted, however, that the nature of tectonic processes on the early Earth remains an active subject of debate. While many geodynamic models support the existence of tectonic regimes characterized by enhanced vertical deformation prior to the stabilization of modern plate tectonics, the timing, extent, and global prevalence of such regimes remain uncertain. Similarly, the relationship between lithospheric stabilization, mountain building, and the emergence of sustained horizontal plate motion is interpreted differently across competing geodynamic models. Accordingly, connections between early tectonic evolution and the later development of stable mountain belts should be understood as interpretive and model-dependent rather than as definitively established.

3. *Comparative Analysis*

This study adopts an interdisciplinary and comparative methodology that integrates semantic analysis of Qur'anic terminology with selected concepts from contemporary geodynamics. The aim is not to establish direct scientific equivalence between Qur'anic expressions and modern geological theories, but rather to explore possible conceptual correspondences between the two domains while maintaining their distinct epistemological frameworks.

The first component of the methodology involves a semantic analysis of key Qur'anic terms, particularly *rawāsī* and *mayd*, through an examination of classical Arabic lexicons and exegetical traditions. This analysis focuses on the semantic range and conceptual function of these terms within Qur'anic discourse, rather than treating them as technical scientific terminology. The second component employs a comparative epistemological approach. Qur'anic discourse and geodynamic models are understood as belonging to different systems of knowledge, each with distinct aims, methods, and modes of explanation. Accordingly, the study does not assume that scriptural language provides empirical geological descriptions in the modern scientific sense. Finally, the comparison developed in this article is based on analogy rather than equivalence. Similarities between Qur'anic descriptions and geodynamic concepts are therefore interpreted as conceptual or functional resonances, not as exact scientific correspondences. This distinction is especially important in avoiding retrospective or reductionist readings of the text.

3.1. *The Concept of Rawāsī and the Regulation of Plate Tectonics*

3.1.1. *Semantic Analysis of the Term Rawāsī*

In the Qur'an, mountains are described using the term *rawāsī*. This expression appears in verses that emphasize the placement of mountains to prevent the instability of the Earth. Linguistically, *rawāsī* is the plural of *rāsīyah*, derived from the Arabic root R-S-W, which denotes firmness, stability, and being firmly established (Ibn Manẓūr 1994, 14:321).

A structural analysis of the term indicates that *rawāsī* is an adjective rather than a proper noun. Consequently, the word inherently conveys the attribute of “stability” rather than the precise physical characteristics of a mountain. In other words, classical lexical and exegetical sources associate the term *rawāsī* with mountains characterized by firmness and stability (Ibn Manẓūr 1994, 14:321; al-Zamakhsharī 1986, 4:187; al-Ṭabarī 1985, 14:62). From a lexical and semantic perspective, *jibāl* functions as a general term for mountains, whereas *rawāsī* emphasizes qualities of firmness and stability associated with certain mountains. This distinction indicates that, in classical Arabic usage, there was a clear differentiation between *jibāl* as a generic term for mountains and *rawāsī* as an adjective for those with stabilizing qualities.

In the Qur'an, the term *rawāsī* consistently appears in contexts that negate *mayd* (oscillation or instability) of the Earth. This semantic association suggests that *rawāsī* refers to mountains associated with firmness, stability, and steadfastness within the Qur'anic linguistic and conceptual framework. The selective use of the term *rawāsī* in contexts related to the prevention of *mayd* suggests that the Qur'anic discourse does not treat all mountains identically, but instead emphasizes particular mountains associated with firmness and stability.

3.1.2. *Comparative Epistemology and Geodynamic Interpretation*

As discussed in section 2, recent geodynamic studies suggest that active collisional mountains can play a significant stabilizing role within plate tectonic systems by acting as long-term resistive feedbacks on plate motion. As shown in previous sections, the growth of orogenic belts influences plate kinematics through two primary and complementary mechanisms: (1) increasing lateral gradients in the lithosphere's gravitational potential energy (GPE), which generate large-scale horizontal stresses opposing

convergence, and (2) enhancing the mechanical strength and rigidity of the lithosphere through crustal thickening and the development of deep, cold isostatic roots. Together, these processes increase lithospheric resistance, redistribute deformation over broader regions, and can lead to measurable reductions in plate convergence rates over multi-million-year timescales.

From a geodynamic perspective, had the Earth lacked mountains and their lithospheric roots, stresses generated by plate-driving forces, such as slab pull, would have been less effectively redistributed. In major collisional systems, mountain belts function as regulatory components within lithospheric dynamics, enhancing resistance and reducing stress localization. These processes can redistribute deformation over broader regions, contribute to long-term lithospheric stability, and, under certain geodynamic conditions, lead to measurable reductions in plate convergence rates over geological timescales, rather than halting plate motion altogether.

3.1.3. *Analogy Rather Than Equivalence*

From a comparative perspective, these findings may be understood as conceptually resonating with the Qur'anic description of mountains as *rawāsī*. In this framework, the comparison does not imply that the Qur'anic term functions as a technical geological concept; rather, it suggests a functional analogy between the stabilizing imagery associated with *rawāsī* in Qur'anic discourse and the moderating influence that large collisional mountain systems may exert within lithospheric dynamics.

In the verses examined in this study, the Qur'an employs the verbs *ja'ala* and *alqa* to describe the placement of mountains upon the Earth. At first glance, the expression *alqa* (to throw) may appear difficult to reconcile with modern geological theories that understand mountains as the result of gradual tectonic processes. The verb *alqa*, derived from the root L-Q-Y, fundamentally denotes facing and encountering something (al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī 1992, 745), whereas in its transitive form it conveys meanings such as throwing, placing, establishing, or setting (Mustafawi 1981, 10:227). Since the Qur'an employs both *alqa* and *ja'ala* in parallel contexts describing the placement of *rawāsī*, the two verbs may function synonymously in this context (al-Rāzī 1999, 20:191). At the same time, the choice of *alqa* may carry an additional semantic nuance, suggesting that the establishment of mountains involves processes of displacement and emplacement. Accordingly, the Qur'anic use of *alqa* may be understood as conceptually compatible with the gradual tectonic processes associated with mountain formation, including lithospheric displacement and plate

interaction, without implying a literal or instantaneous geological event (QELNET n.d.). Accordingly, Qur'anic descriptions referring to mountains as having been "placed" upon the Earth may be interpreted in a manner that is not inconsistent with the gradual emergence of mountain systems through tectonic interactions.

3.2. Conceptual Link between Vertical Tectonics and the Qur'anic Term Mayd

3.2.1. Semantic Analysis of the Term Mayd

The verb *tamīda*, derived from the root M-Y-D, primarily denotes movement accompanied by instability, swaying, oscillation, inclination, or loss of equilibrium (Ibn Fāris 1983, 5:288; Ibn Manẓūr 1994, 3:411–412), rather than motion in itself. Accordingly, the noun *mayd* refers to the resulting condition of persistent disequilibrium, whereas the verb *tamīda* denotes the occurrence of such unstable or unbalanced motion. Al-Ṭabarī (1985, 14:62) explains *an tamīda bikum* as the Earth's inclination and agitation that would disrupt those living upon it, comparing it to the rocking of a ship that induces dizziness in its passengers. Likewise, al-Zamakhsharī (1986, 2:598) interprets the expression as referring to the Earth's tilting and instability. Tabataba'i (1996, 12:217) explains the phrase *an tamīda bikum* as *lest the Earth become unstable beneath you*, that is, God placed firmly established mountains upon the Earth so that it would not sway or incline to the right and left, thereby disrupting the order of human life. Thus, within the classical exegetical tradition, *mayd* denotes persistent instability or disequilibrium rather than mere motion. Accordingly, in verses that highlight the role of mountains in preventing the *mayd* of the Earth, the implication is not the complete cessation of all terrestrial movement, but rather the mitigation of instability.

3.2.2. Comparative Epistemology and Early Earth Geodynamics

As discussed in Section 2.2, contemporary geoscientific literature indicates that an Earth prior to the emergence of stable collisional mountain belts was not static; instead, it likely experienced persistent and heterogeneous tectonic deformation. Some geodynamic models of the early Earth suggest that, prior to the development of stable lithospheric plates and large collisional mountain belts, crustal deformation was dominated by vertical and cyclic processes associated with thermal and density heterogeneities in the mantle. These processes produced repeated uplift and

subsidence and limited the development of long-term structural equilibrium.

During this period, the lithosphere is thought to have been thinner and mechanically weaker than in later tectonic regimes. As a result, tectonic deformation was more localized, vertically dominated, and dynamically variable. Geological structures such as dome–greenstone formations are commonly interpreted as evidence of these tectonic conditions. With the gradual strengthening and thickening of the lithosphere, more stable plate boundaries and large mountain systems emerged, contributing to comparatively more regulated patterns of tectonic deformation and stress redistribution. In this framework, mountains are understood not as halting Earth's motion altogether, but as geological structures that contribute to moderating tectonic instability within Earth's dynamic system.

3.2.3. *Analogy Rather Than Equivalence*

Within a comparative framework, these geodynamic interpretations may be understood as conceptually resonating with the broader semantic field of *mayd* as a condition of instability or disequilibrium. Such a comparison does not imply that the Qur'anic term functions as a technical description of early Earth tectonics; rather, it suggests a functional analogy between the Qur'anic imagery of persistent instability and geodynamic models describing vertically dominated tectonic regimes.

A key point in this scientific–exegetical comparison is that Qur'anic discourse does not deny terrestrial motion; rather, it emphasizes the mitigation of instability and the establishment of relative equilibrium. Within this comparative framework, several broad conceptual correspondences may be identified:

- The Earth remained geodynamically active even in the absence of stable mountain systems.
- Early tectonic deformation appears to have been more vertically dominated and spatially heterogeneous.
- The emergence of major mountain belts did not eliminate tectonic motion altogether.
- Rather, collisional mountain systems may have contributed to more regulated patterns of lithospheric deformation and stress redistribution.

From this perspective, the comparison developed here should be understood as conceptual rather than as equivalent, exploring possible

conceptual correspondences between Qur'anic imagery and contemporary geodynamic interpretations while preserving the distinct epistemological character of each domain.

4. Conclusion

A comparative examination of Qur'anic verses, classical exegetical interpretations, and modern geodynamic evidence indicates that the frequently alleged conflict between the Qur'anic notion of Earth's "stability" and contemporary scientific understandings of Earth's dynamism is largely the result of reductionist and methodologically unsound readings of the religious text. Classical exegetes, consistently emphasize that the negation of *mayd* does not imply the complete cessation of terrestrial motion. Rather, it refers to the prevention of persistent structural instability that would render the Earth uninhabitable for human life. These interpretations differ from simplistic "scientific miracle" readings that portray mountains as mechanical barriers against earthquakes or plate motion; instead, classical exegetes generally interpret these verses in relation to the stability, order, and habitability of the Earth rather than as precise geological descriptions.

From the perspective of modern geodynamics, mountains, particularly active collisional orogenic belts characterized by deep lithospheric roots, play a demonstrable role in regulating tectonic plate dynamics. Through the combined effects of increased lithospheric gravitational potential energy, crustal thickening, and enhanced mechanical strength, major mountain belts impose significant resistive stresses on converging plates. Empirical evidence from regions such as the Himalayan–Tibetan system, the Zagros orogen, and the Central Andes indicates that mountain building is associated with measurable reductions in plate convergence rates over multi-million-year timescales. These observations suggest that orogeny functions not only as a consequence of plate motion but also as a long-term feedback mechanism that modulates the kinematics of the plate tectonic system.

Geological reconstructions of the early Earth further contextualize this relationship. Prior to the formation of stable mountain belts and thick lithospheric roots, the Earth was not tectonically quiescent; rather, it exhibited a state of persistent dynamic instability. In this regime, deformation was dominated by vertical tectonics driven by thermal and density heterogeneities within a hot, weak lithosphere. Cyclic uplift and subsidence, as recorded in dome–greenstone structures and related Archean formations, inhibited the development of long-lived structural equilibrium.

This vertically dominated and continuously deforming system may be considered conceptually resonant with the Qur'anic notion of *mayd* as sustained imbalance and unrest, rather than as discrete seismic shaking.

Within this integrated framework, the Qur'anic concept of *rawāsī* may be interpreted, without departing from its linguistic, theological, or rhetorical context, as referring to stabilizing and regulatory elements within Earth's dynamic system. Mountains do not immobilize the Earth; instead, they redistribute tectonic stresses, reduce stress localization at plate boundaries, and modulate the rate and mode of energy release within the lithosphere. This regulatory function enhances long-term structural stability and habitability while preserving the fundamentally dynamic nature of the planet.

Consequently, the Qur'an does not deny terrestrial motion, nor does it aim to articulate empirical geophysical theories. Rather, it emphasizes the moderation of motion and the mitigation of harmful instability. When approached with appropriate methodological caution, these Qur'anic descriptions may be read in a manner that is not inconsistent with some geodynamic concepts, including: the Earth's long-term dynamism; the predominance of vertically distributed deformation in some early tectonic regimes; the continued persistence of tectonic motion following mountain formation; and the possible role of collisional mountain systems in influencing patterns of lithospheric deformation and stress redistribution. Taken together, these observations suggest that meaningful conceptual dialogue between Qur'anic discourse and Earth sciences may be possible without conflating their distinct epistemological domains.

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A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib in the Holy Qur'an Based on Fairclough's Theory

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ABSTRACT:

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Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) represents an evolutionary trajectory in linguistic studies. This approach goes beyond the mere description of linguistic data to prioritize the ideological processes, situational contexts, and intertextual relations that shape discourse. Accordingly, the present study employs Norman Fairclough's CDA framework to examine the Qur'anic verses revealed regarding the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. The main objective of this research is to uncover the hidden power relations and ideological foundations of the discourse of *Imāmah*. This is achieved through a systematic analysis at the three levels of description, interpretation, and explanation. The findings indicate that at the level of description, the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib are concretely represented and foregrounded through rhetorical devices, such as antithesis, parallelism, contrast, rhyme, and allusion, as well as symbolic loci like Ghadīr and the Mosque. At the level of interpretation, the intertextual network of the examined verses forms a coherent discourse of *Wilāyah*, self-sacrifice, truthfulness, and divinely endowed knowledge. Furthermore, at the level of explanation, the *Imāmah* discourse attains hegemony over competing discourses through six ideological components: divine legitimacy, infallibility, completion of religion, absolute obedience, moral superiority, and divinely bestowed knowledge. Ultimately, the combination of textual and metatextual elements demonstrates that the discourse of *Imāmah* is a

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revelatory, integrated, and hegemonic discourse. It is formed in structural opposition to rival discourses such as tribalism, hypocrisy, and those of the People of the Book.

KEYWORDS: The Qur'an, Critical Discourse Analysis, Imāmah Discourse, Verse of *Tablīgh*, *Ulū al-Amr*, *Wilāyah*, *al-Ṣādiqīn*, *ʿIlm al-kitāb*, Hegemony; Discursive Struggle.

1. Introduction

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as an interdisciplinary approach, investigates the inseparable relationship between language, power, and ideology. Emerging from the tradition of Critical Linguistics in the 1970s, this approach was developed by theorists such as Norman Fairclough, Teun Van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak. Through its three-level framework of description, interpretation, and explanation, Fairclough's model provides a systematic tool for dissecting texts. It seeks to uncover hidden connections between discourse and socio-cultural structures (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002).

Since the Qur'anic verses related to the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (PBUH) play a fundamental role in clarifying the concept of *Imāmah* and the leadership of the Muslim community after the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), they constitute the central focus of the present study. In this context, "virtues" refers to the attributes and deeds that signify the superiority and elevated status of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib within the Qur'an and the traditions. These virtues have been extensively echoed in the exegetical and *ḥadīth* sources of both Shia and Sunni scholarship.

The verses examined in this research encompass key conceptual themes related to the Imam's virtues. However, due to the breadth of the subject, only selected verses have been chosen as the analytical foundation including:

- The verse of *Tablīgh* (proclamation):
O Messenger, convey that which has been sent down to you from your Lord; and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. And God will protect you from the people. Indeed, God does not guide the disbelieving people (Q.5:67).
- The verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (those vested with authority):
O you who believe, obey God, obey the Messenger, and those vested with authority among you (Q.4:59).
- The verse of *Wilāyah* (guardianship):
Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down (Q.5:55).
- The verse of *al-Ṣādiqīn* (the Truthful):

O you who believe, be conscious of God and be with the truthful (Q.9:119).

- The verse of *‘Ilm al-kitāb* (the Knowledge of the Book):
Those who disbelieve say, ‘You are not a messenger.’ Say, ‘God is sufficient as a witness between me and you, and so is the one who possesses knowledge of the Book’ (Q.13:43).

These verses are analysed according to Fairclough's model, drawing upon authoritative exegetical sources and widely transmitted narrations. The selection of these five verses is based on several factors. First, there is a presence of widely transmitted narrations regarding their occasions of revelation in both Shia and Sunni traditions. Second, there exists an exegetical consensus or widespread scholarly attribution of these verses to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib among commentators of both schools. Finally, these verses focus on foundational concepts of the discourse of *Imāmāh*, including the proclamation of *Wilāyah*, obedience, self-sacrifice, truthfulness, and divinely endowed knowledge. Accordingly, this study seeks to address the following questions: What are the most prominent discourses present in the Qur'anic verses related to the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib? How do Fairclough's three analytical structures reflect ideological concepts in this group of verses?

2. Literature Review

In recent years, numerous studies have applied Critical Discourse Analysis to literary and religious texts. While space constraints preclude a comprehensive list, the following works highlight the application of this approach to the Qur'an.

Fallah and Shafī'pour (2018) analysed the textual structure of the surah al-Shams and its correspondence with the situational context at the interpretive level. They examined how the discourses within Surah al-Shams maintain a resistant relationship with the dominant discourse of society. Doodman-Koushki et al. (2019) emphasized the religious, ethical, and pedagogical aims of the surah al-Muṭaffifīn. Their study focused on how the surah's discourse interacts with and is enacted within its context. Ahmadi and Yazdani (2021) examined the different levels of the surah. They concluded that the intratextual and intertextual structures, along with the discourse at the explanatory level, convey specific pedagogical objectives to the audience. Mahmoudi and Alipour (2024) analysed the narrative of the people of Lūṭ and its semiotic significance across the three levels of description, interpretation, and explanation. Mollaebrahimi and Karami (2025) identified a strong and inseparable coherence between the language of Surah Maryam and the social and external context of the narrative. This coherence, they argue, imbues the Qur'anic story with a distinct ideological value. Despite these studies, no systematic research has yet analysed the

collection of Qur'anic verses concerning the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib using Fairclough's three-level model. Therefore, the present study represents the first systematic framework for explaining Alawite virtues. It simultaneously evaluates the rhetorical and discursive elements of the selected verses while extracting the ideological components of the discourse of *Imāmah* based on authoritative Sunni and Shia exegetical and *ḥadīth* sources.

3. Theoretical Framework

Discourse analysis concerns itself with the use of language in social contexts, particularly in interactions or conversations among speakers (Khanifar and Moslemi 2019). It also examines the meanings that human beings project onto the world (Ghahramani 2013). In other words, discourse analysis deals with the description and interpretation of discourse based on linguistic foundations and the strategies of extra-linguistic and sociological factors, such as situational context, social participants, history, ideology, and power (Aghagolzadeh 2013).

Linguists generally offer two perspectives regarding discourse analysis. The first defines discourse analysis as the examination of linguistic units larger than the sentence, while the second views it as a focused inquiry into how and why language is used. The first perspective, which emphasizes the structure and form of the text, is known as structuralism. In contrast, the second, which stresses the function of the text, is termed functionalism. While the former considers discourse as a specific linguistic unit larger than the sentence (Irakhah et al. 2015), the latter views discourse analysis as the study of various aspects of language use, concentrating on the functions of linguistic units (Fairclough 1995). Scholars in the functionalist group pay attention to human actions and behaviours, as well as the specific intentions underlying language use. They seek to uncover the social, cultural, political, communicative, and situational meanings embedded in discourse.

Norman Fairclough distinguishes three stages of Critical Discourse Analysis: the description of the text, the interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and the explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context. He applies discourse analysis at three distinct levels: (1) description, viewing discourse as text; (2) interpretation, viewing discourse as the interaction between the processes of text production and interpretation; and (3) explanation, viewing discourse in relation to the social context (Fairclough 1989). In Fairclough's model, description serves as the foundational basis for interpretation and explanation.

4. Application of Fairclough's Discourse Analysis

The following analysis applies Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis to the selected verses concerning the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

4.1. Linguistic and Structural Features of the Verses

At the descriptive level, Fairclough's theory examines linguistic techniques and analyses the discursive elements of the text. The following features are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Linguistic and Rhetorical Features of the Verses

Verse	Linguistic Features	Syntactic Structure	Rhetorical Devices	Example	Discursive Function in Highlighting the Virtue
Tablīgh Q. 5:67	Imperative verb: <i>balligh</i> ; Conditional clause: <i>wa in lam...</i>	Conditional structure; Performative (injunctive) sentence	Antithesis (<i>ṭibāq</i>)	<i>balligh</i> versus <i>lam taf'al</i>	The contrast between delivering the proclamation and abandoning it highlights the magnitude of the mission of <i>wilāyah</i> .
Ulū al-Amr Q. 4:59	Repetition of the verb <i>aṭī'ū</i> ; Attached pronoun: <i>minkum</i>	Performative sentence; Imperative style	Parallel construction and balance	<i>aṭī'ū</i> <i>Allāha wa aṭī'ū al-rasūl</i>	The alignment of obedience to the <i>ulū al-amr</i> with obedience to God and His Messenger
Wilāyah Q. 5:55	Restrictive particle: <i>innamā</i> ; Circumstantial clause (<i>ḥāl</i>): <i>wa hum rākī'ūn</i>	Relative clause; Restrictive nominal sentence (<i>qasr</i>); Circumstantial clause	Restriction (<i>qasr</i>) through <i>innamā</i>	<i>innamā waliyyukum Allāhu wa...</i>	The restrictive construction confines legitimate <i>wilāyah</i> to Allah, His Messenger, and the designated believers. The circumstantial clauses identify the qualified believer through the distinctive act of giving <i>zakāt</i> while bowing.
Al-Ṣādiqīn Q. 9:119	Imperative verbs: <i>ittaquū, kūnū</i>	Performative sentence; Imperative style	Balanced rhymed prose (Parallel <i>saj'</i>)	<i>ittaquū</i> <i>Allāha wa kūnū ma'a al-ṣādiqīn</i>	The phonetic and semantic symmetry places companionship with the truthful on the same level as piety.
ʿIlm al-kitāb Q. 13:43	Rhetorical interrogative: <i>Alasta</i> ; Emphatic particle: <i>inna</i>	Interrogative sentence; Argumentative style	Rhetorical interrogative; Metonymy (<i>kināyah</i>)	<i>man 'indahū 'ilm al-kitāb</i>	An implication indicating the boundless and divinely granted knowledge of the Book. The rhetorical question invalidates the deniers' rejection.

4.1.1. Spatial Element

In Critical Discourse Analysis, space is not merely a physical and static container. Rather, it is a dynamic and symbolic setting in which profound doctrinal and historical concepts are manifested, functioning as a social structure that carries ideological weight and power (Muhabbak 2001). In the verses concerning the virtues of ‘Alī ibn Abī Tālib, space becomes a key element that serves as a stage for the manifestation of legitimacy, divine obedience, and the delineation of the path of guidance for the community (Sha’iri 2016). These elements are summarized in table 2.

Table 2. Analysis of the Spatial Element in the Verses (Based on Sunni and Shia Sources)

Verse	Spatial Setting	Discursive Signification	Narrative Source
Tablīgh Q. 5:67	Ghadīr Khumm (a desert crossroads between Mecca and Medina during the Prophet's return from the Farewell Pilgrimage)	Transformation of an arid, barren location into a symbol of the proclamation of <i>wilāyah</i> ; a place of pressure and trial for the Prophet	Wāhidī 1991, 194; al-Tha’labī 2002, 4:92; al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:249; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 3: 344; al-Shawkānī 1993, 2:69; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 2:298
Ulū al-Amr Q. 4:59	Medina (during the formation of the Islamic political community)	A locus of authority and governance; wherever an Islamic community is established, obedience to the <i>ulū al-amr</i> becomes obligatory	al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:190; al-Qummī 1988, 1:141; al-Huwayzī 1994, 1:500
Wilāyah Q. 5:55	Masjid al-Nabī, Medina (during communal prayer while Imam ‘Alī was in the state of <i>rukū’</i>)	The mosque as a domain embodying worship and self-sacrifice	al-Ṭabarī 2000, 6:186; al-Zamakhsharī 1987, 1: 649; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 3: 325; al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:209; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 2:293
Al-Ṣādiqīn Q. 9:119	Medina (on the eve of the Tabūk expedition, following the consolidation of the Islamic state)	Any place accompanied by the Imam is transformed into a “place of truth”	al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:341; al-Tha’labī 2002, 5:109; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 5:122; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 3:290; al-Shawkānī 1993, 2:472
‘Ilm al-kitāb Q. 13:43	Mecca (amid the Meccan opposition to the Prophet's mission)	A spiritual and supra-spatial setting; the station of divine proximity	al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:400; al-Tha’labī 2002, 5:303; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 6:462; Abū Ḥayyān 1999, 6:402

According to narratives, the location associated with the Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q. 5:67) was Ghadīr Khumm (Wāhidī 1991, 194; al-Tha’labī 2002, 4:92; al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:249; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 3:344; al-Shawkānī 1993, 2:69; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 2:298). In this context, the location functions as a “place of pressure and trial” for the Prophet. It is in this specific setting that God prepares His Messenger to convey the most critical component of the mission, namely, the *Wilāyah* and succession after the Prophet, and

protects him from potential harm. This desert crossroads between Mecca and Medina during the Prophet's return from the Farewell Pilgrimage became the stage for the Prophet's absolute obedience to the divine command. Since the atmosphere of Ghadīr was turned into a threatening space by the hypocrites, the verse was revealed precisely in that location to underscore the seriousness of *Wilāyah*.

The Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q. 4:59) does not identify a specific geographical location. Nevertheless, a number of exegetical reports associate the expression *Ulū al-Amr* with 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:190; al-Qummī 1988, 1:141; al-Ḥuwayzī 1994, 1:500). The verse instead constructs a normative political order in which *Ulū al-Amr* occupy the highest rank of legitimate authority within the Islamic community. The domain of Islam is thus conceptualized as a sphere of divinely sanctioned governance in which, after God and His Messenger, obedience to *Ulū al-Amr* becomes obligatory. Accordingly, the spatial dimension of the verse should not be understood in a merely physical or territorial sense; rather, it denotes a structural and institutional arena in which divine authority is exercised and manifested in communal life. Within this interpretive framework, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib may be understood as the foremost exemplar of *Ulū al-Amr*, embodying the Qur'anic model of delegated divine authority.

The spatial signification of the Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55) is universal in scope. Yet, the reports concerning its occasion of revelation relate it directly to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, who gave charity in the mosque while in the state of bowing (*al-Rukū'*) (al-Ṭabarī 2000, 6:186; al-Zamakhsharī 1987, 1:649; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 3:325; al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:209; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 2:293). Thus, the mosque becomes the significant spatial setting for this act of generosity. As a place of purity and nearness to God, the mosque provides a context where giving charity, especially during an act of worship, represents the height of selflessness and devotion. The space of worship (the mosque) merges with the worshipful act (charity during bowing) to manifest an unparalleled virtue for 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Accordingly, the mosque functions not merely as the physical setting of the event but as the discursive space in which 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib's act is presented as the distinguishing mark of the believer endowed with *wilāyah*, thereby linking the spatial context of the revelation to the Qur'anic designation of his authority.

The spatial reference in the Verse of *al-Ṣādiqīn* (Q. 9:119) is similarly universal. Nevertheless, reports concerning its occasion of revelation identify 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib as a principal referent of "the truthful" mentioned in the verse (al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:341; al-Tha'labī 2002, 5:109; al-

Ṭabrisī 1999, 5:122; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 3:290; al-Shawkānī 1993, 2:472). The verse addresses believers regardless of their location and commands them to remain within the “space of truth,” namely, in the company of the truthful ones. In this sense, physical space derives its significance from proximity to the Truthful. To be beside 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib is to stand within the sphere of truth; conversely, to be distant from him is to remain outside the centre of sincerity. The verse thus links the notion of space to an identity-forming and doctrinal concept.

The Verse of *'Ilm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43) does not point to a physical location but to a spiritual rank and station before God. This is a metaphysical and epistemic space, as 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib is described as the one who possesses the totality of the knowledge of the Book (al-Hākim al-Haskānī 1990, 1:400; al-Tha'labī 2002, 5:303; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 6:462; Abū Ḥayyān 1999, 6:402; al-Qundūzī 1996, 1: 307). He thus stands in the station of divine proximity, at the very source of revealed knowledge. Space here is not a physical site but a transcendent rank that connects the individual to the fountainhead of divine knowledge, validating him as a witness to the truth of the Prophet's mission.

Across these verses, space performs multiple functions. Concrete and historical locations, such as the mosque and Ghadīr Khumm, become stages for decisive events and manifestations of virtue. Meanwhile, conceptual locations, such as divine proximity and the sphere of companionship with the truthful, emphasize the metaphysical and leadership dimensions of the Imam. In all these cases, space is transformed from neutrality and stillness into a dynamic agent participating in the unfolding of the divine narrative and the presentation of *Imāmah*. These locations, having witnessed both the presence of the Commander of the Faithful and the manifestation of God's command concerning him, attain enduring significance.

4.1.2. Scene Construction

The Qur'an does not merely describe the time and place of events; rather, it creates a vivid and dynamic atmosphere, placing the audience at the heart of an unforgettable moment so that the depth of doctrinal meanings is conveyed through sensory experience (Salehi 2022). The scenes associated with the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib are no exception. Each renders an artistic and memorable image of his virtue, obedience, and divinely sanctioned authority.

The Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67) portrays the scene of Ghadīr Khumm through a lens of emotional strain. In this setting, the Prophet is confronted with a grave and demanding command while anticipating the hostile

reaction of hypocrites and adversaries. The scene construction centres on the Prophet's inner state; furthermore, the phrase "*and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message*" heightens the psychological intensity and tension of the moment. Thereafter, with the statement "*and God will protect you from the people,*" divine intervention restores calm to the tense atmosphere. This shift in emotional tone creates a compelling and suspenseful scene that underscores the critical sensitivity of *wilāyah*.

The Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59) does not present a fixed or static scene; instead, it depicts a fluid and expansive one that encompasses the entire Islamic community. Wherever a believer resides, the scene of obedience to the divinely appointed guardian is present. The scene construction of this verse unfolds through the repetition of the verb "*obey,*" which creates a rhythmic and commanding tone that resonates throughout every dimension of a believer's life. The verse constructs a scene of a divine governance in which obedience to the guardian is intertwined with obedience to God and His Messenger, rendering this scene both continuous and enduring.

Although the imagery of the Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55) conveys a general meaning, reports concerning its occasion of revelation associate it with 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib in the Prophet's Mosque (Masjid al-Nabī) while he was in the state of bowing (*rukū*). The scene is remarkable for its simultaneous portrayal of worship and charity: while fully immersed in prayer, 'Alī responds to the need of a beggar without interrupting his devotion. This convergence of spiritual concentration and compassionate action creates a vivid and memorable image in which ritual worship and social responsibility are inseparably united. The mosque itself functions not merely as the physical backdrop of the event but as a sacred communal space where divine authority is manifested through an act of selfless generosity. The scene thus transforms an ordinary moment of congregational prayer into a powerful visual expression of *wilāyah*, presenting leadership as an extension of devotion to God and service to the community.

The Verse of *al-Ṣādiqīn* (Q.9:119) likewise presents a universal and perpetual scene encompassing all dimensions of the social, political, and personal lives of believers. The scene construction begins with the imperative "*be,*" forming a dynamic and transformative scene in which believers are actively choosing their path. The scene presents two distinct trajectories: separation from the truthful or companionship with them. Ultimately, the verse emphasizes the necessity of choosing the latter and remaining close to the exemplars of truth.

The Verse of *Ilm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43) depicts a scene of debate and

theological confrontation between the Prophet and the disbelievers, a space filled with denial and doubt on one side and rationality and evidence on the other. In its scene construction, God expands the setting from a mundane debate to a celestial testimony. With the introduction of "*the one who possesses knowledge of the Book*," it is as if a veil is lifted and a witness from the metaphysical realm enters the scene. This carefully crafted scene sets forth a decisive and transcendent proof against the baseless claims of the disbelievers, guiding the audience toward an understanding of the depth of knowledge and the exalted rank of the Bearers of the Book.

In the scene constructions related to the Qur'anic verses denoting the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the Qur'an employs various dramatic techniques, including contrast, suspense, and the creation of expansive and enduring scenes. These constructed scenes are not merely narratives of historical events; rather, they serve a higher purpose: to inscribe the truth of *Wilāyah* and *Imāmah* within the sensory experience of the audience, embedding an unforgettable image in both mind and heart.

4.2. *The Relationship between the Text and Its Agents*

At Fairclough's interpretive level, the focus is on analysing the process of text production and the relationship between the text and its agents. At this stage, the verses under study are examined within a specific socio-historical context that reflects the discursive struggle between the monotheistic discourse and the polytheistic and hypocritical discourses opposing it.

4.2.1. *Intertextual Relations*

Texts are continually produced in interaction and dialogue with preceding or contemporaneous texts; indeed, no text is created in a vacuum (al-Ghadhami 1985). The verses of the Qur'an likewise emerged within a specific context and in engagement with the discourses prevalent at the time of revelation. By examining the semantic network of the verses related to the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, their intertextual relations become evident.

The Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67), with its emphasis on the gravity of conveying the divine message, enters into a meaningful intertextual relationship with the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59). The latter indicates divine authority and the necessity of obeying the guardian appointed by God (Tabataba'i 1996, 6: 55). Together, they form a coherent discursive system centred on the leadership of the Islamic community after the Prophet. Since, according to both Shia and Sunni sources, the primary referent of both verses is 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:190; al-Juwaynī 1978,

1: 31ḥ; al-Amīnī 1995, 1: 214–224;), a logical connection exists between the Verse of *Tablīgh* and the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* regarding the necessity of obeying God's appointed guardian. This correlation demonstrates that proclamation is the prelude to obedience. In addition, the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59) and the Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67) share an inseparable intertextual link with the Verse of *al-Ṣādiqīn* (Q.9:119) and the Verse of *ʿIlm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43). Collectively, these verses emphasize the necessity of aligning with the divinely truthful figures after the Prophet.

Furthermore, obedience to the *Ulū al-Amr* requires distinguishing the true bearers of *Imāmah* from those who falsely claim it. The Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55), in portraying the self-sacrifice of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, is closely connected to the Verse of the Truthful, which “emphasizes truthfulness and sincerity as the foundation of self-sacrifice.” The Verse of the Truthful is also linked to the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr*, as it underscores the necessity of accompanying the truthful ones, who are themselves the *Ulū al-Amr*. Moreover, this is closely related to the Verse of the Knowledge of the Book, as both highlight knowledge and divine insight as the basis of the truthfulness of the ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. The Verse of the Knowledge of the Book is also connected to the Verse of the Truthful because divinely bestowed knowledge is the greatest support for truthfulness.

The analysis of these intertextual relations shows that this set of verses forms a coherent semantic network grounded in key concepts such as *Wilāyah*, self-sacrifice, divinely endowed knowledge, and truthfulness. Through their internal dialogue, these foundational concepts construct the Qur'anic discourse of *Imāmah* and *Wilāyah*, with ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib at its centre. This framework clarifies the link between textual features at the level of description and ideological foundations at the level of explanation (Yarmohammadi 2004).

4.2.2. Situational Context

From the situational context of the Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67), the Prophet's concern regarding the consequences of delivering the divine command is evident, and God Almighty grants His Messenger complete reassurance. This inner concern arose from the power and influence of the anti-*Wilāyah* faction within the nascent Islamic community. This indicates that the discourse of *Imāmah* faced serious resistance and challenges from its inception. Thus, divine support in the Verse of *Tablīgh* signifies that the Prophet required supernatural backing to establish the principle of *Imāmah* and to break the hegemony of the dominant tribal discourse.

The situational context of the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59) shows that

the society of Medina was transitioning from a tribal system to a unified community with an organized legal structure. Since traditional sources of authority (tribal chiefs) no longer possessed legitimacy or effectiveness in such a context, the question naturally arose: to whom should one refer in times of disagreement? In response, the verse provides a universal and permanent directive for the social order of Islam. Within that specific context, the verse nullifies the legitimacy of all traditional sources of authority and assigns it exclusively to the *Ulū al-Amr* appointed by God. Thus, the context of the verse establishes the foundation of the divine governance in opposition to the aristocratic tribal system.

According to the situational context of the Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55), the emerging Islamic community faced poverty and social disparity, while pre-Islamic values such as pride in wealth and reluctance to assist the needy still persisted among some members of society. Reports concerning the occasion of revelation portray an act of charity performed during prayer, thereby situating the verse within a context in which sincere faith was expected to manifest itself through both devotion to God and responsibility toward others. Against this background, the verse redefines the criteria of religious authority by associating it not with tribal status, wealth, or social influence, but with piety, selflessness, and obedience to God. The situational context thus presents *wilāyah* as an ethical and spiritual model of leadership that emerges from the integration of worship and social commitment, challenging the hierarchical values inherited from the pre-Islamic order.

From the context of the Verse of the Truthful (Q.9:119), it is inferred that after the conquest of Mecca and the expansion of Islamic territory, many individuals with diverse motives, ranging from material to political, joined Islam. This increased the risk of hypocrisy and duplicity infiltrating the Muslim community. In such an atmosphere, permeated by ambiguity and pretense, the command to “*be with the truthful*” functions as a guiding directive. It instructed believers on how to distinguish the “*axis of truth*” from falsehood amid widespread hypocritical claims. Therefore, by introducing the Imam as the paramount exemplar of the truthful, God provides a concrete criterion for discerning sincerity from hypocrisy in that increasingly complex society.

Based on the context of the Verse of *‘Ilm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43), the Prophet, continually faced doubts and denials from polytheists and the People of the Book. At times, their sophistry caused some new Muslims to experience uncertainty. In the face of the arrogant denials of opponents, God commands His Messenger to substantiate his arguments by appealing to the one who possesses the Knowledge of the Book. In doing so, the level of debate is elevated from mundane discussion to a form of supernatural proof. The

revelation of this verse within such a challenging situational context demonstrates that Islam, in proving its truth, relies on witnesses endowed with divine knowledge, not merely conventional reasoning.

The examination of the situational contexts reveals that the discourse of *Imāmah* constituted a dynamic, intelligent, and strategic response to the needs and crises of the era of revelation. Each verse forms a piece of a larger puzzle within the divine project to establish a civilization grounded in *Wilāyah*. This discourse, in fact, emerged through a dynamic interaction with social realities to offer a lasting and effective model for all ages.

4.2.3. Temporal Element

In interpreting Qur'anic verses, time functions as an active component in advancing profound doctrinal concepts. In the verses concerning the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, time becomes the arena in which truthfulness, self-sacrifice, and *Wilāyah* are manifested; at times, it transcends the limits of a historical moment and transforms into an eternal and perpetual dimension.

The timing of the revelation of the Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67) corresponds to the Day of Ghadīr Khumm during the Prophet's return from the Farewell Pilgrimage (Wāhidī 1991, 194; al-Tha'labī 2002, 4:92; al-Hākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:249; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 3:344; al-Shawkānī 1993, 2:69; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 2:298) and is interpreted from the perspective of the Prophet's inner anxiety at the moment of announcing his successor. This passage represents a "moment of revelation" that descends prior to the public declaration of succession. The moment in which the Prophet is commanded to deliver the most difficult and perilous part of his mission is filled with tension and apprehension. This temporal moment is critical and decisive, for its fulfilment or neglect directly affects the very purpose of the Prophet's mission.

The timing of the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59) does not refer to a specific historical event but rather denotes a perpetual, instructive temporality. The expansive scope of the imperative verb "obey" (*aṭī'ū*) addresses its audience across all generations, from the moment of revelation until the Day of Resurrection. The temporal framework of this verse embodies the continuity of divine governance and demonstrates that obedience to the *Ulū al-Amr* is not limited to the Prophet's lifetime but constitutes a permanent and ongoing command for all ages.

The Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55) signifies a general and comprehensive temporality. Reports concerning its occasion of revelation associate the

verse with an act of charity performed by 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib while he was in the state of bowing (*rukū'*) (al-Ṭabarī 2000, 6:186; al-Zamakhsharī 1987, 1:649; al-Ṭabrisī 1999, 3:325; al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī 1990, 1:209; al-Suyūṭī 1983, 2:293). Within this temporal setting, a brief moment in the course of ritual prayer becomes the occasion for revealing a lasting model of *wilāyah*. The ordinary flow of time is interrupted by an extraordinary act in which worship and charity are performed simultaneously, transforming a passing instant into a decisive moment of divine recognition. Consequently, the temporal significance of the verse is not confined to the historical occurrence itself; rather, that moment serves as the enduring point of reference through which 'Alī's spiritual authority is presented and remembered. The verse thus preserves a single historical event as a perpetual testimony to the inseparable relationship between devotion to God, selfless generosity, and divinely sanctioned leadership.

The temporal dimension of the Verse of the Truthful (Q.9:119), much like the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr*, is continuous and perennial. The imperative verb "be" (*kūnū*) represents an ongoing call to accompany the truthful throughout all eras. The temporality of this verse is not merely segmented or historical; rather, it obligates believers at every moment to situate themselves within the "time of truth" and in the proximity of the "people of truth." This perpetual temporality emphasizes the necessity of steadfastness and unwavering persistence on the path of truth.

The Verse of *ʿIlm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43) operates across two distinct temporal layers: first, the historical present, in which disbelievers during the Prophet's era denied his mission; second, a pre-temporal and trans-historical dimension related to "*the one who possesses the Knowledge of the Book*." This latter temporality refers to the realm of divine, preexistent knowledge, prior to creation and beyond the boundaries of material time. According to this verse, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib possesses knowledge rooted in God's eternal, primordial knowledge. The verse thereby underscores the trans-temporal and sacred dimension of *Imāmah*.

Time in this set of verses assumes multiple dimensions: at times it is continuous and perpetual, such as the obligation to obey the *Ulū al-Amr* and to accompany the truthful, reflecting the eternal nature of divine commandments. At other times, it is trans-historical, such as the divine, preexistent knowledge that signifies the sacred and divine origin of *Imāmah*. Thus, the temporal element demonstrates that the *Wilāyah* and *Imāmah* of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib are not merely historical events, but enduring truths that manifest within time while simultaneously transcending it, maintaining an everlasting relationship with human history.

4.2.4. Emotion Element

Across the verses examined in this study, emotion is not merely an affective reaction but functions as a discursive force that transposes the depth of faith, self-sacrifice, and *Wilāyah* into the heart of the audience. Profound and contrasting emotions appear in these verses, ranging from humility, sincerity, and truthfulness to concern, tranquility, and assurance, all serving to illuminate various dimensions of the exalted personality of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

The dominant emotion in the Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67) is characterized by anxiety, pressure, and concern. The Prophet is confronted with a formidable command and apprehends its consequences. The phrase “*and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message*” conveys to the audience the magnitude of the duty and the gravity associated with its potential neglect. Subsequently, with the statement “*and Allah will protect you from the people,*” a sense of divine calm and assurance supplants the previous anxiety. This rapid affective shift underscores the critical importance and sensitivity of *Wilāyah*.

The emotion embedded in the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59) is one of ontological security, order, and tranquility. It signals to believers that through obeying the divinely appointed authority, they are extricated from confusion and perplexity, leading to the emergence of an orderly, God-oriented society. This verse instills in believers a sense of trust and confidence in divinely designated leaders and strengthens their identification with a sacred system of governance.

The Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55) conveys an atmosphere of humility, compassion, and spiritual admiration. Reports concerning its occasion of revelation associate the verse with an act of charity performed by ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib while he remained absorbed in prayer. The emotional force of the scene arises from the harmonious union of complete devotion to God and spontaneous concern for a person in need. Rather than portraying authority through power or dominance, the verse evokes reverence by presenting leadership as an expression of selflessness and compassion. The simultaneous performance of worship and charity creates a profound emotional resonance, inviting believers to admire a form of spiritual excellence in which devotion to God is inseparable from service to humanity. Through this affective portrayal, the verse strengthens the emotional bond between the audience and the Qur’anic ideal of *wilāyah*, presenting ‘Alī as an exemplary embodiment of humility, generosity, and divinely guided leadership.

Emotion in the Verse of the Truthful (Q.9:119) centers on moral security, integrity, and trust. Being in the company of the truthful emancipates the individual from loneliness, deception, and duplicity, granting him tranquility and assurance. The verse effectively guides the believer from the valley of doubt toward the steadfast shore of certainty. The emotional force of the verse thus serves as an invitation into a realm of absolute purity and integrity.

The Verse of *ʿIlm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43) contains dual emotional currents: on the one hand, the arrogance and denial of the disbelievers; on the other, the Prophet's unwavering confidence and inner assurance. By invoking "*the one who possesses the Knowledge of the Book*" as a divine witness, God instills in the Prophet and the believers a sense of transcendent dignity and reliance on a higher power. This verse demonstrates that in the face of ideological hostility, one must depend on the stabilizing, truth-bearing proofs provided by the Divine.

The emotions employed in these verses form an interwoven fabric connecting profound theological concepts to the collective conscience of the audience. This affective spectrum can be categorized into several groups: first, the emotions of tranquility and ontological reassurance found in the verses of *Ulū al-Amr* and *ʿIlm al-kitāb*; and second, the emotions of existential anxiety and sensitivity seen in the Verse of *Tablīgh*, reflecting the unprecedented magnitude of the mandate of *Wilāyah*. This range of emotions reveals that the narrative of *Imāmah* is not merely a dry theological construct; rather, it is imbued with human and divine sentiments that render it compelling and influential. Consequently, it portrays the discourse of *Imāmah* as a living, dynamic, and responsive reality designed to guide humanity across all ages.

4.3. *Explanation: Struggle and Ideology within Macro-Social Structures*

The level of explanation constitutes the highest and most complex layer of discourse analysis. Transcending textual description and situational interpretation, this level examines the dialectical relationship between discourse and broader social, cultural, political, and historical fluctuations. At this stage, discourse is understood not as an abstract phenomenon, but as a reflection of deep ideological struggles and, simultaneously, as a powerful instrument for stabilizing, resisting, or transforming dominant power structures (Fairclough 1992). This analysis focuses on the catalysts and motivations that shape major social actions. The social relations prevailing at the time of revelation, as well as the projected developments of the Islamic

community, play a decisive role in shaping subsequent discourses. Within this framework, institutionalized social structures and power relations provide the foundational bases for the formation of disruptive and transformative discourses (Aghagolzadeh 2013). The two principal and interconnected components at the explanatory level are Struggle and Ideology, which will be analyzed hereafter.

4.3.1. Struggle

According to several theorists, ideological struggle is the confrontation between discourses in their attempt to attain hegemony, legitimacy, and the power to define social reality in a way that advances the interests of a particular group (van Dijk 2003). From Fairclough's perspective (1992), discursive struggle is a process in which discourses compete in order to become hegemonic. Thus, struggle in Qur'anic discourse is not a superficial or merely physical confrontation; rather, it is a profound ontological contestation between competing systems of thought, values, and worldviews. The struggle within the discourse of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib manifests on several interconnected yet distinct levels, each of which can be traced in the selected verses and is presented in the table 3.

Table 3. Arenas of Discursive Struggle in the Verses

Verse	Domain of Struggle	Competing Discourse	Strategy of the Imamate Discourse	Historical Evidence
<i>Tabligh</i> Q. 5:67	Political–Security	Tribalism, hypocrisy	Transcendental support & formal proclamation of wilāyah	The Prophet's concern over opposition from hypocrites and hostile groups during the proclamation at Ghadīr Khumm
<i>Ulū al-Amr</i> Q. 4:59	Legitimacy of governance	Consultation, tribal aristocracy	Establishing Divine-Political Obedience	Exegetical reports identifying 'Alī as a principal referent of Ulū al-Amr
<i>Wilāyah</i> (Q. 5:55)	Religious authority and social values	Tribal elitism and material superiority	Grounding leadership in divinely recognized piety, self-sacrifice, and charity	The report of 'Alī's charitable act while in rukū' in the Prophet's Mosque
<i>Al-Ṣādiqīn</i> Q. 9:119	Epistemological	Falsehood, hypocrisy, ostentation	Designating a concrete exemplar of truthfulness (the Imam)	Hypocritical movements on the eve of the Battle of Tabūk
<i>Ilm al-kitāb</i> Q. 13:43	Epistemological	Denial of Prophethood, Conventional rationalism	Appealing to divinely bestowed knowledge	Polytheists' denial & their demand for miraculous proof

The Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67) vividly foregrounds the intense struggle and profound psychological pressure placed upon the principal agent, the Prophet. The Prophet's concern regarding the social, political, and security-related consequences of proclaiming *Wilāyah* demonstrates that the discourse of *Imāmah*, at its very inception, confronted a powerful and expansive counter-discursive front operating within a climate of pervasive apprehension. According to this verse, the tribalistic ethos remains an ever-active and persistent force within society. The Verse of Proclamation clearly indicates that the production, dissemination, and consolidation of a revolutionary discourse are invariably accompanied by substantial costs and serious dangers, requiring transcendent support and a divine guarantee to rupture the siege imposed by the dominant reactionary discourse.

The Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59) refers to a structural, perpetual, and fundamental struggle over the locus of authority, the basis of obedience, and the legitimacy of governance in the Islamic community. This divine command stands in diametrical opposition to traditional discourses of leadership, including the authority of tribal chiefs, Qurayshite aristocrats, and clan elders, as well as incipient discourses based on consultation, election, or elite consensus. By establishing the concept of divinely sanctioned political obedience as a religious obligation, the verse seeks to supersede the fragmented and volatile power dynamics and to define a unified, stable, and inviolable normative order.

The struggle depicted in the Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55) unfolds primarily within the sphere of religious authority and social values. Rather than confronting political authority directly, the verse challenges the prevailing criteria by which leadership and social distinction were recognized in pre-Islamic and early Islamic society. Tribal lineage, material wealth, and social prestige constituted the dominant standards of legitimacy, whereas the Qur'anic discourse redefines authority by grounding it in piety, self-sacrifice, and unwavering devotion to God. Reports concerning the occasion of revelation associate this transformation with 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, whose charitable act while remaining in the state of *rukū'* presents a model of leadership founded upon spiritual excellence rather than worldly privilege. Through this discursive strategy, the verse contests the hegemonic values of tribal elitism and replaces them with a divinely sanctioned conception of *wilāyah*, in which moral and spiritual merit constitute the basis of legitimate authority.

The Verse of *al-Ṣādiqīn* (Q.9:119) addresses a struggle over the conceptualization of truth and the validation of discourses within the ambiguous, hypocrisy-ridden social environment of post-conquest Medina. With the quantitative expansion of Islam and the entry of individuals and

groups with diverse, and at times conflicting, motivations, backgrounds, and intentions, the boundary between truth and falsehood, honesty and deception, and sincerity and ostentation had become deeply blurred and uncertain. By explicitly commanding alignment with the truthful, this verse launches a comprehensive discursive struggle to reclaim the meaning of integrity, establishing the discourse of *Imāmah* as the sole embodiment of authentic “truthfulness.”

The Verse of *‘Ilm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43) portrays an epistemological and evidentiary struggle within the realm of interfaith debate. When conventional and rational arguments fail in the face of obstinate denial, the monotheistic discourse reveals its decisive weapon: the testimony of one endowed with divinely bestowed knowledge. This elevates the struggle from terrestrial debates to a transcendent mode of proof, demonstrating that the discourse of *Imāmah* claims access to epistemic sources that lie beyond the reach of its rivals.

The comprehensive analysis of the element of struggle in these verses demonstrates that the discourse of *Imāmah* emerged within a multifaceted and full-scale battlefield. At times, as in the Verse of *Wilāyah*, this struggle is within the domain of religious authority and social values; at others, as in the verses of *Ulū al-Amr* and *Tablīgh*, it is structural, political and institutional; and in the verses of *‘Ilm al-kitāb* and the *al-Ṣādiqīn*, it is epistemological and discursive. The common denominator is the confrontation of the *Imāmah* discourse, as a hegemonic and transformative alternative, with deeply rooted dominant discourses such as tribalism, hypocrisy, and secular rationalism (Ta'ebi Esfehani 2022). In these intense confrontations, the discourse of *Imāmah*, by leveraging its rich symbolic capital, such as infallibility and divine knowledge, engages in a radical delegitimization of rival discourses while affirming its own inherent superiority.

4.3.2. Ideology

In critical discourse analysis, ideology is understood as a symbolic and interpretive system that provides individuals and groups with meaning, direction, and coherence in their social actions. It is employed to legitimize political power, justify the existing order, or conversely critique and negate it (Fairclough 1995, 18). The ideology governing the discourse of *Imāmah* is an integrated, hierarchical, and profoundly divine intellectual system. Its foundational principles are purposefully manifested in the verses under study.

The ideology expressed in the Verse of *Tablīgh* (Q.5:67) asserts the

centrality, sanctity, and strategic magnitude of *Wilāyah* within the comprehensive project of Prophethood. In this verse, the proclamation of *Wilāyah* is regarded as coextensive with the prophetic mission itself. The verse demonstrates that the issue of leadership is neither marginal nor peripheral; rather, it possesses such foundational significance that tribal loyalties and the pragmatic conservatism of power-seekers are framed as major obstacles to its realization. This ideology prioritizes Divine Mandate over political expediency.

The ideological core of the Verse of *Ulū al-Amr* (Q.4:59) is the establishment of a Theocratic Political Order (the governance of God) and the obligation of absolute, unconditional obedience to divinely appointed authority. This verse commands obedience to *Ulū al-Amr* without qualification, placing it in ontological alignment with obedience to God and His Messenger. Consequently, perspectives that condition obedience on individual interest or popular will find no place within this framework. This principle stands in diametrical opposition to political systems based on secular social contract theory, aristocratic rule, or individual despotism.

The ideology of the Verse of *Wilāyah* (Q. 5:55) promotes a “Self-Sacrificial Economy” and a “Just Distribution of Wealth” as integral components of the ideal leader and society. This verse demonstrates that the leader within the discourse of *Imāmah* is neither a hoarder of wealth nor a consumer of luxuries; rather, he is a distributor and a pioneer in altruism. This principle stands in complete contrast to the ideologies of extreme capitalism and the wealth-centrism prevalent in class-based societies. The discourse of *Imāmah* thus redefines wealth not as a tool for domination, but as a medium for spiritual proximity and social justice.

The ideology of the Verse of the Truthful Ones (Q.9:119) is grounded in the necessity of forming a “community centered on integrity” and adhering to an objective, trans-individual moral authority. This verse mandates that collective salvation, social cohesion, and spiritual prosperity depend on an existential and practical bond with the “truthful ones.” This principle transforms the Islamic community from a fragmented collection of individuals into a unified, purpose-driven *Ummah* organized around the Imam, thereby highlighting the Imam’s central, unifying role within the social fabric.

The epistemic orientation of the Verse of *‘Ilm al-kitāb* (Q.13:43) rests on grounding leadership legitimacy in “divinely bestowed, metaphysical knowledge.” This verse indicates that the Imam is the inheritor of prophetic wisdom, possessing a form of knowledge rooted in God’s eternal, pre-existent reality. This principle stands in resolute opposition to purely

secular, administrative, or charismatic conceptions of leadership, asserting instead that divine leadership is founded upon “Gnosis” and a supernatural insight into both the ontological and the scriptural realms.

Fairclough (1995, 71–72) defines ideology as a system of meaning that either reproduces or challenges relations of domination. Accordingly, the ideology governing the discourse of *Imāmah* is an integrated, hierarchical, and comprehensive system grounded in six interdependent pillars:

1. Divine and Appointment-based Legitimacy: Designation by God, as opposed to human election;
2. Intrinsic and Acquired Infallibility: Immunity from error and sin through divine protection;
3. The Foundational Necessity of *Imāmah*: The belief that *Imāmah* is essential for the perfection of religion and the completion of divine favor;
4. The Obligation of Absolute Political Obedience: A theocratic and *Wilāyah*-based system of governance;
5. Moral, Altruistic, and Ascetic Superiority: A concrete model of justice, self-sacrifice, and pious simplicity;
6. Reliance on Metaphysical Knowledge: A supra-human and esoteric epistemic source.

This comprehensive and profound ideological system stands in complete and multidimensional contrast to rival ideologies such as tribalism, elitism, secular democracy, materialism, technocratic essentialism, and secular rationalism, presenting itself as the only legitimate, divine, and effective alternative for guiding the individual and organizing the Islamic society.

5. Conclusion

This study, which sought to examine the discourse of *Imāmah* in the Qur'anic verses concerning the virtues of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib by applying Fairclough's three-level model, has reached the following conclusions:

- Description Level: The analysis of linguistic and rhetorical elements demonstrates that the Qur'an, through employing devices such as antithesis, parallelism, contrast, and metaphorical allusion, renders the virtues of the Imam tangible. By situating these virtues within symbolic chronotopes, such as Ghadīr and the Mosque, and constructing dramatic scenes, such as almsgiving during *rukū'*, the text transforms abstract theological concepts into perceivable social realities.
- Interpretation Level: By analyzing the situational context and examining elements of intertextuality, temporality, and emotion, it

becomes evident that the discourse of *Imāmah* constitutes a strategic response to the existential challenges of the formative era of Islam. Within an intertextual network, it forms a coherent discourse of proclamation (Q.5:67), obedience (Q.4:59), self-sacrifice (Q.5:55), truthfulness (Q.9:119), and divine gnosis (Q.13:43).

- Explanation Level: The discourse of *Imāmah*, across political, governmental, economic, and epistemological arenas of struggle, seeks to establish a new discursive order. Relying on its six ideological pillars, divine legitimacy, infallibility, the perfection of religion, absolute obedience, moral superiority, and metaphysical knowledge, it attains discursive hegemony. It presents itself as the sole divine and effective model for governing both the individual and the *Ummah*.

Overall, the discourse of *Imāmah* in the Qur'an is a divine, integrated, and transformative system that emerges in structural opposition to reactionary discourses. Supported by a comprehensive ideology, this discourse does not merely interpret the world but seeks to reconstruct it toward the realization of monotheistic ideals and a just, pious society. Thus, the ideology governing this discourse rests upon six interdependent pillars: Divine, appointment-based legitimacy; The requirement of intrinsic infallibility; The essential, completion-oriented nature of *Imāmah* for the faith; The obligation of absolute political obedience; Moral superiority and the embodiment of justice and ascetic simplicity; Reliance on divinely bestowed, metaphysical knowledge.

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From Interpretation to Theory Construction: A Hermeneutical Shākilah-Oriented Explanatory Model in Qur'an-Based Psychology

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ABSTRACT:

Original Paper

The present study aims to design an appropriate methodological framework for research in Qur'an-based psychology. Its central problem is the absence of a coherent and operational model for extracting psychological propositions from the text of revelation. Most existing studies have either attempted to align Western psychological concepts with Qur'anic verses or lacked an internal logic for textual understanding. To address this challenge, the research is organized around hermeneutical analysis and a text-centered approach. It begins with a critical examination of two prevalent methods, namely, the comparative approach and structural semantic analysis. Subsequently, by integrating the logic of revelation with the principles of Islamic jurisprudential reasoning, the study formulates the principles and stages of a new methodological framework called the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, which is developed through theoretical analysis and analytical comparison. The findings indicate that the *Shākilah*-oriented model has the capacity to elevate Qur'anic understanding from the level of interpretation to the level of scientific theory construction. The method is grounded in the analysis of the triadic structure of the speaker, text, and interpreter, and consists of four stages: problem identification, causal analysis, solution analysis, and *shākilah* structuring. Within this framework, meaning is determined by divine intent and the internal context of the text rather than by external scientific presuppositions. As a result, the psychological propositions of the Qur'an are reconstructed in the form of guidance-oriented laws and the inner structures of the human self, enabling their transformation into scientific models of human behavior and psychological development. Accordingly, this study provides a foundational

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basis for the production of religious knowledge in psychology and paves the way for future empirical studies grounded in the Qur'an.

KEYWORDS: Qur'an and Psychology, Hermeneutics, Psychological Interpretation, Qur'anic Psychology, *Shākilah*-oriented Model, Interpretive Methodology.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the methodology of religious studies, particularly Qur'an-based psychological studies, has emerged as one of the foundational challenges in the field of Islamic humanities. The necessity of such studies stems from the fact that the Holy Qur'an constitutes the central source for understanding the human being within the Islamic epistemological framework and provides the capacity to reconstruct psychological concepts on the basis of divine will and teleology. Without a systematic framework for extracting psychological propositions from the revealed text, neither the production of religious knowledge nor the development of a coherent theological psychology can be realized. To date, most existing studies have either focused on correlating modern psychological concepts with Qur'anic verses or have remained at the level of general theoretical discussions, lacking an operational and structured pathway for understanding the text. This inconsistency and fragmentation highlight the need for a coherent model grounded in hermeneutics, one capable of demonstrating the interaction between reason and revelation within a systematic inferential process.

The central challenge in current Qur'an-based psychological studies is the absence of a coherent methodological framework. Comparative approaches, which seek to align empirical psychological theories with Qur'anic verses, have largely become trapped within the presuppositions of Western scientific paradigms and, consequently, have distanced themselves from interpreting the text according to the internal logic of revelation. Conversely, purely *ijtihād*-oriented studies have often remained confined to abstract theoretical generalities without clarifying the practical stages involved in extracting psychological laws from the text. In response to these challenges, the present article proposes a *Shākilah*-oriented model grounded in a hermeneutical analysis of revelation and emphasizing the threefold relationship between the Author, the Text, and the Interpreter. This model organizes psychological understanding through a progression from the identification of the problem to the discovery of psychological law, and from law to a guidance-oriented behavioral system.

The present study addresses the methodological vacuum in Qur'an-based psychological research. Despite the expansion of interdisciplinary studies over the past two decades, no systematic, step-by-step scientific process has yet been presented that can derive behavioral propositions and laws from the revealed text systematically and inferentially through an intratextual approach. Most existing efforts either attempt to adapt modern psychological concepts to Qur'anic verses or remain limited to broad theoretical discussions concerning religious science, without specifying the operational stages of textual understanding. Therefore, there is a pressing need to formulate an independent model grounded in the Qur'anic hermeneutics and the logic of *ijtihād* for understanding human psychology through the Qur'anic text.

2. Literature Review

In reviewing the scholarly background of this field, some major works can be identified. Rezaei Isfahani (2009) presents the first structured attempt to establish a connection between the logic of *ijtihād* and scientific methodologies, introducing the Qur'an as a direct source for the production of knowledge in the human sciences. Despite its theoretical comprehensiveness, however, it does not clarify the operational structure for inferring psychological propositions and remains limited to broad interdisciplinary foundations. Golshani (2003) analyzes the philosophical possibility of religious science based on Qur'anic foundations and examines the interaction between empirical reason and revealed reason. Nevertheless, the work lacks a systematic method for extracting psychological knowledge from the text, as it remains at the epistemological level. Bagheri (2010) emphasizes the necessity of reconstructing scientific methodology on the basis of the logic of revelation. Although Bagheri formulates the inferential process of scientific knowledge at a principled level, his treatment of Qur'an-based psychology has not advanced beyond conceptual description to actual inferential derivation.

Pasandideh (2018) represents one of the earliest attempts to design practical stages for the psychological interpretation of Qur'anic verses and narrations. Pasandideh outlines three principal steps, identifying the problem, uncovering the causal structure, and extracting psychological solutions. However, the final process of behavioral modeling from the revealed text remains incomplete and does not develop into comprehensive behavioral theories. Arafī (2000) introduces two approaches to understanding religious texts, intratextual and extratextual, and outlined the *ijtihād*-based foundations for interpreting the human sciences through the

Qur'an. The present article extends these foundations by moving them toward practical application in Qur'an-based psychology.

The novelty of the present article may be explained at two levels: the foundational and the operational. At the foundational level, the article establishes a new theoretical basis for the psychological understanding of the Qur'an by integrating the principles of the Qur'anic hermeneutics with the logic of *ijtihad*. Unlike comparative methods and previous conceptual analyses, this model shifts the axis of meaning from the expectations of the interpreter to the divine will. In other words, the psychological meaning of Qur'anic verses is derived from the internal logic governing the revelation of the propositions rather than from external psychological concepts. The triadic relationship among the Author, the Text, and the Interpreter constructs a novel hermeneutical structure in which human reason becomes active within the text under the guidance of revelation, and the role of the interpreter shifts from that of a passive recipient of meaning to that of a discoverer of psychological laws.

At the operational level, this article presents, the inferential process of Qur'an-based psychology in the form of four explicit stages:

1. Problem Identification: discovering the psychological challenge embedded in the text.
2. Causal Analysis: analyzing the causes and psychological laws underlying that challenge.
3. Solution Identification: extracting strategies for reforming the *shākilah* through the structure of prescriptive propositions.
4. Final *shākilah* Formation: reconstructing the internal system of human belief, motivation, and behavior within the framework of a revelation-based scientific model.

Accordingly, the article establishes a bridge between interpretive understanding and the production of knowledge and may be regarded as the first structured attempt to transform Qur'anic knowledge into psychological theory. While preserving the authority of the sacred text, this model also creates opportunities for empirical testing and further development within the field of religious psychology.

3. Theoretical Framework

From an epistemological perspective, a Qur'an-based methodology is a composite and multidimensional concept in which the two fundamental dimensions of scientific knowledge and method are integrated with the

revelational and hermeneutical foundations of the sacred text. At its core, the term methodology refers to the knowledge of the path and procedure that a researcher adopts to attain a particular epistemic objective (Rezaei Adriani 2024). Methodology is not merely a set of technical rules; rather, it constitutes a system in which the path of knowledge and the logic governing the movement of thought, from question to discovery, are examined and evaluated (Aarabi & Boudlaie 2011). Accordingly, the methodology of any discipline reflects its philosophical foundations, and without a coherent method, no body of knowledge can attain stability and rigor (Jamshidi 2009, 311). From the perspective of the philosophy of science, the investigation of research methods and the critique of their logical structures fall within the domain of philosophy and logic (Fathollahi 2009, 250). Therefore, analyzing a Qur'an-based methodology is, in essence, a philosophical reflection on the epistemic foundations of the Qur'anic revelational system.

The Qur'an, as the most complete source of revelation and the one that provides "a clarification of all things" (Q. 16:89), is not only a source of knowledge but also a guide to methodology itself. One of the distinctive characteristics of the Qur'an is that, alongside its epistemic richness, it possesses an internal coherence and semantic structure that make possible the formulation of a distinct scientific method. For this reason, a Qur'an-based approach to methodology signifies the identification and explanation of valid pathways for understanding in light of revelational criteria, a path that leads from Qur'anic propositions to the discovery of psychological and cognitive principles governing human beings.

Being Qur'an-based in psychology, as Pasandideh (2016) explains, means that all elements of research are grounded in Qur'anic teachings rather than merely supported by occasional references to verses or narrations. The Qur'an itself possesses the analytical capacity to illuminate human behavior, emotion, will, and the transformation of personality. Consequently, a Qur'an-based methodology is not only grounded in a worldview-oriented perspective but is also oriented toward a Qur'anic anthropology and ontology, in which the reality of the human being, conceived as a multilayered being endowed with a divine nature (*fiṭrah*), constitutes the central axis of both the theory and the methodology of knowledge (Kavyani 2020, 38).

Within the theoretical framework of this approach, two central principles can be identified. The first is the principle of revelation-centered knowledge production, and the second is the principle of Qur'anic hermeneutics as the basis of the interpretive process. The principle of revelation-centered knowledge production signifies that the primary epistemic source for

explaining human psychology is divine revelation and Qur'anic discourse. According to this principle, the Qur'an is regarded not merely as a source of data but as the foundational basis for both the research perspective and the methodology employed. Accordingly, the researcher transfers the pathway of understanding from autonomous human reason to reason guided by revelation. In other words, the research method is grounded in the logic of understanding revelation rather than solely in sensory experience detached from it. Within this conception, the Qur'an becomes a primary source for understanding the human psyche alongside reason and experience, and their integration gives rise to what may be termed a Qur'an-based integrated epistemological model.

The second principle, Qur'anic hermeneutics, refers to the necessity of understanding the sacred text in accordance with its own internal semantic rules. In other words, the psychological interpretation of Qur'anic verses must follow the semantic order, contextual relationships, and linguistic mechanisms inherent in Qur'anic discourse. Drawing upon the method of *tadabbur* (reflective contemplation) (Naqipourfar 2002, 183), this approach goes beyond descriptive exegesis and emphasizes the discovery of relationships, patterns, and psychological constructs embedded within the text.

Ultimately, the theoretical framework of a Qur'an-based methodology is grounded in the integration of the logic of revelation with the scientific process of deriving psychological principles. This framework organizes its epistemic foundations around three central axes: (1) revelation as the primary source of knowledge; (2) reason as the instrument for evaluating and analyzing propositions; and (3) human experience as the field for empirical verification and practical application. Such an approach moves beyond purely imitative or comparative methods toward what may be termed a *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, a model that reconstructs psychological structures from within the Qur'anic text and, on the basis of the Qur'an's internal logic, arrives at a systematic understanding of the human self. Consequently, a Qur'an-based methodology is not merely a research technique but a comprehensive theoretical and philosophical framework that integrates revelational foundations with the structure of modern science, thereby enabling the production of religious knowledge in the field of psychology.

4. Critical Analysis of Prevailing Methods in Qur'an-Based Psychological Studies

4.1. Correspondence-Based Equivalence

Understanding and analyzing scholarly perspectives in any field constitute a fundamental prerequisite for the intellectual development of that discipline. This is particularly significant in the contemporary era, where the proliferation of information and the diversity of theoretical approaches have led to considerable confusion regarding the direction of religious and psychological research. Islamic studies in the field of psychology therefore require a precise and systematic method that moves beyond the mere collection of textual evidence toward a deeper level of epistemic explanation. As Fadakar (2014, 7) has emphasized, many existing works on religion and psychology suffer from methodological deficiencies, and overcoming this situation requires grounding Islamic research in a coherent methodological framework. From this perspective, a fair and balanced critique of the existing methods in Qur'an-based psychology is essential, not by rejecting other viewpoints outright, but by recognizing both their strengths and their limitations, as suggested by Kalantari (2014, 34–65), who advocates a balanced critique of contemporary psychology while benefiting from its useful aspects for understanding human behavior.

Among these approaches, the Correspondence-Based Equivalence method proposed by Dr. Muhammad Uthman Najati (2001) represents one of the most well-known attempts in recent decades to derive psychological concepts from the Qur'an. Najati, a professor of psychology, sought through his works, particularly his well-known book *The Qur'an and Psychology*, to demonstrate that the Qur'an encompasses a broad range of psychological concepts, including motivation, personality, cognition, learning, and psychotherapy (Nobari 2020, 820). Drawing on a thematic method, he attempted to establish correspondences between Qur'anic terms and concepts and the terminology commonly used in contemporary psychology to demonstrate that there is a significant overlap between the findings of modern psychological science and the teachings of revelation.

The epistemological basis of this perspective rests on the assumption that has been described in the literature as the *a priori* presupposition that Islamic psychology already exists. According to this view, Islamic psychology already exists within the Qur'an, and the researcher's task is simply to identify and extract it. In other words, every scientific proposition found in modern psychology is assumed to have a counterpart in the Qur'an

(Ebrahimi Dehshiri & Salehzadeh 2016). Such a presupposition leads the researcher to read the revealed text through the lens of personal expectations and prior assumptions, interpreting its meanings according to individual interests rather than according to the aims and methodological logic of the Author of the text. A hermeneutical analysis of this situation shows that the researcher's system of interests unconsciously becomes the center of meaning, thereby diverting textual interpretation from its authentic trajectory. As Mojtabeh Shabestari (1996, 23) has observed, erroneous interpretation of a text ultimately arises from problematic prior assumptions and expectations on the part of the interpreter.

From the perspective of religious studies more broadly, Najati pays insufficient attention to the intentions of the Author of the text. Interpretation of the Qur'an is valid only when its purpose is to understand the divine message rather than to confirm scientific theories. When an interpreter approaches the Qur'an with a predetermined orientation, the outcome tends to affirm the interpreter's mental presuppositions rather than reveal the divine intent (Jazayeri 2017, 271). Consequently, in Najati's works, we observe a form of comparative interpretation in which figures such as Freud, Skinner, and other twentieth-century psychologists are treated not critically but rather as standards for understanding the Qur'an. For example, in his discussion of the concept of reaction formation, Najati cites verse Q. 63:4 as evidence for this defense mechanism and concludes that Freud's theory had already been expressed in the Qur'an fourteen centuries earlier (Ebrahimi Dehshiri & Salehzadeh 2016). From the standpoint of Qur'anic epistemology, however, this comparison is problematic, since the behavior of the hypocrites described in the Qur'an represents a conscious and deliberate action rather than an unconscious defensive mechanism arising from anxiety.

Beyond these theoretical concerns, the practical procedure employed in Najati's method also presents serious ambiguities. He outlines eight stages for theorizing in Islamic psychology, from mastery of psychological knowledge and Islamic principles to the critique of sources and the redesign of psychology within an Islamic framework, yet the manner in which inference from religious texts is carried out within these stages remains unclear (Najati 1990). Moreover, several of these stages function merely as general prerequisites for research, such as familiarity with Islamic sources, and do not directly contribute to the inferential process itself. As a result, despite its seemingly systematic structure, this approach lacks the logical coherence necessary to transform Qur'anic data into psychological propositions.

At the epistemological level, Najati's approach also exhibits several

structural weaknesses. First, it conflates psychology as a conceptual system of knowledge with psychology as a social institution. Second, it fails to clarify the ultimate purpose of the method and does not establish clear criteria for evaluating its validity. Third, it reduces the Qur'an, from a book of guidance and moral formation, to a collection of scientific evidence. In practice, this method turns Qur'anic verses into tools for validating human achievements rather than into sources of inspiration for transforming our understanding of human psychology. Consequently, the primary function of the Qur'an, guidance and moral cultivation, becomes marginalized, replaced by a process of humanizing the Qur'an in accordance with existing scientific paradigms. As Rajabi (2017, 199) has warned, any attempt to penetrate the deeper meanings of religious texts without observing the principles of rational indication and the established rules of interpretation is methodologically unsound and unreliable.

In conclusion, the Correspondence-Based Equivalence approach may be regarded as a valuable yet incomplete effort. Although it aims to demonstrate the compatibility between Qur'anic verses and psychological science, in practice it often reduces this relationship to superficial or even imposed correspondences. In the present author's view, the fundamental weaknesses of this method lie in three main issues. First, it relies on the *a priori* assumption that Islamic psychology already exists, which leads to the imposition of non-religious concepts upon the Qur'an. Second, it neglects the epistemological foundations of revelation, thereby reducing the Qur'an to a mere source of scientific data rather than recognizing it as a source of ontological and anthropological guidance. Third, it lacks reliable hermeneutical criteria for analyzing meaning. Although Najati's works played a foundational role in the early development of Islamic psychology, progress toward a more adequate model requires moving beyond this comparative stage and adopting methods that derive psychological structures from within the revealed text itself through a hermeneutically grounded and *Shākilah*-oriented logic. Only in this way can Qur'an-based psychology move beyond merely confirming existing knowledge and advance toward the production of authentically revelation-based knowledge.

4.2. Structural Semantics Approach

The Structural Semantics approach, developed by Kavyani (2019) within the field of Qur'an-based psychological studies, represents a serious effort to extract psychological concepts from the revealed text based on the internal logic of Qur'anic language and the relationships among its words and propositions. Influenced by Izutsu's semantic studies and the Qur'an-

by-Qur'an interpretive method, this approach seeks to uncover the conceptual system of Islamic psychology through the network of Qur'anic vocabulary—a network in which each term is connected to others through structural and semantic relationships, and in which meaning emerges not from isolated words but from the web of interlexical connections (Fadakar 2014, 84).

This method rests on the philosophical assumption that meaning is embedded within the structure of the text itself and must therefore be extracted from the internal linguistic system of the Qur'an. In numerous articles, Kavyani (2019, 84) has attempted, within the broader goal of establishing Islamic psychology and attaining an a priori methodological framework for the production of Islamic science, to present Qur'anic psychology as part of the epistemic architecture of Islam. In this structure, theology occupies the apex of the epistemic pyramid, while psychology is situated at lower levels. According to his view, transmitted knowledge (*naql*) possesses epistemic validity not only within the domain of revelation but also in the field of psychology. Accordingly, the Qur'an-based researcher is permitted to integrate revelational data with rational, empirical, and even intuitive methods to formulate psychological theories.

Nevertheless, a critical evaluation of this approach is necessary from several perspectives. First, within Kavyani's epistemological foundations, the priority given to the interpreter's expectations over the intention of the Author becomes apparent. As Mojtaba Shabestari (1996, 23–24) has emphasized, any valid understanding of religious texts requires that the interpreter's interests be aligned with divine purposes; otherwise, interpretation degenerates into the interpreter's own subjective reconstruction. In Kavyani's works (2014, 86), the questions posed to the text often arise from concerns rooted in modern psychology rather than from the revealed text itself. Consequently, the Qur'an risks functioning not as a guiding source but as a means of confirming the researcher's theoretical assumptions. For instance, in his discussion of motivation, Kavyani equates terms such as *ba'th*, *hājah*, and *tahrīd* with the psychological concepts of activation, need, and stimulation, respectively.

In such cases, the analytical movement proceeds not from within the Qur'anic text outward but from external psychological theories inward. The psychological concept is first defined, after which Qur'anic evidence is sought to support it. This process reflects what Najati (1990) has described as the fallacy of associative projection, a common pitfall in interdisciplinary studies whereby researchers inadvertently impose their own conceptual frameworks upon the text. At the level of methodological rules, Kavyani proposes that conflicts between psychological findings and Qur'anic

teachings be resolved through the principles of *ta'ādul* and *tarājih*, concepts derived from the jurisprudential method of Islamic legal theory. While this proposal is methodologically notable within the context of jurisprudence, its application to the psychological interpretation of the Qur'an risks transferring the inferential logic of jurisprudence to the domain of semantic analysis. Such a transfer may carry epistemological consequences, since jurisprudence concerns normative rulings (*ḥukm*), whereas semantics concerns meaning and signification (*dalālah*).

The most significant critique of Kavyani's Structural Semantics approach, however, concerns its method of inference and the sequence of its practical stages. The proposed process includes six stages, from identifying the research problem to extracting Qur'anic propositions. Although this sequence appears coherent, it contains a major gap from the standpoint of the epistemology of religious language: the absence of a clear explanation of the relationship between structural meaning and divine intentionality. In other words, the method successfully identifies conceptual meanings through patterns of lexical association and opposition, yet it neglects the teleological dimension of meaning and its relationship to divine intent, that is, the guidance-oriented purpose of Qur'anic verses. As Va'ezi (2014, 286) has argued in his theory of textual interpretation, any Qur'anic semantic analysis must simultaneously consider the interpreter's mind, the structure of the text, and its ultimate purpose to arrive at a comprehensive interpretation. At this point, Kavyani's method focuses primarily on the second level, the linguistic structure of the text.

From an ontological perspective, the Structural Semantics approach, despite its claim to holism, often results in linguistic reductionism in practice. Researchers tend to concentrate on selected words and propositions while overlooking the broader semantic architecture of entire surahs. As Fadakar (2014, 98) has noted, many studies in Qur'anic psychology neglect the systematic perspective of the surah as a whole and instead become preoccupied with localized details of individual verses. As a result, the semantic coherence and guiding orientation of the text may be compromised, and the extracted propositions fail to achieve practical psychological relevance. Moreover, despite Kavyani's emphasis on the social and cultural functions of Qur'anic psychology, he has not provided concrete and measurable examples of such applications in his writings (Kavyani 2017, 354), even though practical applicability constitutes an essential component of methodological inquiry in the religious human sciences.

In summary, Kavyani's Structural Semantics method possesses notable

strengths, including its attention to the internal semantic system of the Qur'an, its utilization of elements from the logic of *ijtihad*, and its constructive orientation toward establishing Islamic psychology as a discipline. At the same time, however, it faces fundamental epistemological, hermeneutical, and methodological challenges. Rather than moving from the Qur'anic text toward a model of human psychological structure, the approach frequently moves from contemporary psychological theories back toward the text, thereby situating the resulting discourse within the framework of existing scientific paradigms. From the present author's perspective, the primary weaknesses of this method may be summarized in three points. First, it gives precedence to the interpreter's interests over divine intention and fails to align the researcher's objective with the purpose of the text. Second, it relies excessively on modern psychological criteria in defining Qur'anic concepts, resulting in the loss of epistemic independence. Third, it neglects the broader semantic architecture at the level of the surah and the overall conceptual network of the Qur'an.

Accordingly, while Kavyani's efforts represent an important step toward systematizing Qur'an-based psychological studies, achieving a more comprehensive methodological model requires moving beyond purely semantic analysis toward what may be termed a *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, an approach that preserves the lexical structure of the Qur'an while interpreting it within a teleological horizon and in relation to the existential structure (*shākilah*) of the human being. In this way, meaning can be elevated from the level of language to the level of guidance and psychological transformation.

4.3. General Assessment and Identification of the Research Gap

A comparative examination of the two major approaches currently employed in Qur'an-based psychological studies, namely, Najati's Correspondence-Based Equivalence method and Kavyani's Structural Semantics approach, reveals that, despite their apparent technical and linguistic differences, both approaches suffer from a common deficiency at the level of their epistemological and hermeneutical foundations. This weakness has become a major source of the inconsistencies and theoretical impassés observed in this field. This shared deficiency may be summarized concisely as the absence of a systematic and text-centered process. In other words, neither approach has succeeded in establishing a coherent connection among the three principal domains involved in textual understanding: the revealed text itself, the interpreter's mind, and scientific methodology. As a

result, interpretations of the Qur'an often remain reactive, analogical, or associative rather than methodologically grounded.

In Najati's method, the text occupies the position of a source for confirming scientific knowledge; the Qur'an is used to validate contemporary psychological theories, and the researcher seeks equivalents in the language of revelation for pre-established scientific concepts. By contrast, in Kavyani's approach, the Qur'an is positioned as a source for generating meaning, yet its interpretation continues to be evaluated through extratextual concepts and criteria derived from modern psychology. In both cases, the direction of understanding moves from outside the text toward the revealed text rather than proceeding from within revelation toward a Qur'an-centered anthropology. This externally driven framework has led researchers working within these approaches, despite operating under the banner of Qur'an-based scholarship, to produce analyses that gradually distance themselves from a genuinely internal religious perspective and instead reproduce non-religious scientific knowledge in religious terminology.

From a hermeneutical standpoint, both methods encounter a similar difficulty: the displacement of the center of meaning from divine intention to the expectations of the interpreter. Mojtabeh Shabestari (1996, 23–24) explains that the interpretation of any text is inevitably influenced by the interpreter's horizon of expectations, and when this horizon does not correspond to the horizon of meaning embedded in the text, interpretation becomes an act of projection rather than discovery. Najati's method represents a clear example of this condition. The researcher approaches the Qur'an expecting to find scientific evidence rather than seeking to understand the Qur'anic discourse on the human being. Although Kavyani claims to analyze the structural features of Qur'anic language, the questions guiding his inquiry are primarily derived from modern psychological concerns rather than from the Qur'an's own anthropological framework centered on *fiṭrah* (human primordial nature). Consequently, both approaches may be said to treat scientific knowledge as an interpreter of the Qur'an rather than allowing the Qur'an to serve as the interpreter of knowledge. This inversion of the epistemic framework diverts Qur'anic understanding from its authentic trajectory.

At the methodological level, the shared weakness becomes evident in the absence of a systematic step-by-step process for deriving psychological propositions from the text. Najati outlines eight stages of theorizing; however, these stages largely consist of general research prerequisites and educational guidelines, and they lack a distinct stage devoted to extracting

meaning from the contextual and discursive structure of Qur'anic verses. Kavyani, on the other hand, proposes a six-stage process ranging from the selection of a research problem to the semantic analysis of vocabulary, yet he does not adequately clarify the distinction between linguistic semantics and guidance-oriented semantics within the Qur'an. As a consequence of these shortcomings, the outcome of research in both approaches tends to consist not of Qur'an-based psychological knowledge but rather of a set of lexical correspondences or conceptual parallels. As Nooralizadeh et al. (2018) argue, Islamic psychological studies can be considered scientific only when they are grounded in a method for the scientific understanding of the revealed text rather than merely relying on religious propositions.

At the epistemological level, the absence of a systematic interpretive process produces even deeper consequences. First, it leads to what may be called the *a priori* construction of religious science. As Ebrahimi Dehshiri & Salehzadeh (2016) note, when researchers assume that all psychological concepts already exist fully formed within the Qur'an, the need for explanatory and interpretive effort disappears; understanding is reduced to compilation rather than to discovery and reasoning. Second, this absence undermines the internal coherence of the field, since it lacks a coherent methodological foundation. Third, it removes the role of the hermeneutical mediator, namely reason guided by revelation. Researchers either employ an autonomous form of rationality detached from revelation, as seen in Najati's approach, or substitute linguistic analysis for rational interpretation, as in Kavyani's method. Yet a Qur'an-based methodology requires a text-centered form of reason, a mode of rational inquiry that understands itself in relation to the divine discourse and derives its interpretive principles from revelation rather than from empirical science alone.

From the present author's perspective, the profound research gap between existing approaches ultimately stems from their neglect of the hermeneutical structure of understanding revelation. Qur'anic hermeneutics does not negate semantics or scientific methodology; rather, it integrates them within a framework rooted in the text itself. In this view, methodological inquiry must begin with the Qur'an rather than with external theoretical frameworks. For this reason, proposing an alternative model is not merely a theoretical exercise but constitutes a response to the methodological crisis that has shaped several decades of Islamic psychological research.

Such an alternative model must organize the process of understanding according to the rules internal to the text itself, define clear stages leading from the research question to the inferential conclusion, and ground its epistemological foundations in reason guided by revelation. The framework

proposed in the following chapter seeks precisely to address this gap and move beyond the stage of data collection toward the production of genuinely Qur'anic knowledge. By treating text-centered hermeneutics as the core of the inferential method, this model aims to transform Qur'anic psychology from a reactive discipline of comparative confirmation into an active discipline of explanatory knowledge production.

5. Foundations, Principles and Stages of the Proposed Methodological Model

5.1. Qur'anic and Hermeneutical Foundations

In any methodological framework grounded in the text of revelation, the first step is to determine its theoretical foundations, because a method derives its meaning from the epistemic assumptions and presuppositions upon which it rests. In the field of Qur'an-based psychology, these foundations are not merely philosophical or cognitive in nature; rather, they are fundamentally revelational and Qur'anic. This means that understandings of the human being, knowledge, and the text itself must be organized within the worldview presented by the Qur'an. As Rezaei Adriani (2024) emphasizes, any systematic scholarly activity must first clarify its underlying assumptions and theoretical infrastructure, since these determine both the direction and the quality of the inferential process. These foundations constitute the basis of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, distinguishing it from previous approaches based on simple correspondence or purely semantic analysis.

Within the Qur'anic epistemic framework, three principal elements are involved in the process of understanding: the Author (the divine Speaker), the revealed text, and the interpreter (the human recipient of the text). These three elements form the vertices of a triangle whose relationships must be carefully understood for any Qur'anic explanation to succeed. As Alitabar Firouzjaei (2011, 410, 443) notes, every text possesses three fundamental axes, and genuine understanding is impossible without determining the relationships among them: the intention of the speaker, the structural organization of the text, and the interpretive apparatus employed by the reader. In the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, these three elements are redefined within a specific hermeneutical logic so that the interpretive process may proceed in a text-centered and guidance-oriented manner.

5.1.1. *Foundations Related to the Author: The Centrality of Divine Intention in Understanding the Text*

In Qur'an-based thought, the starting point of interpretation is the intention of God as the Author, rather than the prior assumptions of the interpreter. As Bagheri (2021, 69) notes, the author's intended meaning forms the foundation of interpretation; therefore, the interpreter must seek to uncover the divine intention rather than adapt the text to personal concerns. Within this perspective, the text functions as a window through which one may observe the intentional horizon of the Author and infer divine intent through contextual and internal indicators embedded in the discourse (Alitabar Firouzjaei 2011, 444).

Accordingly, the first foundational principle of the proposed method is the primacy and centrality of the Author in interpretation. Divine intention is not merely an abstract concept but a coherent system of guidance aimed at directing the human being toward psychological and moral perfection. Consequently, psychological propositions derived from the Qur'an must always be interpreted in light of their educational and guidance-oriented purpose.

The Qur'anic verse, “*Alif, Lām, Rā. [This is] a Book We have sent down to you that you may bring mankind out from darkness into light, by the command of their Lord, to the path of the All-mighty, the All-laudable*” (Q. 14:1), indicates that the ultimate aim of the revealed text is the liberation of human beings from inner darkness, not the confirmation of external empirical sciences. This principle distinguishes Qur'anic hermeneutics from purely human hermeneutics: here, ultimate meaning arises not merely from analyzing linguistic structures but from uncovering divine intention within the historical context of revelation.

5.1.2. *Foundations Related to the Text: Purposefulness, Coherence, and Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an*

A defining feature of the Qur'an as a text is its purposeful and structurally coherent nature. Rajabi (2017, 130) explains that understanding a discourse requires knowledge of the speaker's communicative characteristics. Accordingly, each surah, together with its context, must be viewed as a coherent semantic system whose components are internally interconnected. This interconnection forms what may be described as a *Shākilah*-like structure, which constitutes the conceptual foundation of the proposed model. In other words, each surah, through its distinctive conceptual geometry, guides the direction of meaning.

For this reason, extracting isolated propositions detached from the textual context is unacceptable within this model. The Qur'an is not a collection of independent sentences but rather an organic network of statements organized around a unified guidance-oriented objective. Tabataba'i (1996, 13: 230) emphasizes that the only reliable path to meaning is reflection on textual context (*siyāq*) and reliance on both internal and external textual indicators, since context conveys the relationship between cause and purpose in divine discourse. Accordingly, the psychological interpretation of the Qur'an must be structured around the internal contextual framework of its verses and the longitudinal connections among its surahs, thereby avoiding the reductionism that results from fragmentary conceptual analysis.

Another important characteristic of the Qur'anic text is its comprehensiveness in guiding human life. Imam 'Alī states in *Nahj al-Balāghah*: *Indeed, within it is knowledge of what is to come, an account of what has passed, the remedy for your ailments, and the ordering of your affairs* (al-Raḍī 1993, 223).

This statement forms the epistemic foundation of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory method: the Qur'an is not merely a record of psychological states; rather, it functions as a source of healing and an organizer of the human existential system. This comprehensiveness implies that it encompasses all dimensions of the human psyche, cognitive, motivational, and evaluative, and therefore any method for understanding the Qur'an must take this inclusiveness into account when it is designed.

5.2. Principles Governing the Process of Inference

After establishing the epistemological and hermeneutical foundations of the model on the basis of the Qur'an and reason guided by revelation, the second step in the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory methodology is to determine the practical principles that guide the process of inference. These principles function as guiding principles and evaluative criteria through which the interpreter moves from the level of lexical and conceptual analysis to the stage of discovering meaning and guidance-oriented laws within the text. In effect, the governing principles of inference in this approach resemble the procedural rules of *ijtihād* in the science of legal theory (*Uṣūl al-fiqh*), providing a systematic framework for understanding the psychological propositions of the Qur'an. The objective is to achieve a deep level of semantic understanding and to design a pathway that leads from textual evidence to theoretical formulation. As noted in a foundational study,

the rules of inference from the Qur'an and Hadith consist of formulas and principles that operate simultaneously with the act of deduction and render the process of extraction from revelation methodical (Qodsi 2018, 49).

5.2.1. The Principle of Problem Orientation Rather than Concept Orientation

The fundamental distinction between the *Shākilah*-oriented method and earlier approaches lies in this principle. In many traditional Qur'an-centered studies, interpretation often proceeds from concept to problem: the researcher begins with a psychological concept such as "anxiety" or "motivation" and then searches the Qur'an for words or verses corresponding to that concept. The outcome of such an approach is typically adapted to external theoretical frameworks rather than derived from the text itself. By contrast, the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory method begins with the problem. This means that the first step is to identify the psychological challenge or question that emerges within the text itself, rather than imposing a preconstructed scientific concept drawn from outside the text.

Pasandideh (2016) explains the distinction between these two approaches to the psychological interpretation of religious texts. According to him, understanding individual words and expressions constitutes only a general level of comprehension rather than specialized understanding; genuine scientific inquiry arises when the question shifts from the lexical meaning of a statement to the reason for its utterance. A problem-oriented approach therefore enables the discovery of causal and law-like relationships within the text.

For example, the verse, "*And indeed, you are of a great moral character*" (Q. 68:4), if viewed merely from the perspective of the concept of "great moral character," yields a simple ethical description. However, if the psychological situation of the Prophet in response to the accusation of madness in the opening verses of Surah al-Qalam is examined, it becomes clear that the verse functions as a response to a psychological and social injury, thereby conveying a deeply educational dimension. In this case, understanding shifts from description to explanation. This principle constitutes the *ijtihād*-like spirit of the method, because the mechanical matching of words is replaced by the discovery of the human existential problem addressed by divine guidance.

5.2.2. The Principle of Movement from the Whole to the Part

This principle directly reflects the foundational assumption concerning the coherence and comprehensiveness of the Qur'an as a text. Proper

understanding of the Qur'an does not arise from examining isolated fragments but from comprehensive reflection on the structure of the surah. As Tabataba'i (1996, 13: 230) emphasized, understanding the Qur'an depends upon reflection on context (*siyāq*). Within the proposed model, this principle operates as a surah-centered strategy. The interpretive process therefore begins with the macro-level meaning and contextual atmosphere of the surah and gradually moves toward its individual components and propositions.

Faramarz Qaramaleki (2009, 116), in his methodology of religious studies, notes that the context and framework of a text define its concepts and shape the semantic analysis of its propositions, since meaning emerges within the discursive system of the discourse rather than from isolated words. Accordingly, each surah of the Qur'an is examined as an organized psychological guidance unit: first, its general structure, purpose, and audience are analyzed, and only then are the verses related to the psychological issue under investigation examined within that contextual framework.

The advantage of moving from the whole to the part lies in preventing fragmentary and arbitrary interpretation, because the meaning of any individual element in the Qur'an becomes clear only through its relationship with the overarching purpose of the surah. As Heydarifar (2016, 1: 15–28) explains, the epistemic comprehensiveness of the Qur'an requires that the rules for extracting meaning be structured according to the broader needs of humanity and that each component be understood within the wider conceptual system. Such a holistic perspective enables the interpreter to avoid the repetition of scattered concepts and instead to extract guidance-oriented laws from the relationships among the psychological propositions within the surah.

5.2.3. The Principle of Distinguishing the Level of Description from the Level of Prescription

One of the methodological weaknesses frequently observed in studies of religious psychology is the confusion between description and prescription. Qur'anic statements about human beings may sometimes describe psychological states, yet researchers often interpret them as ethical recommendations or normative commands. The *Shākilah*-oriented method insists on a clear distinction between these two levels, because any valid prescription must be grounded in the discovery of causal and law-like knowledge about human nature within the Qur'an.

Bostan (2013, 2: 65), in discussing the logic governing the relationship between declarative and imperative propositions, demonstrates that a necessary connection exists between the two forms of discourse: prescriptive statements ultimately refer to underlying realities. From this perspective, psychological descriptions of human beings in the Qur'an often contain an implicit law that can subsequently become a prescriptive principle during the explanatory stage. However, these two levels must not be conflated during the interpretive stage. First, the problem and its underlying law must be discovered within the descriptive dimension of the verse; only afterward, at the stage of application, may that insight be translated into educational or therapeutic guidance.

Alamzadeh Nouri (2021, 199), in his discussion of the principle of *tanqīḥ al-manāṭ* in legal theory, explains that deriving lessons from the actions of the infallibles or from behavioral narratives in the Qur'an requires abstracting particular contextual features to identify the essential spirit of the behavior. This distinction reflects precisely the separation between descriptive and prescriptive levels. By adhering to this principle, Qur'anic psychological analysis moves beyond rhetorical moralism and reaches the level of a scientific understanding of human psychological mechanisms grounded in demonstrable textual indications.

5.3. Stages of the *Shākilah*-Oriented Explanatory Model

5.3.1. Stage One: Problem Identification (Applied Example)

In the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, the starting point for the psychological understanding of the Qur'an is not preconstructed scientific concepts but rather the human problem articulated within the revealed text itself. Accordingly, problem identification refers to recognizing the psychological challenge to which Qur'anic statements respond, namely, the situation that the text addresses in its effort to guide, reform, or heal the human condition.

At this stage, the researcher moves beyond the level of lexical semantics and seeks to determine the actual psychological condition being addressed by the revealed text, as well as the disturbance or imbalance in the inner structure (*shākilah*) of the audience that provided the context for the revelation of the verses.

To illustrate this stage in practice, one may examine the structure of Surah al-Qalam. The opening atmosphere of the surah, beginning with the oath by the Pen and the rejection of the accusation that the Prophet was "mad," indicates that the central issue of the surah is not merely the

description of a moral virtue or a personal trait. Rather, it addresses a serious psychological and social pressure that threatened the perceived psychological stability and credibility of the Prophet. The accusation of madness, functioning as a social label, could undermine the Prophet's self-confidence, psychological tranquility, and the effectiveness of his prophetic mission. Therefore, the verse, “*And indeed, you are of a great moral character*” (Q. 68:4), within this context performs the function of stabilizing the psychological structure of the Prophet rather than simply describing an ethical attribute.

Within this framework, problem identification requires contextual and structural analysis of the verses to determine the role that each statement plays within the semantic network of the surah: whether it presents the problem, explains its causes, or proposes a solution. The distinction between descriptive texts and prescriptive texts, which is established at this stage, enables the extraction of preliminary psychological insights. Descriptive verses report human psychological states and internal conditions, whereas prescriptive verses offer guidance-oriented responses aimed at correcting those conditions. Thus, problem identification, as the first stage of the model, lays the groundwork for the causal and *Shākilah*-based analysis that follows and prepares the transition from interpretive understanding to psychological explanation.

5.3.2. Stage Two: Causal Analysis (Applied Example)

After identifying the psychological problem embedded in the text, the second step in the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model is the analysis of the causes and contextual factors that give rise to that problem. In this method, causal analysis does not merely reconstruct the historical circumstances of revelation; rather, it seeks to uncover the psychological law governing human behavior that is reflected in the revelatory discourse, a law that elevates the discussion from a particular event to a generalizable pattern.

In the case under examination, the opening of Surah al-Qalam, the psychological and social pressure created by the accusation that the Prophet was mad arises from a particular oppositional behavioral pattern. Within this pattern, the polytheistic society attempts to delegitimize the divine message by undermining the character of its bearer. By rejecting this accusation and emphasizing the intellectual soundness and moral firmness of the Prophet, the Qur'an indicates that the source of such behavior lies not in objective reality but in defective psychological structures such as conscious denial, obstinacy, and fear of the collapse of the dominant value system.

From a *Shākilah*-oriented psychological perspective, this situation reflects the confrontation of two distinct inner structures: on one side, a *shākilah* grounded in certainty, inner stability, and a coherent personality represented by the Prophet; on the other, a reactive and unstable *shākilah* characterizing the opposing audience, who resort to labeling and psychological humiliation to preserve their social dominance.

By highlighting this contrast, the Qur'an explains that the origin of the socio-psychological crisis lies not in any weakness in the Prophet's character but in the distorted inner structure of his opponents. Consequently, causal analysis at this stage leads to the discovery of a general psychological principle: whenever the established value system of a society is threatened, defensive psychological reactions, such as denial, projection, and character assassination of the perceived threat, are activated. This psychological law extends beyond the historical circumstances of revelation and can be generalized to similar situations of human behavior. In this way, the revealed text transcends the narration of a specific event and articulates a stable psychological mechanism.

5.3.3. Stage Three: Solution Analysis (Applied Example)

After identifying the problem and explaining its psychological causes, the third stage of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model focuses on extracting Qur'anic solutions for transforming the human psychological condition. In this method, solution analysis does not consist of collecting scattered moral recommendations; rather, it is an analytical process aimed at discovering the strategies for transforming the *shākilah* embedded in the prescriptive and guidance-oriented statements of the Qur'an.

In Surah al-Qalam, the revelatory response to psychological pressure and social labeling is not limited to rejecting the accusation. Instead, it establishes a new internal foundation. The emphasis on the Prophet's "great moral character" functions as a psychological strategy aimed at strengthening the inner core of his personality and protecting him from the psychological harm caused by social rejection. This statement indicates that psychological resilience is achieved not through reactive external responses but through the strengthening of the ethical and inner structure of the self.

Moreover, the broader structure of Surah al-Qalam, through its depiction of the fate of the deniers and its emphasis on the consequences of arrogance and rejection, promotes a form of cognitive reframing. The audience learns that short-term social pressure should not serve as the criterion for judging truth or personal worth. By linking the present condition to the purposeful horizon of divine guidance, the Qur'an situates social judgment within a

meaningful framework that mitigates the anxiety generated by external evaluation. Thus, the solutions extracted at this stage can be summarized at three levels:

- Strengthening foundational beliefs;
- Stabilizing moral identity;
- Reorienting cognitive evaluations of external pressures.

These strategies are not temporary moral instructions but enduring principles for reforming the human psychological structure, thereby preparing the ground for the coherent reconstruction of belief, motivation, and behavior in the final stage of the model.

5.3.4. Stage Four: Final Shākilah Structuring (Theoretical Formulation)

The fourth stage of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model represents the transition from dispersed interpretive analyses to a coherent conceptual model of human behavior. At this stage, the findings derived from the previous three steps, the psychological problem, the causal law governing it, and the guidance-oriented solutions offered by the text, are organized into a unified structure that explains human actions on the basis of the individual's inner *shākilah*. The Qur'anic foundation for this stage is the verse, “Say, ‘Everyone acts according to his character (*shākilah*).’ Your Lord knows best who is better guided with regard to the way” (Q. 17:84), which presents human behavior as dependent upon the internal organization of enduring beliefs, motivations, and inclinations.

Within this model, the *shākilah* is not merely an ethical attribute or an isolated psychological state; rather, it is a relational network of internal elements that directs outward behavior. Accordingly, the *shākilah* may be analyzed as a multilayered system consisting of:

- A cognitive layer comprising fundamental beliefs and interpretive frameworks;
- A motivational-emotional layer encompassing inclinations and affect regulation;
- A behavioral layer consisting of stable patterns of action.

These three layers do not operate in a linear sequence but interact dynamically with one another to shape human personality and conduct.

In the case examined (Surah al-Qalam), the stage of *shākilah* structuring

demonstrates that the affirmation of the Prophet's "great moral character" in the face of psychological and social pressure is not merely an ethical recommendation. Rather, it represents the reconstruction of a coherent inner structure in which belief in the truth of the divine path (cognitive layer), inner confidence and emotional tranquility despite external judgment (emotional layer), and steadfastness in the prophetic mission (behavioral layer) operate in harmony. By contrast, the *shākilah* of his opponents is organized around unstable beliefs, defensive emotional reactions, and destructive behavioral patterns.

Technically, reconstructing this *shākilah* in psychological language means transforming interpretive insights into theoretical constructs rather than directly into measurable empirical indicators. At this level, the researcher identifies potential variables, such as cognitive stability, meaning-based emotional regulation, and behavioral perseverance, derived from the network of verses. These variables may later be operationalized in empirical research; however, in the present article they remain at the pre-theoretical stage.

In this way, the final stage of *shākilah* structuring may be understood as a process of modeling religiously grounded human behavior. Through this process, the revealed text is transformed from a collection of descriptive and prescriptive statements into a coherent explanatory system. Such a model does not replace empirical psychological theories; rather, it provides their conceptual and guidance-oriented foundation within the framework of Qur'an-based psychology, serving as a potential point of connection between Qur'anic interpretation, theoretical development, and future interdisciplinary research.

6. The Operational Process and Executive Stages of the Shākilah-Oriented Explanatory Model

6.1. Preliminary Steps: Problem Identification and Causal Analysis

The operational process of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model begins with two preliminary steps whose purpose is to move beyond a general understanding of the text toward a specialized and scientific level of comprehension. In these stages, the researcher moves from merely observing the surface meanings of words and linguistic constructions to analyzing the underlying problem and discovering the psychological causes embedded within the text.

According to Pasandideh (2018), the general understanding of religious texts results from recognizing their vocabulary and linguistic combinations, whereas specialized understanding requires uncovering the cause of utterance and the structure of implication within revelatory statements. Without this transformation, no genuine psychological knowledge can be derived from the text. These steps constitute the foundational layer of the *Shākilah*-oriented method and resemble the stage of discovering the authoritative textual evidence (*kashf al-naṣṣ*) in Islamic legal theory. They thus form the basis for a systematic and scientific interpretation of the Qur'an.

6.1.1. Stage One: Problem Identification

At this stage, the researcher does not merely engage with the lexical meaning of the verses but rather with the guidance-oriented problem that prompted their revelation. The central assumption is that religious texts reflect the psychological realities of human beings within particular historical and spiritual contexts and that each verse functions as a response to an inner human challenge. For example, when examining the verse, “*Nūn. By the Pen and what they write... And indeed, you are of a great moral character*” (Q. 68:1–4), the purpose is not simply to describe a moral virtue. Rather, the verse responds to a real issue confronting its audience: the social accusation directed at the Prophet and the need to affirm his psychological integrity and personal stability in the face of external pressure. This problem becomes the starting point for a psychological understanding of the text (Pasandideh 2018).

Structural analysis of the text at this stage involves two components: identifying descriptive texts and identifying prescriptive texts. Descriptive texts consist of verses and narrations that report human psychological states, the consequences of behavior, or internal dispositions. Examples include the verses, “*There is a sickness in their hearts*” (Q. 2:10) and “*their hearts had hardened*” (Q. 6:43), which describe psychological illness or inner disorder. These texts represent the primary psychological evidence of the Qur'an and must be analyzed through semantic interpretation and the extraction of psychological indicators from contextual reasoning. Prescriptive texts are verses expressed in the form of commands, prohibitions, or recommendations, such as “*Do not approach fornication*” (Q. 17:32) or “*Do not walk exultantly on the earth*” (Q. 17:37). These texts constitute the guidance-oriented responses to the psychological problem embedded in the context of revelation, aiming to reform behavior and regulate human action.

After distinguishing these two types of texts, the main step becomes

implication analysis that is, determining how each statement relates to the psychological problem. Each verse must be examined within the narrative progression of the surah to determine whether it functions as the presentation of a problem, the explanation of its cause, or the articulation of a solution.

As Elahizadeh (2020) notes, the declarative and imperative statements within each surah reflect human states and the conditions of the audience, and the distinction between these two forms of implication provides the foundation for the psychological analysis of the text. Thus, the stage of problem identification aims to recognize the educational purpose of the statements rather than merely their lexical meaning. From this perspective, the text indicates a need, crisis, or desired state that must be reconstructed. As Pasandideh (2018) states, a problem or difficulty is essentially the absence of the desired condition. Identifying this problem constitutes the entry point for the scientific analysis of human behavior in the Qur'an.

6.1.2. Stage Two: Causal Analysis

Once the problem has been identified, the next step is to analyze the causes and contexts that produced it. This stage corresponds to explaining the context of revelation, while also seeking to discover the relationship between the social or psychological conditions surrounding the revelation and the general laws governing human psychology. As discussed in previous Four, every psychological phenomenon described in the Qur'an is rooted in the lawful structures of the human self. Therefore, the interpreter must determine the causes underlying both desirable and undesirable states (Pasandideh 2018).

In the *Shākilah*-oriented method, causal analysis goes beyond historical reconstruction and includes psychological and structural dimensions. The interpreter must determine what kind of inner structure (*shākilah*) or personality style led to the behavior or discourse addressed by the Qur'an. For instance, when the Qur'an discusses religious superiority or spiritual arrogance, as examined in the analysis of Surah al-Hujurāt, the root of many deviant behaviors is identified as a psychological need for religious superiority. This inner disposition functions as a *shākilah*, which manifests outwardly in observable behavior (Sabouhi 2016).

Causal analysis therefore corresponds to discovering the causal law governing human psychology. What appears at the surface level of textual description must be traced back to the deeper level of the underlying law. This law may involve a psychological motivation, attitude, or structural disposition that explains the emergence of a particular behavior. Faramarz Qaramaleki (2009) emphasizes that identifying the hidden layers that shape

behavior makes it possible both to predict human behavior in different contexts and to formulate effective educational strategies.

At this stage, the central question becomes: What understanding of human psychology did the divine Author presuppose when revealing this statement, and on which psychological reality was the verse based? Answering this question enables the interpreter to move from the level of meaning to the level of law and to explain not merely what the concept is but also why it appears in the text. In this way, the text is transformed from a historical narrative into a scientific explanatory model.

The first two steps of the *Shākilah*-oriented model thus establish the foundation for a psychological understanding of the Qur'an: problem identification views the text in light of the human condition embedded in the discourse, while causal analysis reveals the psychological roots and governing laws of that condition. Together, these steps enable the transition from conceptual analysis to the discovery of guidance-oriented laws, preparing the ground for the subsequent stages of solution analysis and *shākilah* structuring. Through this process, the Qur'an moves from being understood as a report of events to becoming a source for understanding the mechanisms of the human self within the framework of revelation, thereby providing the scientific basis for Qur'an-based psychology.

6.2. Complementary Steps: Solution Analysis and Shākilah Structuring

After completing the first two stages, problem identification and causal analysis, the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory process proceeds to two complementary steps that shape the practical dimension of the model: solution analysis, which extracts Qur'anic strategies for psychological transformation, and final *shākilah* structuring, which constructs a coherent model of religiously grounded human behavior. These stages constitute the theoretical foundation of Qur'an-based psychology, organizing the final conceptual model through the network of Qur'anic verses.

6.2.1. Stage Three: Solution Analysis

At this stage, the researcher must extract from the verses related to the problem and its causes those guidance-oriented propositions that constitute the Qur'anic response to the human psychological crisis or need. Each prescriptive statement indicates an internal law of transformation rather than merely a moral recommendation (Pasandideh 2018). Within this analytical

framework, every verse serves a distinct educational purpose, and its meaning becomes clear only when examined in relation to that pedagogical objective (Fathollahi 2009, 489).

Solution analysis reconstructs the pathway of behavioral transformation by bringing together the descriptive and prescriptive verses of each surah. The Qur'an first describes a negative condition and then provides a corresponding strategy for overcoming it, thereby transforming its network of commands and descriptions into a model of psychological development. Each command or prohibition reflects an inner law of the human self, allowing the text to move from the level of recommendation to the level of guidance-oriented law (Nooralizadeh et al. 2018).

A clear example appears in Surah al-Ḥujurāt. The surah first reports socially destructive behaviors such as ridicule and backbiting and then presents a solution based on humility and communal harmony among believers. This framework is introduced as the Qur'anic path for reforming a narcissistic inner structure (Sabouhi 2016). By linking the causal law identified in the previous stage with the guidance-oriented statements of the text, the researcher uncovers the logic of transformation within the revelatory system. At this point, the Qur'an is no longer treated merely as a linguistic text but as a system for psychological healing and human development.

6.2.2. Stage Four: Final *Shākilah* Structuring

The final stage involves integrating and organizing all the findings into a unified conceptual model that explains the relationships among the problem, its causes, and the proposed solutions, while demonstrating how these are manifested within the structure of human personality. The conceptual foundation of this stage lies in the verse, “Say, ‘Everyone acts according to his character (*shākilah*)’” (Q. 17:84). This verse presents human behavior as rooted in the inner structure of the individual (Faramarz Qaramaleki 2009, 96).

Within this model, *shākilah* refers to a set of interrelated attitudinal and motivational patterns that guide behavior (Nooralizadeh et al. 2018). By classifying the data obtained from the previous stages, the researcher reconstructs the inner network of belief, motivation, and action, thereby extracting from the relationships among the verses a comprehensive system that explains human conduct. This process effectively transforms dispersed textual propositions into a theory of religiously guided behavior.

In the example of Surah al-Ḥujurāt, the Qur'an reveals a pattern of religious narcissism underlying various destructive behaviors, while

presenting faith-based humility as the desirable *shākilah* that leads to proper guidance (Sabouhi 2016). The verses thus form a network of contrasting actions and attitudes that together illustrate the law governing inner human transformation.

The ultimate aim of this stage is to uncover the overall logic of divine guidance that is, the organization of human behavior within the framework of divine purpose. The researcher analyzes the verses not as isolated concepts but as components of a coherent system governing the human self, thereby explaining how divine will directs the psychological structure of human beings (Bagheri 2021, 153–154).

Solution analysis transforms the Qur'an from a descriptive text into a strategic guide for human transformation, while final *shākilah* structuring establishes the link between divine law and the psychological structure of the human being. The outcome of these two stages is a coherent theory of religiously guided behavior grounded in revelation, the lawful nature of the human self, and the structural network of the *shākilah*. Such a theory elevates the understanding of the Qur'an from a collection of moral exhortations to a systematic scientific framework for Qur'an-based psychology.

7. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is grounded in an analytical trajectory that moves from a critical evaluation of existing approaches to the presentation of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model. A comparative examination of previous approaches in Qur'an-based psychological studies reveals that their principal limitation lies not in a lack of data but in the absence of an internal logic for deriving knowledge from the revealed text. In many of these approaches, meaning becomes subordinate to the expectations of the interpreter rather than to the divine will. Consequently, the psychological understanding of Qur'anic verses is often reduced to empirical generalizations or moral exhortations.

Seeking to overcome these shortcomings, the present study proposes a new model grounded in text-centered hermeneutics and the tripartite structure of Author, Text, and Interpreter. The objective of this model is to move beyond mere moral description toward a scientific explanation of human behavior within the framework of divine law. Within this framework, the *Shākilah*-oriented method regards the Qur'an not as a collection of isolated concepts but as a living and law-governed system of behavioral, cognitive, and motivational relations. According to this logic, the researcher

follows a coherent interpretive path consisting of four stages: problem identification, causal analysis, solution analysis, and *shākilah* structuring. This process transforms the structure of interpretation into a structure of theory construction, because each proposition acquires meaning through its relation to its guidance-oriented purpose and is situated within a network of psychological causes and governing principles. In this way, the verses move beyond the level of historical narration to the level of revealing mechanisms of guidance and transformation within the human psyche.

The outcome of this process is the formation of an intratextual logic that views the human being as a creature possessing a *shākilah* that is, an integrated system in which behavior, motivation, and belief operate under divine law while remaining capable of reform and reconstruction. Within this perspective, the Qur'an functions as a source for discovering the laws governing inner transformation rather than merely as a repository of moral exhortations and recommendations. Such an approach creates the conditions for the production of religious knowledge in psychology and opens the possibility of theory development and empirical inquiry within a revelation-based framework.

In conclusion, by presenting this model, the study takes a step toward reconstructing the methodological logic of the human sciences on the basis of revelation. The *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory approach demonstrates that the transition from interpretation to theory construction is possible only by returning to the logic underlying the revelation of divine statements and by analyzing the guidance-oriented structure of the text. This approach may serve as the beginning of a new phase in the production of scientific knowledge grounded in the Qur'an.

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The Universal Tasbīḥ of Beings and Electromagnetic Radiation: Toward a Scientific Interpretation of Qur'an 17:44

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ABSTRACT:

Original Paper

The Holy Qur'an mentions in several verses the *tasbīḥ* (glorification) of all celestial and terrestrial beings and of all objects. These verses have become the subject of considerable debate among exegetes and a focal point of divergent interpretations. Generally, exegetes have adopted two primary approaches toward the concept of the universal *tasbīḥ* of objects. One group considers *tasbīḥ* to be in the "language of disposition," viewing disbelievers as being deprived of perceiving it. Another group understands *tasbīḥ* to be in the "language of speech" from a metaphysical perspective, asserting that the general public is deprived of witnessing it. Furthermore, some thinkers have attempted a scientific interpretation of the verse, seeking a scientific instance for the concept of universal *tasbīḥ*. While critiquing previously proposed scientific instances, this paper examines the proposed claim of the correspondence between the emission of electromagnetic waves by objects and the material dimension of the universal *tasbīḥ* of beings as a physical instance of the *tasbīḥ* of all objects. According to this claim, since these waves are emitted from all material phenomena and creatures in all states, the *tasbīḥ* of beings is in the "language of speech." Its physical and material manifestation is the emission of electromagnetic waves from all objects, which non-experts cannot perceive. This interpretation can also be compatible with the metaphysical *tasbīḥ* of objects in the language of speech,

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in the sense that its material manifestation consists of the electromagnetic waves emitted from all material objects.

KEYWORDS: Qur'an and Science, *Tasbīḥ* of Beings, Scientific Interpretation of the Qur'an, Electromagnetic Radiation, Consciousness of Beings, Verse 44 of Surah al-Isrā'.

1. Introduction

Scientific interpretation, as an interdisciplinary approach, is based on explaining revelatory propositions from the perspective of the definitive achievements of the natural sciences. This is done to reveal the harmony between religious truths and scientific findings and to identify new layers of meaning that have been neglected in classical interpretations (Zouelm 2025). This method of research re-reads verses in light of modern knowledge; for instance, in the study of the “Verse of Light” (Q. 24:35), divine manifestation is analyzed based on optical physics and the electromagnetic radiation characteristics of olive oil (Moradi & Gholampourmir 2025; Zouelm 2025). In addition to physics, this approach has been applied to fields such as meteorology and geology to explain phenomena such as the mechanism of hail formation and the relative movement of mountains based on verses from Surah al-Nūr and Surah al-Naml (Barati & Paymard 2022; Barati 2022). Furthermore, scientific interpretation has opened new and tangible horizons in Qur’anic studies by using biometric knowledge to analyze the miracle of fingerprints (Shenassa & Houshmand Viki 2023) and by utilizing archaeological findings to understand the background of the angels' knowledge of human corruption on earth (Morakkabi & Zerehsaz 2024). Finally, even destructive and historical phenomena such as the “Scream” (*ṣayḥah*) have been scientifically analyzed within this paradigm from the perspective of acoustic physics and shock waves (Moradi 2022).

In this paper, an attempt is made to examine the universal *tasbīḥ* of objects from the perspective of natural sciences. Some verses of the Qur'an indicate the consciousness and knowledge of all beings and speak of the *tasbīḥ* of all objects in the universe:

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَاوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا (الإسراء/44)

The seven heavens glorify Him, and the earth [too], and whoever is in them. There is not a thing but celebrates His praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Indeed He is all-forbearing, all-forgiving (Q. 17:44).

These verses have been discussed by Muslim scholars and exegetes (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 12:134), and various claims regarding God's intent in these verses have emerged from Qur'anic and philosophical perspectives. Some Qur'anic scholars consider the concept of the *tasbīḥ* of beings and objects to be metaphorical, believing that their *tasbīḥ* is expressed through the language of disposition. Within this group, there are two views regarding the language of disposition. The first holds that beings, through the limitations and defects in their existence, point to a perfect and complete being who is their Creator. The second maintains that every being, through its specific order and unique creation, and particularly through the perfection inherent in its existence, serves as a sign and token of the power, knowledge, and perfection of its Creator.

A second group, relying on philosophical and Qur'anic arguments, considers this *tasbīḥ* to be real and maintains that all beings possess consciousness and knowledge, which are prerequisites for real *tasbīḥ*. Some researchers have also claimed that modern science confirms this Qur'anic teaching. Drawing on scientific findings in this field, they argue that everything in existence communicates in some manner and emits various types of waves. For example, certain studies suggest that acoustic waves and frequencies are generated by certain plants (Ataei Kachooei & Mehrabi Tavana 2001). Consequently, these researchers have interpreted the verses concerning the *tasbīḥ* of beings as referring to the acoustic waves and frequencies emitted by the particles and beings of the world, arguing that everything in existence has a specific sound and thus glorifies God. They further contend that this is a reality that the Qur'an articulated more than 1,400 years ago.

The flaw in the above claim is that sound waves, which are themselves a specific type of physical wave, are not emitted by all beings in existence, whether animate or inanimate, because their propagation requires a material medium. This is inconsistent with the universality implied by the concept of a "thing" (*shayʾ*). In this article, we propose a new claim that accords with the major achievements of physics since the late nineteenth century. According to the Stefan–Boltzmann law of radiation and established thermodynamic laws—the explanation of which will follow—there is a type of physical wave that is emitted by all beings in the universe without exception, and its emission occurs continuously. This phenomenon is more consistent with both the universality of the verse and the continuity of *tasbīḥ* among beings. In this paper, after reviewing the opinions of exegetes regarding the concept of universal *tasbīḥ*, the claim that the *tasbīḥ* of beings corresponds to the emission of these waves will be examined in terms of its

compatibility with the lexical meaning of *tasbīḥ* and the interpretive significance of the verse.

2. Exegetes' Perspectives on the Tasbīḥ of Beings

Some scholars consider the concept of the *tasbīḥ* of beings and objects to be metaphorical, believing that their glorification is expressed through the language of disposition. This group holds two views regarding the language of disposition: first, that beings, through the limitations and defects inherent in their existence, point toward a Perfect and Complete Being who is their Creator; and second, that every being, through its specific order and unique creation, particularly insofar as it reflects perfection within its own mode of existence, serves as a sign (*āyah*) and token of the power, knowledge, and perfection of its Creator. Others consider this *tasbīḥ* to be real and expressed through the language of speech. These two perspectives will now be examined in detail.

2.1. Language of Disposition

All beings are creatures of God, and as creatures, they possess both aspects of perfection and deficiency. Whatever deficiency they possess stems from their own essence, whereas whatever perfection they exhibit originates from their Creator. Thus, in reality, they exalt and praise their Creator through the language of disposition. Some exegetes have emphasized the aspect of deficiency in beings and explained their *tasbīḥ* on this basis: Beings, by virtue of their contingency and origination, clearly indicate the necessary existence of God Almighty, His unity, His power, and His transcendence above the attributes of contingent and originated things (al-Ālūsī 1994, 8:80).

Others have focused on the aspect of perfection in beings, linking *tasbīḥ* to it. For example, al-Rāzī (1999, 20:347-348) considers the *tasbīḥ* of accountable beings to occur through both the language of speech and the language of disposition, since their states indicate the Oneness of God Almighty. However, he regards the *tasbīḥ* of animals and inanimate objects as occurring solely through the language of disposition. In explaining his reasoning, he states: *Tasbīḥ* expressed through the language of speech is based on knowledge, understanding, perception, and utterance (*nuṭq*), and all of these are impossible in the case of inanimate objects. Therefore, the *tasbīḥ* of inanimate objects can only occur through the language of disposition. Know that if we were to attribute knowledge and speech to inanimate objects, we would no longer be able to prove these attributes for

God Almighty. This would lead to disbelief (*kufṛ*), for it could be argued that if the inanimate objects of the world possess knowledge of the essence and attributes of God Almighty and glorify Him despite not being alive, then the attribution of knowledge and power to a thing would not be sufficient to establish that it is alive. Consequently, we would be unable to affirm the life of God Almighty on the basis of His knowledge and power. Such a conclusion constitutes ignorance and disbelief. It is a matter of necessary knowledge that whatever is not alive cannot be knowledgeable, powerful, or speaking.

Al-Rāzī then addresses the objection raised by proponents of the language of speech, who argue that if God intended the language of disposition, this *tasbīḥ* should be comprehensible to human beings; yet the verse explicitly states, “*but you do not understand their glorification.*” He offers three responses to this objection:

1. Many wonders of creation remain concealed from human understanding, and our inability to attain a complete and profound comprehension of the marvels of creation prevents us from fully grasping the reality of the *tasbīḥ* of beings.
2. The primary addressees of the verse are the disbelievers, who remain heedless of the signs pointing to the existence of God.
3. Although ordinary believers affirm the existence of God Almighty, their limited understanding of the perfection of His power leads them to regard the Resurrection and the Gathering as improbable. Consequently, they remain heedless of many of the proofs and signs relating to divine unity, justice, prophethood, and the Resurrection (al-Rāzī 1999, 20:347–348).

Al-Zamakhsharī (1986, 2:669–670) also considers the *tasbīḥ* of beings to occur through the language of disposition, maintaining that it refers to their indication of the Creator, His power, and His wisdom, as though all beings are exalting God above the attribution of partners to Him. He proposes two responses to the aforementioned objection: first, that the verse is addressed to the polytheists; and second, that it is addressed to believers in general, with the implication that their failure to act in accordance with this knowledge prevents them from truly comprehending this *tasbīḥ*.

However, it should be noted that lack of understanding is conceptually distinct from both faith and action, a distinction emphasized in several Qur’anic verses:

- *They impugned them though they were convinced in their hearts wrongfully and defiantly... (Q. 27:14).*

- *Those whom We have given the Book recognize him just as they recognize their sons, but a part of them indeed conceal the truth while they know (Q. 2:146).*

He then raises and answers another objection. If one argues that in the verse, “*The seven heavens glorify Him, and the earth [too], and whoever is in them,*” (Q. 17:44) the verb *tusabbiḥu* (exalt) is used metaphorically for the heavens and the earth (inanimate entities) and literally for their inhabitants (jinn, humans, and angels), such an interpretation would be problematic because a single word cannot simultaneously be employed in both its literal and metaphorical senses within the same context. Al-Zamakhsharī (1986, 2:669–670) responds that metaphorical *tasbīḥ* is present in all beings, whether living or non-living, and that the verse refers universally to the language of disposition, thereby employing the metaphorical sense in both cases. Nevertheless, literal interpretation ordinarily takes precedence over metaphorical interpretation. Therefore, when it is possible to understand the *tasbīḥ* of the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth in its literal sense, recourse to a metaphorical interpretation is unwarranted.

Makarem Shirazi (1995, 12:135–137) holds a view similar to that of al-Rāzī, with the difference that he regards the *tasbīḥ* of beings in the language of disposition as a literal (real) rather than a metaphorical phenomenon, while not accepting the doctrine that all particles of the universe possess life and consciousness: Many scholars believe that this *tasbīḥ* and praise correspond to what is known as the language of disposition. It is real rather than metaphorical, but it is expressed through the language of state rather than the language of speech... At times, this language of disposition is so powerful and eloquent that it overshadows the language of speech and even contradicts it... Particularly with the advancement of human knowledge and the gradual unveiling of the secrets of this vast universe, this universal praise and *tasbīḥ* of beings has become increasingly evident... Every leaf sings the song of divine unity day and night... yet the heedless perceive nothing of it... This understanding of the universal *tasbīḥ* and praise of beings is entirely intelligible and does not require us to attribute perception and consciousness to all particles of the universe, for no conclusive proof exists for such a claim.

Mughniyah (n.d., 718) considers the language of disposition to be even more expressive and eloquent than the language of speech. He argues that all beings, whether celestial or terrestrial, are signs proclaiming “There is no god but Allah” through either the language of disposition or the language of speech. In his view, there is no doubt that all things glorify their Lord; however, the mode of *tasbīḥ* differs according to the nature of each being.

Rational beings glorify God through speech, whereas non-rational beings do so through disposition. According to Mughniyah (2003, 5:48), the language of disposition conveys meaning more effectively and forcefully than speech because speech itself requires supporting evidence, whereas the state of a thing constitutes direct evidence that leads to knowledge and certainty.

In summary, the defining feature of this first perspective is that it does not attribute consciousness to all beings. Rather, it regards the existential effects of objects, which indicate both their deficiency and the perfection of their Creator, as constituting their *tasbīḥ* through the language of disposition. Accordingly, it limits the address, “*you do not understand their glorification*,” to disbelievers. According to this view, the electromagnetic waves emitted by objects cannot be equated with their *tasbīḥ*, since these waves cannot be categorized as expressions of the language of disposition. Furthermore, owing to modern technological advances, these waves are observable even by disbelievers.

2.2. *Language of Speech with a Metaphysical Aspect*

Proponents of the language of speech in the *tasbīḥ* of beings do not claim that all entities possess a physical tongue like humans. Rather, they maintain that glorification is expressed through the unique mode of communication appropriate to each being. Relying on Qur'anic verses, they argue that all beings possess consciousness. The phrase “*but you do not understand their glorification*” (Q. 17:44) is considered the strongest evidence that *tasbīḥ* stems from awareness and speech; for if it merely referred to the language of disposition and the rational indication of a Creator, the statement that humans do not understand it would be redundant.

Additional verses are cited in support of the consciousness of matter, including God's speech to the heavens and the earth at the beginning of creation (Q. 41:11), the idols' disavowal of the polytheists (Q. 46:5), the earth speaking on the Day of Judgment (Q. 99:4), and the testimony of human limbs (Q. 41:21). In response to the objection that, if plants and minerals possessed consciousness and will, their awareness should be outwardly manifest, these scholars appeal to the concept of different levels of consciousness (Nasiri Gheydari 2022). They argue that, because beings possess varying degrees of existence, the manifestations of consciousness likewise differ. Furthermore, the precise and astonishing mechanisms observed in plants and other natural phenomena are no less sophisticated than the organized behavior exhibited by conventionally recognized living beings such as humans and animals (Tabataba'i 1996, 17:382).

Tabataba'i and other scholars also rely on philosophical arguments concerning the ontological presence of knowledge throughout existence in order to define *tasbīḥ* as both real and vocal (Tabataba'i 1996, 17:382; Bidhendi 1998). Similarly, Motahhari (2009, 26:515) argues in favor of the language of speech on the grounds that the language of disposition is universally intelligible, which appears inconsistent with the verse's assertion that humans do not understand this *tasbīḥ*. He further notes the use of the rational plural pronoun *hum* (them) with reference to inanimate objects, arguing that such usage signifies consciousness. Qur'anic accounts of the speech of the ant and the hoopoe with Solomon likewise reinforce the view that all beings possess awareness.

In summary, this second perspective affirms the universal consciousness of beings and regards their glorification as real. It further suggests that such *tasbīḥ* may be perceptible only to those whose "inner sight and hearing" have been opened to the metaphysical realm, as was the case with Abraham (Q. 6:75). Consequently, the address "*you do not understand*" is understood to apply to the general public while excluding certain chosen servants of God. While this view acknowledges that electromagnetic emissions are physical and material phenomena and therefore cannot be identified with the metaphysical dimension of *tasbīḥ* itself, it remains silent regarding whether such waves might constitute the material and physical manifestation of that metaphysical *tasbīḥ*.

3. Language of Speech with a Physical Aspect: The Proposed View

This perspective proposes that electromagnetic waves constitute the physical manifestation of the metaphysical reality of the conscious *tasbīḥ* of objects. Evidence supporting this view will be presented below. The claim that there is a correspondence between the emission of electromagnetic waves by all objects and the universal *tasbīḥ* of beings may be introduced as a third perspective. Its defining feature is that it is compatible with the consciousness of objects while simultaneously defining *tasbīḥ* as a form of speech. It interprets the addressees of the phrase "*you do not understand*" on two levels: first, as non-experts who lack scientific knowledge of these phenomena; and second, as those who remain heedless of the metaphysical dimension of the world. Accepting this claim as a potential instance of the verse does not preclude other interpretations. Given that Qur'anic verses are "multi-faceted" (*dhū wujūh*) and possess "multiple layers of meaning" (*dhū buṭūn*), different instances may be identified at the literal, esoteric, or simultaneous levels of interpretation.

Some scientists believe that every biological molecule produces specific acoustic or radio waves, the amplification of which enhances the differentiation between molecules. Although these frequencies, like radio waves, fall outside the range of human hearing, researchers have used quartz crystals in electric fields to record the vibrations generated when a virus attaches to a host cell and have converted these vibrations into electrical current (Ataei Kachooei & Mehrabi Tavana 2001). The weakness of this claim, however, is that sound waves, being a particular type of physical wave, require a material medium for propagation. Consequently, they are not emitted by all beings in existence, whether animate or inanimate, which is inconsistent with the universal scope of the term thing (*shay'*) employed in the verse.

This article presents a new claim that is consistent with the major achievements of modern physics. According to the Stefan–Boltzmann law of radiation and the laws of thermodynamics, there exists a type of physical wave that is emitted by all beings in the universe at every moment. This phenomenon corresponds more closely to both the universal scope of the noble verse and the continuous nature of *tasbīḥ* among all beings.

3.1. Introduction to Types of Waves in Physics

In physics, a wave is an oscillation accompanied by the transfer of energy that propagates through space or matter. Physical waves are divided into two principal categories: mechanical waves and electromagnetic waves. Mechanical waves propagate through material media and produce disturbances within those media; for example, sound waves propagate through the interaction and collision of air molecules. In contrast, electromagnetic waves do not require a material medium for propagation. They consist of periodic oscillations of electric and magnetic fields and can travel even through a vacuum. These waves differ in wavelength and, in descending order of wavelength, include radio waves, microwaves, infrared radiation, visible light, ultraviolet radiation, X-rays, and gamma rays (Longair 1984, 75–78).

Based on the universal application of the word *shay'* (thing) in the verse, the *tasbīḥ* of beings cannot be restricted to living organisms. Some may argue that, because living beings emit sound waves, such waves constitute the instance of *tasbīḥ* expressed through the language of speech. However, from a scientific perspective, sound waves are mechanical and longitudinal waves that necessarily require a material medium for propagation. Given that the vast spaces between celestial bodies are effectively vacuum

environments, sound waves cannot propagate universally throughout the cosmos and therefore cannot reasonably be identified with the universal *tasbīḥ* described in the verse.

3.2. Examination of Electromagnetic Waves as a Strong Probability for the Tasbīḥ of All Beings

The Stefan–Boltzmann law is a fundamental principle in thermodynamics and radiation physics that describes the quantitative relationship between the temperature of an object and its total radiant energy. In brief, this law states that the total power radiated per unit surface area of a black body is directly proportional to the fourth power of its thermodynamic temperature. The mathematical form of the law is as follows:

$$P = \sigma T^4$$

Where P is the radiant power per unit area, measured in watts per square meter; σ is the Stefan–Boltzmann constant; and T is the thermodynamic temperature in Kelvin (Zemansky & Dittman 1997, 96–101). The central physical implication of this law is that every object with a temperature above absolute zero necessarily emits electromagnetic radiation. Although the law was initially discovered empirically, it was subsequently derived from thermodynamic principles. Its complete theoretical explanation became possible through the work of Max Planck, whose introduction of energy quantization marked the beginning of quantum mechanics (Griffiths 2005, 8–11).

Although the Stefan–Boltzmann law predicts zero radiation at $T = 0$, attaining this temperature is physically impossible according to the Third Law of Thermodynamics. This law states that no system can reach absolute zero through a process involving a finite number of steps (Zemansky & Dittman 1997, 217–218). The fundamental explanation for this limitation lies in quantum mechanics, particularly in the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle. According to this principle, particles at the microscopic scale cannot simultaneously possess both a perfectly defined position and a perfectly defined momentum. At absolute zero, particles would have to become completely stationary, a condition that directly contradicts the Uncertainty Principle. Even in the lowest possible energy state, a quantum system retains an irreducible quantity of energy known as zero-point energy, which prevents the system's internal energy from reaching zero. Consequently, the atoms and molecules constituting matter never cease motion entirely (Heisenberg 1930, 13–25, 133–134).

Since, according to the Third Law of Thermodynamics and the principles

of quantum mechanics, no material object can attain a temperature of zero Kelvin, all matter in the universe possesses a temperature above absolute zero. Consequently, in accordance with the Stefan–Boltzmann law, all objects continuously and inevitably emit electromagnetic radiation.

The conclusion derived from these scientific principles is that all physical bodies, regardless of their location or temperature, emit electromagnetic waves. This may be regarded as one of the most universal characteristics shared by all physical entities. Since God Almighty states in the verse Q. 17:44 that all beings perform *tasbīḥ* without exception, it may be argued that, if one seeks a natural and physical instance of the language-of-speech *tasbīḥ* of all beings, the closest candidate is the continuous emission of electromagnetic radiation from every object, for the following reasons:

- Universality: *Tasbīḥ* is universal, and electromagnetic radiation is likewise emitted by all material entities without exception.
- Continuity: The *tasbīḥ* of beings is continuous, and the emission of electromagnetic radiation is likewise continuous.
- Expression: These waves are emitted outward from beings, analogous to the outward expression involved in human verbal dhikr; in this sense, they may be viewed as an affirmation of existence.
- Comprehension: The phrase “*you do not understand their tasbīḥ*” refers to a lack of comprehension. Although these waves can be scientifically detected, their significance as a manifestation of *tasbīḥ* is not readily comprehensible to ordinary human perception.

It should be noted that the correspondence between electromagnetic wave emission and the *tasbīḥ* of all beings may be understood in two different ways. The first interpretation holds that the language-of-speech *tasbīḥ* of beings consists solely in the emission of these waves. However, this explanation appears incomplete because electromagnetic radiation, in itself, does not entail will, awareness, or consciousness. The second interpretation, which is preferred in the present study, maintains that *tasbīḥ* is fundamentally expressed through the language of speech and is rooted in the metaphysical dimension of beings. According to this view, the emission of electromagnetic waves constitutes the physical and material manifestation of that underlying metaphysical *tasbīḥ*.

3.3. Examination of the Lexical Indication of *Tasbīḥ* for Wave Emission

Language is a dynamic phenomenon that evolves over time under the influence of human culture and civilization. In the process of linguistic development, words are generally first coined to denote tangible and perceptible objects encountered in everyday life. With the advancement of human thought and intellectual activity, non-material and abstract concepts gradually enter the lexicon. Accordingly, concrete meanings typically precede abstract meanings in the historical development of language. If a word possesses both a material meaning and several abstract meanings, the material sense is ordinarily regarded as the primary concept for which the word was originally coined. Subsequently, through perceived affinities or analogies between the material and abstract senses, the semantic range of the word expands to encompass abstract concepts.

The term *tasbīḥ*, derived from the root S-B-Ḥ, is no exception to this principle. *Tasbīḥ* is derived from *sabbāḥa*, which denotes rapid movement in water or air. It is said: (*sabaḥa sabḥan wa sibāḥatan*), meaning “he swam.” The term was later extended metaphorically to describe the movement of stars in the heavens, the galloping of a horse, and the swift pursuit of a task (al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī 1992, 227).

Dawud Salman al-Sa‘di interprets the *tasbīḥ* of all objects by drawing on the correspondence between the behavior of objects and the semantic components embedded in the lexical meaning of the term. He identifies characteristics such as rapid yet orderly and tranquil motion, often occurring in circular or sevenfold trajectories around oneself or another, as elements inherent in the meaning of *tasbīḥ*. He derives this interpretation through a synthesis of the concepts of *sabḥ* and *tasbīḥ* (al-Sa‘di 2011, 79). According to several Qur’anic verses, all entities in the universe possess both *sabḥ* (Q. 36:40) and *tasbīḥ* (Q. 17:44; 57:1; 24:41). Al-Sa‘di then argues that all entities, including celestial bodies, atomic particles, electromagnetic waves, and electrons, exhibit such patterns of motion, and he therefore defines their *tasbīḥ* in these terms (al-Sa‘di 2011, 208–233).

Regarding the place of human *tasbīḥ* within the broader *tasbīḥ* of all beings, he argues that, in addition to verbal and spiritual *tasbīḥ*, the entirety of the human being, including organs, tissues, cells, chromosomes, genes, and all constituent particles, glorifies the Creator. Furthermore, he interprets the use of the circular *misbahah* (prayer beads) and the sevenfold circumambulation (*tawāf*) of the Kaaba as symbolic reflections of the circular motions that characterize objects and the universe. Through a

further line of reasoning, he seeks to establish *sabḥ*, though not necessarily *tasbīḥ*, for all beings. He argues that the terms *al-sabḥ* and *al-sibāḥah* are primarily associated with movement in water. Since seawater is continuously undulating under the influence of wind, producing waves characterized by semi-circular upward and downward motion and accompanied by sound, and since all forms of energy in the universe can be understood in terms of waves, he concludes that all waves, and, by extension, the cosmos as a whole, may be described as *sābiḥāt* (engaged in *sabḥ*) for Allah.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the correspondence between the term *tasbīḥ* and the concept of a “wave,” as defined in the scientific discussion above, appears to be a plausible interpretive possibility.

4. Conclusion

The examination of the verses related to the universal *tasbīḥ* of beings revealed two primary interpretive approaches: *tasbīḥ* as the language of disposition and real *tasbīḥ* as the language of speech. Despite their Qur'anic, philosophical, and lexical foundations, both perspectives face challenges in reconciling the universality of these verses with the statement, “*but you do not understand their glorification*” (Q. 17:44). Consequently, the proposal of scientific instances for the *tasbīḥ* of beings may open new horizons for understanding these verses, provided that such correlations are advanced with appropriate caution and without claims of absolute certainty.

In this study, after critically examining the proposed correspondence between *tasbīḥ* and acoustic waves, it was argued that electromagnetic waves, by virtue of their universality, continuity, and emission from all material entities under all conditions, constitute the closest natural and physical instance of the material dimension of universal *tasbīḥ*. According to this proposal, the *tasbīḥ* of beings is not merely the emission of material waves devoid of consciousness; rather, it is the material manifestation of a conscious and metaphysical reality, a reality that becomes manifest in the physical world through electromagnetic radiation. In this way, a conceivable link is established between the real *tasbīḥ* of beings and its physical manifestation.

Furthermore, the etymological analysis of the root S-B-Ḥ demonstrated that the notions of motion, flow, and continuous emission are consistent with the semantic field of *tasbīḥ*, thereby lending further support to the proposed interpretation. Therefore, the claim advanced in this article merits consideration as a significant potential instance for explaining the universal

tasbīḥ of beings.

The final conclusion is that findings from the natural sciences, particularly modern physics, can contribute to a renewed reading of the *tasbīḥ* of beings alongside traditional Qur'anic and exegetical discussions. Such a reading is consistent with the universal scope of the relevant verses and provides a promising framework for further research in the field of scientific interpretation of the Qur'an.

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	Al-Zamakhsharī, Maḥmūd ibn ʿUmar (1986). <i>Al-Kashshāf ʿan Ḥaqāʾiq Ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl</i> . Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī.
Two or Three Authors	(Laudon & Laudon 2003) (Coveney, Ganster & King 2003)
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More than Three Authors	(Jones et al. 1999: 34) Jones et al. (1999: 34) suggested that ...
	Jones, P., Smith, A., Hudson, T., Etherton, J., Connelly, W. and Gardener, J. (1999). <i>Business management for the new era</i> . Adelaide: Wyland Publishing.
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Translated works	Bakhtin, M. (1984). <i>Rabelais and his world</i> . transl. H. Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
No date can be established	(Lansdown n.d.).
	Lansdown, M. (n.d.). <i>Bridging courses</i> . Rockhampton: Central Queensland University.

Journals

Single author	(Rohani Mashhadi 2018)
	Rohani Mashhadi, Farzaneh (2018). The Analogy between Jesus and Adam Based on the Analysis of Key Concepts in the System of Human Creation Verses. <i>Qur'anic Sciences and Tradition</i> , 51(1), 67-87.
Two or three authors	(Lamb & Kling 2003) (Darzi, Pakatchi, & Faramarz Gharamaleki 2017)
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More than three authors	(Lips et al. 2020)
	Lips, C., Ritterhoff, T., Weber, A., Janowska M.K., Mustroph, M., Sommer T., Klevit, R.E. (2020). Who with whom: functional coordination of E2 enzymes by RING E3 ligases during poly-ubiquitylation. <i>The EMBO Journal</i> , 39(22).
No volume or issue number	(Sprague & Shameen 1999)
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Conference paper	(Fitzsimmons 2005)
	Fitzsimmons, D. (2005). Who chooses who belongs: Tactics and strategies and migrant literature. The AULLA & FILLM conference. James Cook University. Cairns. 15–19th July.
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Encyclopedias	(Karlof 2002)
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Document on the web	(Arch & Letourneau 2002) (Greenpeace n.d.)
	Arch, A. and Letourneau, C. (2002). Auxiliary Benefits of Accessible Web Design. in W3C Web Accessibility initiative. viewed 26 February 2004. from http://www.w3.org/WAI/bcase/benefits.html . Greenpeace, (n.d.). The future is GE free. viewed 28 September 2005. from http://www.greenpeace.org.au/ge/farming/canola.html

Referencing the Qur'an

You can refer to the verses of the Qur'an by the number of surah and verse, according to the following example. e.g. (Q. 2:19).

Transliteration System

Authors are expected to adhere to the convention of transliterating Arabic words and phrases in italic roman script in accordance with the Journal transliteration scheme. Authors are responsible for the accuracy and consistency of their transliteration.

Avoid writing words in Arabic script. If it is necessary, you can transliterate the word in the text and write it in Arabic script in the footnote. As for the verses of the Qur'an, only the main verse that is essential for the purpose of the article can be written in Arabic script.

Transliteration of Arabic words that do not have standard spellings in English should be done according to the following system.

ء	'	ذ	dh	ظ	ẓ / Ẓ	ن	n
ب	b	ر	r	ع	‘	و	w
ت	t	ز	z	غ	gh	ه	h
ث	th	س	s	ف	f	ي	y
ج	j	ش	sh	ق	q	ة	h (without iqlāfah)
ح	ḥ / Ḥ	ص	ṣ / Ṣ	ك	k	ة	t (with iqlāfah)
خ	kh	ض	ḍ / Ḍ	ل	l		
د	d	ط	ṭ / Ṭ	م	m		

ا	a	ي	ī / Ī
ي	i	و	ū / Ū
و	u	و	aw
آ / ا / ا	ā / Ā	ي	ay

- Transliterated words should be italicized (except for names). They should not be capitalized except at the beginning of sentences, in titles, and for names.
- Note that some foreign words have been naturalized in English and have standard spelling. These words are not transliterated and italicized. e.g. Allah, Qur'an (Koran), Muhammad, imam, Islam, shariah, hadith, hajj, Shia (Shi'a), Shiite (Shi'ite), Sunni, qibla, Ramadan.
- In transliteration of phrases, i' rāb is not considered. If necessary, i' rāb can be marked for the Qur'an and poetry e.g. ḡulumāt thalāth not ḡulumātin thalāthin.
- **Al- :**

Al- is always written in lower case, unless it appears at the beginning of a sentence. In the table below, you can see examples of transliteration of al- in different situations.

القبلة	al-qiblah	من الشمس	min al-shams	والبيت	wa al-bayt
الشمس	al-shams	عن البيت	'an al-bayt	للبيت	lil-bayt
على الجدار	'alā al-jidār	في البيت	fī al-bayt	بالبیت	bil-bayt
الى البيت	ilā al-bayt	لا البيت	lā al-bayt	كالبيت	kal-bayt

- **Ibn, bint, abū, abī, abā, umm:**

Ibn and bint should not be capitalized, unless they appear at the beginning of a name or sentence. Bin and 'b.' should not be used. Abū, abī, abā, umm is always written separately and without hyphen. See some examples in the table below.

	Correct transliteration	Incorrect transliteration
الخليل بن احمد	al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad	al-Khalīl Bin Aḥmad, al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad
ام البنين	Umm al-Banīn	Ummul-Banīn, UmmulBanīn
ابو القاسم	Abū al-qāsim	Abul-qāsim, Abulqāsim

- It is optional to write an abbreviation after the names of the holy people to show respect and prayer for them. If authors want to add the abbreviation, only the following two abbreviations will be acceptable.
 - (PBUH): peace be upon him
 - (PBUTH): peace be upon them
- The names of those who spell their names in a particular way are not transliterated. For example, Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

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