

Water and Tears: A Discussion on Mathnawi I (821) as the Basis for the Metaphysic Understanding of Hope

Mohamed Eusuff Amin

Preface

Mawlana Jallaludin Rumi Al-Bakhi, better known as Rumi is a very important figure in Islamic mysticism and philosophy. Not only that, his poems are widely read through hundreds of years by people around the world – and this shows his words are not merely words - they are full of wisdom and rich of inspirations. Everybody has their own interpretation of Mevlana, the name that he is known for in Turkey. This monograph is my own interpretation on only one couplet from his magnum opus the Mathnawi.

The couplet that I have chosen is the 821st couplet from the first of six volumes of the Mathnawi. It reads, “*where there is water flowing there is greens; where there is a tear flowing, there is a blessing*”. The reason I chose this couplet is that I believe it carries a heavy metaphysical statement that has tremendous influence not only on the psychology aspect of human, but also introduces an ethical code that is universal in character. At the age where the misuse of capitalism and the politicization of religions, we see the rise of right wings and the growth between the rich and the poor – not only within states but also in the international community. By the time of this writing, the atomic bomb of doomsday is measured 2 minutes to midnight, indicates the fragile state of the world’s health in terms of economy, ecology and politics. It is an age of despair for many and of confusion for many more. A generation known as the millennial, who are lost in their identity is not a new confusion, but it is worst than the experience and conscious challenges faced by their parents when they were about at the same age. The younger generations than them are facing similar challenges but somehow in a more modern world, the challenges are greater in terms of the understanding of religions, the prosperity of economy and the purpose of politics. Therefore, it is a wise thing to look at the past, to know the wisdoms because these wisdoms were created to be inherited. If we deny the usefulness of old wisdoms, then we should expect a child able to learn mathematical formula without the help of a teacher or a tutor. As much as important, to look back at the mistakes made by the previous generations in order to understand and implement the inherited wisdom effectively.

As the title and the selected couplet suggest, despite the horror age we are living in, hope is not to be given up; instead we must be strong enough to find the blessings to cure our sorrows and confusions. The generation of this age is not alone – as we think of the future generations, the past generations also thought of us, hence humans in spirit has always been connected throughout time and the ageless wisdoms are what binding us together – the past, present and future. “Discoveries of science” is not replacement of wisdoms. The late great scientist Richard Feynman ended up referring us to the sayings of Buddha that the

key to heaven also is the key to hell, and so we were advised to choose wisely. Feynman, a brilliant scientist was regretted to help to invent the atomic bomb that killed millions of innocents in Hiroshima. Therefore, it is a mistake to regard our ancestors whose lives were not as rich with sciences as we have now, to be closer to apes – a philosophical conclusion that is in obsession with evolution.

The concept of religion in this monograph is not what the religion that is defined by anthropology. The religion in our discussion is neither an institution that is created out of the absence of science as suggested by David Hume nor an institution to control the society as suggested by Karl Marx. The religion, which is Islam, is a union of the thoughts that pertains to the metaphysical understanding of existence and the ethics that reflects it. Therefore it does not concerns with capitalism interest of certain groups nor the political power of certain people, but it concerns the understanding of oneself in relation to nature, society, history, politics and economics. Therefore, this monograph concerns with the epistemic discipline of Islam that is universal in character. As long as humans keep struggling to do what is right, as what as suggested by his or her intellect and confirmed by his or her feelings, like ‘courage’ overcomes ‘fear’ and ‘certainty’ overcomes ‘doubt’, there is always **hope** for justice.

The flow of tears indicate a sense of sadness or sorrow and it indicates the sense of loss; something that was previously held and now disappear. This kind of things happen from time to time and in everyone lives, the emotional challenges that one may have to face from day to day – depends on the story of his or her life. But this ‘loss’ is not only limited to our physical world; in the higher metaphysical world, there is another kind of ‘lost’ that we are experiencing, a ‘lost’ that is so real that it hurts. This kind of lost is what the Sufis refer to as the separation of ourselves from God.¹ The idea that we were once together with God is not only in the Islamic faith, but the in ancient Greek philosophy too this idea is recorded. According to Plato the being of us in this world is a cause of forgetfulness and the meaning of education is a recollection;² a statement that once we had observed reality before we came to earth. But in Islam, is not only that we had observed the truth before we were born, in fact, we acknowledged God already as the Lord. Syed Naquib Al-Attas has argued that, this is the basis of religion which is called Islam.³

¹ See Abdul Baki Golpinarli’s commentary on the Mathnawi, written in Turkish, *Mesnevi Tercemesi ve Serhi*, first volume.

² See Plato’s *Phadeo*.

³ See Syed Naquib Al-Attas’ *Islam and Secularism*, Chapter III

Rumi himself in the opening chapters of the Mathnawi stated that the humans are longing to return to God because everything and everyone are longing to return to their place of origin.⁴ Therefore, this pain of missing home is the effect of 'love' which is the main reason the world is created in Islamic tradition belief. "Love" according to another mystic, Al-Ghazali, is the attraction to what is beautiful, and the ultimate beauty is God himself,⁵ so therefore when God intended to express himself – to let himself to be known, the world was created for this purpose.⁶ "Love" is a very abstract thing that itself is what constitutes 'existence'. For this reason for Rumi, all kind of loves, although are directed to different things, in reality is pointing to one direction as all of kind of loves share the same essence in terms of its meaning and effect.⁷ Love produces movements that shape our life, and therefore the question of love plays very important role in the questions of ethics.

If 'love' is the effect of attraction of what is beautiful as according to Al-Ghazali, then this idea can be traced back to Aristotle who said that movement is the result of motive and hence it is the result of desire.⁸ Desire according to biologists is the innate instinct designed for one to adopt changes in order to survive.⁹ Without going into details on ethics from this point of view, we can see that even in a secular understanding, existence itself is conducted in a motive – that cause movement between souls and particles. For some atheists the world is created out of randomness that begun in quantum physic and the need to survive is

⁴ Mathnawi I: 1 - 18

⁵ See Al-Ghazali's *Book on Love* which is found in his magnum opus *Revival of Religious Sciences* (or as *Ihya Ulumul'din* in the original Arabic) or its shorter version as found in *The Alchemy of Happiness (Kimya'i Saadet* as in the original Persian).

⁶ God spoke through Prophet Muhammad "*I am a hidden treasure, I am desired to be known as I created creations.*" There is no established report on this saying, but the Sufis like Ibn Arabi verify it through intuition. See Stephen Hirstenstein and Martin Notcut, translators, *Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, Divine Sayings: 101 Hadith Qudsi (Mishkat al-Anwar)* (2008) Anqa Publishing, Oxford. For discussions in relate this saying to the concept of existence in Islam, see Syed Naquib Al-Attas' *Prolegomena To The Metaphysic of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of The Worldview of Islam*, Chapter VII and Toshihiko Izutsu's *The Concept and Reality of Existence*, Part: An Analysis of *Wahdat al-Wujud*.

⁷ See Rumi's *Fihi Mafhi*, Chapter 23 (*Discourses of Rumi*, A. J. Arberry's translation).

⁸ See Aristotle's *DeAnima*.

⁹ This statement is general. But for specific readings for examples, see: Sarah Rose Cavanagh (June 19, 2013) *Psychology Today: Female Sexual Desire: An Evolutionary Biology Perspective*. Online Article. Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/once-more-feeling/201306/female-sexual-desire-evolutionary-biology-perspective>

natural. If we take this idea as the ultimate reality we can understand why Machiavelli's Prince is an important political philosophy book where it justifies the end rather than the mean. Of course the questions of end and means had already been debated – perhaps even still being debated – by thinkers, writers, novelists, philosophers and politicians on so many issues and levels in society, history and politics but the question that we should consider now is that the consciousness of ethic is very strong and real in the human's consciousness, if not everyone, there are some people who feel the responsibilities toward others. We can question their motives or sincerity but we cannot deny that the power 'good' and the power of 'evil' are available to be defined and between them is the interaction between humans in society in different levels. For this reason, if Aristotle was right, there is a force that pushes amongst us that create this ethic-consciousness that further influence the development of sciences and arts that continually to define the civilization of the human beings. The fear of Artificial Intelligence will take over our civilization to the point that a church was created for Artificial Intelligence to be worshipped is indication of total denial of God.¹⁰ Perhaps, in their life experience, the definition of God that they have learnt is strictly defined into definitions that do not satisfy their intellect, they are well understood; but at the same time too we must consider also for the fact that the existence of 'goodness' and 'love' is real, then their source must be something that is 'real' too.

A British comedian in a video recorded to have said, if he were ever to meet God, he would say "how dare you give cancer to an innocent child!" His anger is reflective, true, and right. His anger towards God shows his love and care for the child. Although God in his calculation is 'evil', the existence of his care and love for the child is real and hence the source of 'love' must be real although one may not associate it with God. We cannot however agree with some opinions that his love and care for innocent child is his own interest, in the sense to protect himself from the same fate if we disregard the possibility of his desire to be 'famous', because if he already blaming God, and we tend to take assumption that he is doing it for his own preservation, than we can assume that he is playing politics with God; this also a contradiction because in a realist world, to have a God that shares the same level existence of us is our best interest to form a partnership. Therefore the definitions of God can be multiple, depends on the philosophy or literature that shapes Him, however 'love' as far as it concerns its different shapes and forms, share

¹⁰ Kif Leswing (Nov. 15, 2017) Business Insider: *Ex-Google executive Anthony Levandowski is founding a church where people worship an artificial intelligence god*. Online Article. Retrived from: <http://www.businessinsider.com/anthony-levandowski-way-of-the-future-church-where-people-worship-ai-god-2017-11>. See also: <http://www.wayofthefuture.church/>

the same velocity or purpose. Islam, as explained by the Sufis, the source of 'love' which is the force of our movement and feelings is from God and from that the philosophical question like the problem of evil was never a question as according to Rumi evil is the actualize agent of the potential in goodness.¹¹ In Islam, God's mercy precede His wrath,¹² hence the power of goodness is strong against evil and it is 'love' that motivates us to achieve this. Therefore, Islam, although it claims its universal place that pertains to truth, it never forces itself on everyone¹³ despite its prophet, Prophet Muhammad, according to the Quran is a mercy to the whole world¹⁴ – that means everyone literally. Therefore Rumi, who follows the path of Muhammad, in his lifetime, the Christians regarded him as their priest and the Jews regard him as their rabbi.¹⁵

The challenges that is facing us in this period of time in the human history is non other like before. In one part of the world, artificial intelligence to replace humans are being built and the option of living in Mars is discussed while on the other part of the world, religion and democracy are still being debated. Also, a group of people able to earn millions of dollars by simply running internet sites, while another group have to work from morning until night out at the cold to earn as much as a dollar per-day. It is pretty obvious from this simple observation the separation between these two worlds are real and if keeps growing humanity that is based on unity will be something that is 'taboo'. Of course this far reach as a general opinion, but to some, it's already happened. An already powerful country like America, some of its leaders, still have the fear that it's losing its regional power by not involving in any direct confrontations between nations.¹⁶ Their nationalism concern is very overwhelming and it is a continuation of what already happening in Western history. After Europe gains it power to explore the world, they created themselves burden to liberate and Christianize other parts of the world. Previous to that, globalization was about trading and

¹¹ What is meant here is that without evil how good can be known and vice versa. This means as the potential to know the opposite in every aspects, different aspects of God is shown in particular situation. See *Mathnawi I* :1509-1514.

¹² Quran 35: 1

¹³ Quran 2: 256

¹⁴ Quran 21: 107

¹⁵ See Erken Turkmen, (2002) *The Essence of Rumi's Masnevi Including His Life and Works*, Ministry of Culture of The Republic of Turkey, Ankara. p. 57

¹⁶ *James Mattis unveils new US military strategy focused on threat from Russia and China, not terrorism.* (Jan 20, 2018) Online News Article. Available at www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-20/china-and-russia-not-terrorism-main-threats-to-us-mattis-says/9345670

empire expansion was about governance ruling. Colonization was a new form of globalization by that time as the European powers had changed the social structure and also the traditional education structure of the colonized world by introducing ideas that were alien before such as nationalism and open market. The most unfortunate of all is the reconstruction of the understanding of religion to misunderstanding which its impact is very influential both on social and political levels. Interestingly enough, the wealth of colonized area were used to enrich the Europe and later Northern America while the locals had their future generation in conflicts that perhaps they had never imagined before. The colonists must be admitted that they treated the colonized states as capital or political tools and this already a dehumanization of the people of the decolonized world, as an example, the Dutch exchanged lands with Britain in the Malay world to reach a post-war agreement.¹⁷

The root of dehumanization is 'fear', and 'fear' is compliment to the idea of the 'fear' of the 'unknown'. If the 'unknown' is already 'known' then 'fear' is not necessary because we would already know what will happen or happening. When we are in fear, the most logical thing to do it to eliminate every suspects we have in order to preserve our life as we aware that the competition to survive is very competitive. If we expose this 'fear' by relate it other factors such as economy and politics, we can rename the 'fear' as 'greed' or 'gluttony'. In the *Meaning of Happiness in Islam* by Syed Naquib Al-Attas, he explained that the 'happiness' as understood in Islam is when 'doubt' can be eliminated by being in 'certainty'. The word 'iman' an Arabic word used by the Muslims to denote 'faith',¹⁸ is not understood as 'faith' in the English dictionary, nor it is the 'faith' that is expressed by the Danish philosopher Kierkegaard; instead it is a 'certainty' with knowledge about the nature of oneself as human in relate to God, and God's nature like His characters in relate to us, as well as ours in relate to nature as a whole, and hence, social, psychology, economy and politics too. According to Rumi, humans are like donkeys with angels' wings.¹⁹ This mean that, as much as humans can be as useful as donkeys, humans like the angels also can reach the heaven and contemplate on the beauty of the universe. The angles in Islamic beliefs, are made from 'light' and 'light' in Islamic metaphor is used to denote 'knowledge' and 'knowledge' in the Quran, is expressed in term of bringing 'life' to what is 'dead'. Therefore, when it is relate an Islamic tradition that angels are always in the state of worship, is not about them doing something passive and act like 'zombie', but instead they

¹⁷ Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824

¹⁸ See Syed Naquib Al-Attas' *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, chapter II.

¹⁹ *Fihī Mafihī* Chapter 26

are active and being very alive! It is fortunately also the lowest part human being Rumi relates it to a donkey. Donkey, is not a completely a useless animal. Apart from eating and sleeping, it serves its human owner by carrying loads. However, another Sufi before Rumi's lifetime, Al-Ghazali already made an important metaphor. As far as concerning to carry loads, donkeys and horses are equally useful, but when it comes into the battlefield in the war, only horses are useful, and it is a shame and a waste if we do not train the horses for war!²⁰ Therefore he concludes that we as humans we must exercise our fullest capacity, and our highest capability is our exercise of our intellect. As Rumi referred our intellect as angel's wings, the Quran mentioned about different angels has different number of wings.²¹ Therefore, everyone has different strength of intelligence and this difference must be respected. Therefore, our confidence should never be as an excuse for us not to train our intelligence as best as we can.

The definition of humans intelligence is not so simple that the word artificial intelligence as we have know can borrow the word intelligence to itself as if it is the artificial version of ourselves, although Saudi Arabia has granted citizenship to a robot.²² The late English mathematician Alan Turing introduced the Turing test to determine if artificial intelligence indeed is 'intelligence'. In the communication test, if it were found that a human could not distinguish the response from a computer or a human, then it shows that computer can reach human-like intelligence.²³ Throughout the world history, we have seen computers able to beat the best human chess player and the best player in an ancient Chinese game known as Go. Not so long ago also, artificial intelligence has achieved the level where it can 'design' a car to be safer based on data collections from car accidents.²⁴ Furthermore, machine learning was introduced where these computers can 'teach itself' or 'develop itself' by collecting data through its experience and perform algorithmic calculations to increase its 'intellect' capacity. The advancement of artificial intelligence has reached a level where it can imitate human's 'intuition'. The 'intuition' they have defined it as the collection of

²⁰ See Al-Ghazali's *Alchemy of Happiness (Kimyat'i Saadet)*

²¹ Quran 35: 1

²² Andrew Griffin (October 26, 2017) Independent: *Saudi Arabia Grants Citizenship to a Robot for the First Time Ever*. Online Article. Available At: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/saudi-arabia-robot-sophia-citizenship-android-riyadh-citizen-passport-future-a8021601.html>

²³ Editors. Encyclopaedia Britannica. *Turing Test*. Online Article. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/Turing-test>

²⁴ Autodesk (May 27, 2016) *Autodesk Generative Design*. Online Video. Available At: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtYRfMzmWFU>

data and predications base on it through algorithm in a super computer that uses quantum mechanic where they can computerized multiple data in the same micro seconds.²⁵ When it is claimed that robots can imitate human's intuition, then it shows that their definition of human nature is based on this mathematical formula. They view this because these robots have the power to achieve the level where humans cannot reach and hence, there will be a time when these robots can have their own consciousness and decided to be independent on humans. They view this prediction as the day the robots took over humans and perhaps destroy the human race too. This kind of 'thinking' has dehumanized the human race, and perhaps for us it's a reflection in their consciousness that they failed to aware that humans actually have been 'robotized' instead. This 'thinking' has contradicted their consciousness of the origin of humans which they held as the break-through of science in the Western civilization. They have argued that through the randomness as shown by quantum physic that universe were created and a neutral particle exploded to produce positives and negatives particle, a theory known as the big bang. This chaos continued until it reaches a point where a living being is conceived, as it is intelligent enough to have its own consciousness and the will to survive. Hence the theory of evolution suggested the humans great grandfather before the ape was a fish. As they already argued that then we can assume that in their theory, throughout randomness there is point where a fixed algorithm that is formed which responsible to set the pattern that allows evolution. This algorithm finally is possible in robot and when the time they reach the level where they overcome humans in term of intelligence and free-will, it is assumed that the artificial intelligence will replace human beings as the main inhabitant of the planet earth – a continuation of evolution.

But we disagree with their hypothesis because their theory of existence and their definition of intellect is in contradiction – or in conflict – with each other. If algorithm indicates any pattern, then it must be a priori in the sense its potentiality to exists must be precede before its actualization in existence. For example, “ $1+2=3$ ”. Although 3 is the product of 1 and 2, the existence of 3 in term of potentiality is equally at the same time to the existence of 1 and 2, either in potentiality or actuality. The reason is, “ $1+2=3$ ” is logically and conceivable by us – it's existence allowed by us by our common sense indicate by our feelings. The influential German philosopher Immanuel Kant would use this model to explain the aesthetic transcendental that support his philosophy of epistemology. Furthermore in arithmetic manner we can see that;

²⁵ BBC Click (Dec 20, 2017) *What is Quantum Computing?* - BBC Click. Online Video. Available At: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7HXTt7HMDE8>

$$1 + 2 = 3$$

$$1 + 2 + 3 = 5$$

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 5 = 11 \dots\dots\text{and so on.}$$

Hence to argue that from randomness we can form an intelligent algorithm pattern is to argue “red + blue = 3” and from that 3, a set of constant arithmetic will be formed.

Therefore to imagine;

$$\text{Blue} + \text{red} = 3$$

$$\text{Blue} + \text{red} + 3 = 4$$

$$\text{Blue} + \text{red} + 3 + 4 = 7 \dots\dots\text{and so on is unacceptable.}$$

Even if,

$$1 + 2 = 14$$

$$1 + 2 + 14 = 15$$

$$1 + 2 + 14 + 15 = 30 \dots\dots\text{and so on also in not acceptable.}$$

Therefore, the definition of ‘intellect’ that is limited only to our physical sense that can be apply to machines as well is not acceptable in our understanding – if not in Islam, at least for Aristotle and Immanuel Kant.

In the history Western philosophy, Plato argues in his *Phaedo* that the intellect must be ‘polished’ by minimizing the body influence, hence he denotes that humans are made of two components, the physical-animal body and high lofty soul known as the intellect. The intellect is responsible to contemplate on beautiful things – goodness that share a more resemble to God, the end destination of man upon reaching death. Aristotle went further details by arguing that it’s God that activates the intellect to receive abstract things and perform intellection on them, like how the light helps the eyes to see colours.²⁶ The German philosopher Immanuel Kant went even further in the metaphysic realm by combining both Plato and Aristotle arguing that essence of knowledge is inert and the rest of knowledge are built based on this system.²⁷ Although British empiricist like John Locke would argue the otherwise, he did not deny the internal presence in humans, which responsible for the systematic build up for knowledge.²⁸ In short, from ancient time to classical period, the Western consciousness did not deny the dual aspect of human nature as proven in their articulation of what is the ‘intellect’. It is recorded until around the period of around World War II, in the early 20th century when Vienna Circle agreed that ‘metaphysic’ is not a science anymore. The drastic measure had shown, through analytical

²⁶ See Aristotles’ *DeAnima*.

²⁷ See Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*.

²⁸ See Locke’s *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.

philosophy lead by Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein, that the concept of existence and epistemology is limited to logic that can be expressed in mathematical language. They even to a conclusion that due metaphysic is not logical in a mathematical language structure hence it is simply a 'myth'.²⁹ They have brought down the dual aspect of human into a single aspect – purely physical and biological. When they did this, they had removed the essence of 'God' in their epistemology but this did not (and does not) deter their sense of ethic through utilitarianism. Therefore, their removal of God in their ethic is not a problem, but their limited definition of human, merely to physical beings, has put their human conception closer to robots – and the problem is when – although robots maybe to be intelligent but they are under programmed and they are not that free, and humans if they limited their self only to the biological aspect, due to the nature of forgetfulness in humans, they may not be free as well and constraint to the chain of capitalism which a big hindrance to their ethical consciousness of utilitarianism.

For the Sufis, the spiritual aspect of human is what contemplates on the beauty of God and it should control the animal aspect of human to achieve this objective. They do not consider that the animal aspect of human to be destroyed, instead, it is rather to be used in proper way, as suggested by the intellect on the spiritual aspect. God is Most Kind and the Most Beautiful and the contemplation of Him should induce the sense of humility and respect towards creatures and natures that are a 'trust' from God to us. The following is the translation of Al-Fatihah, the Opening chapter of the Quran:

In The Name of Allah The Most Merciful Most Compassionate

All praises belong to You the Lord of the universe

The Most Merciful Most Compassionate

The Owner of the Day of Submission

To You we worship to You we ask for help

Show us the right path

Path that is blessed by You and the not the path that angers You and those that are lost.

The Opening chapter which is the summary of the whole Quran, where Sufism finds its root, explained in the beginning how God, who is the Most Merciful, is the Lord of the everything which includes us and therefore our nature as humans should not go against His nature of "gentleness". The purpose of worship then is not the fear of satisfying the 'ego' of

²⁹ Richard Creath (April 4, 2011) Standord Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Logical Empiricism*. Online. Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/logical-empiricism/>

a God, but rather the fear of oneself from being “injustice” and “oppressor” to other beings while the real “King” is the “Most Merciful”. It is a sense of shame when the Prophet Muhammad said “*shame is part of faith*”.³⁰ With this kind of consciousness in human, they tend to outweigh the positive characters that are gentle more than the negative characters that are harsh. As the saying goes, nobody is perfect, then we can expect that we are not required to be perfect, however if humans were created from God’s image, with this in mind, according to the Quran, God’s mercy precede His wrath,³¹ therefore the gentleness of a person must outweigh his or her harshness. We cannot completely remove harshness in our nature, as in the time when justice is required, anger is necessary for courage.

The world, according to the Sufis, was created because God was expressing Himself, on how beautiful He is.³² His act of creation, the act of giving us existence, is an act of His generosity for not only He gave us existence but also to experience His beauty.³³ As God that is described in the Quran is not a passive God, but rather an active God, our experience of Him also is active to satisfy the purpose of His creation at the first place. Between God and us, is the Prophet Muhammad, whose spirit is the first creation. Rumi in one of his discourses argued that the Light of Muhammad is the first mover of our intellect.³⁴ The symbol of Prophet Muhammad is not like Jesus Christ in Christianity – as Jesus was God in the form of man as the son of God, Muhammad was only a man who is known to have the knowledge where he can master his ethics according to the worldview that pertain to the truth. Unlike Jesus Christ, Muhammad was not crucified – he did not die for others’ sins – but he was abused and harmed and he involved in wars, fighting physically, risking his life to defend the people who accepted him as their leader. His legacy is not in his death for others, but rather in his examples to do what is right and justice for himself and others. Since in Islam, Prophet Muhammad holds the highest place of meaning, then in the consciousness for those who follow him like Rumi, the struggle to do what is right and justice is very real and hope is the spirit of this struggle.

Perhaps one of the most unrivaled romantic literatures is the love story of Layla and Majnun. It tells how two lovers from different tribe, went against the challenges that came between them, without being wary of love, they hold each other in their heart although in the end was rather a tragic. The Persian literature was the main inspiration for William

³⁰ Sahih Al-Bukhari 6118

³¹ Sahih Muslim 2751b

³² See footnote 6

³³ This is further discussed in coming pages. See footnote 53.

³⁴ See *Fihi Mafih*, chapter 38

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. When Kiyas, fell in love with Leyla, they were separated by the notion that she is to be kept from away from the boy of a rival tribe. The separation caused Kiyas to loss an aspect of himself, as he started to wonder around the desert and recited poems dedicated to Layla. Kiyas by that time was known as Majnun, which means 'the crazy one'. For people other than the lovers, Majnun did 'lost an aspect of himself' – his sanity and his consciousness as Majnun started to live the wild and befriended with wild animals and hardly eat any food. For Majnun, it wasn't a lost; but a gain instead – he gained something that is more valuable than what other people have claimed what he lost – he gained his 'freedom'. Despite all the distractions and the worldly offers that he received in his lifetime, Majnun did not swayed from loving his Leyla, until he became nothing but dust and bones by her grave. For the readers of the novel (or poetry in Persian) they know that in the end Leyla and Majnun loved each other and them two knew they loved each other despite there were tons of reasons for them to give up their love. But they didn't because they stayed true to themselves which is to love whom or what they really love, and this is 'freedom' when we live our life true to ourselves and with sincere. Therefore, it is essential for us to reflect on our life, apart from distinguish what is truth and false, what is right and wrong; also we need to reflect what is necessary and unnecessary.

According to the Quran, God will not change our conditions unless we change ourselves.³⁵ There is no effect if we able to change the system of the world while we still have our previous bad habit, as that habit will not help us to put the 'newly' system on how it is originally intended. Instead, the 'new' system can be abused also and the same cycle will keep going – in other words, it is only the same problems with different reasons or accuses. In fact, if our human quality is the best what humanity can offer, then even the most evil capitalism system can be justice. In other words, it was not the system that defines human nature, but humans themselves who define how human they are – the power they have to execute righteousness and justice. In the age of philosophical challenge that pertains both to the mind, spirit and body, the question of hope should not be ignore. Like the spirit of true of lovers, each on us must keep on fighting believing what is right, that is in harmony with our nature as human beings. As we acknowledge hat God is One, even in the language of atheist it would be 'human nature', then we must agree that amongst humans are no that different but they are one in nature by being truthful to themselves. Justice as far as we concern, its about the right to do as it is ethically involve us – ourselves- with others. It is not out of fear, as we already had discussed, but rather through the shame by acknowledging that the world is created out of 'kindness' and 'gentleness'. Our attitude in

³⁵ Quran 13: 11

economy and politics must reflect this 'love' that we consider a very core of ethic, as it should be the principle in our life. Therefore the best economy modal, is not the reform of its structure, but rather the reform of the character of its leaders and workers who follow the leaders. .

Before the beginning of our concerned verse, in one verse, Rumi mentioned how that laughter and sadness is not a difference for the man who sees the end.³⁶ This idea carries a lot of weight when we are discussing about hope as it shows that our emotions should never be the distraction for us to achieve our goals – be it a happy emotion or a sad one. This kind of goal must be certain and does not suffer change, and this is what Al-Attas meant in his conception of happiness in Islam which is the removal of doubt and the establishment of certainty pertain to this life and the hereafter. This certainty which is known as 'iman' is not simply a blind faith, but faith that is built when the knowledge perceived is confirmed both by reason and intuition.³⁷ This certainty is confirmed by feelings, when the feeling is not in doubt it does not suffer a misery, instead when it is in a state of certainty there is no force that should shake it – to make it into doubt.³⁸ Therefore we know that emotion is not the indication but rather something deeper that even beyond the notions of principles – or rules – because we do not concern with the means rather we concern with end. When this is embedded in our consciousness, the sense of 'to sacrifice' as the right to do is possible, because the feeling of 'pain' will not deter our spirit and help us not to give up – likewise, in the state of comfort and joy, we will not be swayed by the distractions and to forget our main 'intention' and the saying of "power corrupts" will be far from our state. Without implying "Islam" is the only solution by imposing it on others – which itself contradicts the teaching of Islam – the lesson we can learn is to put "love" above our emotional satisfaction that carries the meaning of "selfishness". In other words, in struggle for the right thing, the aspect of 'sacrifice' must be expected.

Human according to Aristotle is a social animal.³⁹ Therefore, from this understanding we can see that, for human to isolate himself or herself from society completely for a long time, we cannot assume that this person has reached a wisdom that beyond our comprehension. To be fair, the avoidance of human interaction means the avoidance of 'pain' which as we have already discussed is necessary in our experience. In other words, a man who is lost in contact with world, we cannot expect him to help to

³⁶ Mathnawi I: 820

³⁷ See Al-Attas' *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, chapter II.

³⁸ *Ibid*, see the *Introduction* and chapter III.

³⁹ See *Politics* by Aristotle.

make the world better because he does not share our experience and pain. Of course, sometimes certain isolations are necessary, like we need some time alone to recollect both our physical and psychological strength as well as to do reflection in order to remove unnecessary distractions that holding us back to reach our destination in our consciousness. Therefore self-awareness in all time is necessary and this is important as long as we do not forget who we are through knowing what we actually love.

According to idealism which is a legacy of Immanuel Kant, all humans ultimately want to live in peace, and that is why for the 'idealist', 'democratization' of oneself and others, is necessary even this should include "war".⁴⁰ They believe that when all nations are democratized, people all around the world have the collective strength – in individual – to determine how the life must be, which is the universal desire of living in peace. Karl Marx also adopt this idea, believing that colonialism is necessary in order to establish communism around the world, as when the colonizer is communized, so are the colonized countries too, and when this happen, communism truly can be realized which is according to him is the real 'justice'.⁴¹ Therefore we can see here, both of the opposite spectrum of ideology believe in the same essence, which humans share the same universal reality that pertains to truth and values – the only difference is how the expressed it and how they arrange its conception in their mind, what they have expressed with what is ultimate true and real, which we can see are in conflict with each other and causes some wars. This doesn't only limit to political or economy ideology, but also religion and psychology. Therefore in order to not to be distracted by this 'conflicts' the necessary step is to ignore it and accept the diversity amongst humans in many different levels without compromise what we already certain as 'truth'. With this in mind, tolerance is possible without us losing our own self or identity and by this, reaching unity with others is more possible than division by creating bigger separate groups.

If the cause and effect would be a certain law, then we can assume that for every good action or deeds we do the positive effect will amplify in a way that we do not anticipate – in a sense that our little deed means a lot in a bigger scale. Of course good actions are only

⁴⁰ In Kant's transcendental judgment, in a priori sense everyone subjected to universal moral laws or maxim, hence the desire for peace (which is beautiful and useful) is universal too. Therefore, if nations follow the will of the people wars and unwanted chaos can be avoided. See Kant's *Critique of Judgment* and Frederick Rauscher (2016) *Kant's Social and Political Philosophy: Republics, Enlightenment and Democracy*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Online. Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-social-political/>

⁴¹ Margaret Kohn, Kavita Reddy (Aug 19, 2017) Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. *Colonialism*. Online Article. Retrieved from <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/colonialism/#MarLen>

actions if there is no sincerity in it. The actions that are appear to be good might as well not be for good but for bad, and we can see the effect of bad things from it and in some cases it could be worsen like the victims could be really hurt and mistrust any good deeds again, doubting the sincerity of another person and always assume there is a hidden agenda. Therefore, we should not rely too much to define our goodness based on actions or deed that we have made, but rather we ought to focus on our inner quality. For Rumi, being good and doing good is two different things. The “doing good” is only appears in form but in meaning it could mean the other and this is hypocrisy.⁴² In Islam, hypocrisy is worst than misbelieve.⁴³ While misbelieve is the sincerity of being in doubt, hypocrisy is the complete challenge towards God and the removal of God as the All Knower and Justice from the consciousness. The opposite of hypocrisy is sincerity, and sincerity according to Al-Ghazalli is in parallel to our knowledge of God.⁴⁴ Of course our knowledge of God also pertains to our knowledge of the self and nature; society, religion, politics, economics; and hence our understanding of things in relation to their relationship with each other, we may act what is right that is understood as justice. Therefore, when we act according to this, by being justice, we give others their right then they are in their right ‘place’ they also tend to act right and give others their right also, and the cause and effect will continue as long as other unavoidable factors allow. That is why for Rumi, when he interprets the Quranic verse “they say we believe when they with you, but once they are alone they say we misbelieve”,⁴⁵ he does not like most of us would interpret it as a verse about hypocrisy, rather Rumi says it shows the power of goodness in someone affects his or her surrounding.⁴⁶ With this in mind, if we have the slightest of desire to see the world in a better place, we should not lose hope as the least thing we can do is to improve our inner state, and our surroundings will follow suit.

One of the ways to improve our inner state – perhaps the most effective – is to align the conceptual thoughts of objects in our mind. According to Seyyed Husseyn Nasr, in Western philosophy, the evolving of from the ancient Greek philosophies to the Vienna Circle, we have witness the disintegration of metaphysic into simply to mathematic and science, and when this happen the separation of human and nature becomes inevitable

⁴² See Mathnawi IV :214-236

⁴³ Quran 4: 145

⁴⁴ See his *Book of Sincerity in Revival of Religious Sciences (Ihya Ulumuddin)* or from the *Alchemy of Happiness (Kimya’i Saadet)*

⁴⁵ Quran 2: 14

⁴⁶ *Fihi Mafih*, chapter 63.

hence the questions of moral in relate to nature also becomes a problem. When this happened, the sense of responsibly towards nature diminished and this resulted in to the exploitation of nature for capital gain.⁴⁷ This is just one example, there are many others also that needs our intention to re-shift or realign conceptual ideas in our thought. When our understanding if things and objects are in their right positions, based on their meaningful purpose, then we can see the effects of it in term of ethics that have tremendous impact on social, politics and economy. Therefore, the first struggle is the struggle of acquiring knowledge and put the knowledge into action. The first action is within our mind, when this is firmed in our soul and external actions that spring from our internal state which is known as ethic to us. According to Nietzsche, psychological factors play important role in our consciousness that we tend to philosophize or conceptualizes what we internally desire.⁴⁸ There is some truth to this but it is limited. By this we mean, the desire that everyone has if it is not distracted by the lust of gluttony should be in the same direction, although in different velocity, hence make it in relate to each other are different but in relate to the end point are the same (similar). Again, this require faith, but the system of faith that Rumi adheres to explain how all things are returning to God, a system known as *Wahdatul Wujud*.⁴⁹ In Western philosophies we have seen that they have argued that knowledge is inert. This is the time when metaphysic has a tremendous position in their epistemology of their civilization and life. Religions at that time too play important roes and philosophers by then were strong defender of faith, like Saint Thomas Augustine. It is only until that when philosophy is limited to purely sense perception logic and the disintegration of human nature from Mother Nature happened, these affected their epistemology concerning ethics and economy.

According to the Quran, deeds only begin for the self and end at the self,⁵⁰ in other words, justice also begin from the self and end to the self. This Quranic idea shows the importance

⁴⁷ See Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1997) *Man And Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man*, ABC International Group, Inc. p. 17-39

⁴⁸ See Nietzsche's first chapter of *Beyond Good and Evil*

⁴⁹ *Wahdatul Wujud* often translated into English as 'Unity of Existence'. It tells that existence is in different levels as manifestations of God's own existence. It must not be confused with *pantheism* or *panentheism* which these two thoughts stated that the world is God or part of God as the latter said. Instead, what we are saying is that, God is alone unconditional in existence whereas everything else are conditional in respect to God. See Toshihiko Izutsu's *The Concept and Reality of Existence* and Syed Naquib Al-Attas' *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, chapters V, VI, and VII.

⁵⁰ Quran 45: 15

of the self and hence the demetaphysicized of the self in our estimation is the first step or the beginning of the demetaphysicization of anything else. In Islam, even in ancient Greek philosophies like Plato and Aristotle especially, human is both body and soul. Ethic for these two tradition is when the intellect soul rules over the animal desires. The demetaphysicization of the concept of human especially in the West happened when the French Mathematician philosopher, René Descartes degraded the spiritual meaning of the soul to a mere scientific “mind” although he provided an ontological argument for the existence of God.⁵¹ The “mind” as “consciousness” were further understood, as led by Nietzsche, like a psychological manifestation of the biological brain and further supported and refined by the understanding of the evolution theory led by Charles Darwin, suggesting humans are purely biologically physical or animal. When their definition of human is limited to this sense, the realism school of thought will appear to be the most logical solution, and this has prompted the Prince, a book by Machiavelli, as a necessary read to understand politics. Therefore when this happen, ethic for them is about the end, regardless of the means and the core of their belief is ‘self-preservation’. With this philosophy and ideology in their consciousness, they lay out political policies to preserve their interest and interpret science and religion to serve their ‘self-preservation’. We already can see this ideology in action, in the past and the present, through extreme right wing political parties whose purpose are to preserve their nation, race and religion by committing crimes and injustice acts against ‘aliens’. It was with this view that Karl Marx came to a conclusion that economy, religion and education served to protect the interest of certain groups. When reality is defined by how Marx had observed, then we can see that ‘capitalism / materialism’ will be a strong factor in the psychology of a human being in the form of ‘pride’ in terms of gluttony and ‘racism’ or ‘fascism’ even ‘sexism’ derived from the fear of ‘losing the capital’ or an injury to the ‘pride’.

As already discussed, we have seen that the demetaphysicization begun with the conceptualization of the self. Therefore we can assume that the metaphysicization process too should begin with conceptualization of the self. As mentioned, one of the biggest challenges to the acceptance of the human to consist a soul is the standardization of the evolution theory as a science. Many discussions between biologists and philosophers are needed in this subject, but in this work, at least we can assume that Aristotle would reject the evolution theory on the basis of the exceptional quality of the human intellect. Even the father of modern linguist Noam Chomsky was still in puzzle on the origin of language as there is no biological evidence linking it to evolution although for now the minimal

⁵¹ See Reene Descartes’ *Meditations on First Philosophy*.

program seem to the best explanation despite there is a huge difference in intelligent manifestation with a very little biological difference between humans and other chimpanzee species including the ancestor species.⁵² If the biologists' observation and conclusion is true, then all the philosophies since ancient Greek about the human nature is as good as 'rubbish'. However I am sure, these ancient philosophers were more sophisticated than the average person nowadays and I am sure also their observation on nature must be sophisticated also, and for them not to assume humans were derived from apes showed a deeper understanding of logic is necessary. One of the basic reasons we can consider in this little space of this book is that, for Aristotle nothing greater should come of from the lesser.⁵³ Let's assume one may disagree by Aristotle by saying that from the lesser, the greater can be created. For example, we assemble simple metal and non-metal parts together, we can produce a super computer that can calculate the distance of stars. The computer of course by principle is far superior than the simple metal and non-metal parts. Technically what has been argued is correct, however, if we think out of the box, we counter argue by saying that the mathematic law that allows the computer to be created and able to be functioned, already pre-exist in potentiality before physical substances come to existence; it is simply *a priori*. That is why, another great metaphysician, Immanuel Kant always careful with *a priori* when he developed his philosophy which has tremendous influence on the Western civilization itself. Now, let's bring this analogue to understand human; humans' intellect already exists in potentiality even before humans are existed in the physical form. The Sufis in Islam, like Rumi, called this law the *Light of Muhammad*, which is the origin of the human intellect.⁵⁴ But this law, unlike Aristotle's *First Unmoved Mover*, nor unlike Kant's *a priori*, is active as proven in the freedom of will power in humans. Therefore, it is ridiculous for Aristotle that the intelligent consciousness of a human is derived from evolution, but must be already in human, even when it is not manifested, it is hidden as a potential, and even the biological physical component that allow the human intellect to be manifested too must be original, not from the ape, if not it will be a contradiction to the principle of humans consciousness that could do come from

⁵² Given citation: Bolhuis JJ, Tattersall I, Chomsky N, Berwick RC (2014) *How Could Language Have Evolved?* PLoS Biol 12(8): e1001934. doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.1001934. Can be found online at <https://chomsky.info/20140826/>

⁵³ See Aristotle's *Metaphysic*.

⁵⁴ See *Fihi Mafihi*, chapter 38

apes.⁵⁵ Human is a different species completely. According to Syed Naquib Al-Attas, in his book *On Justice and the Nature of Man*, if we were to consider the revelation in Islam as the basis of science, then the human species would begun with Adam which he calculated as roughly 8000 years ago.⁵⁶ Therefore, according to him, humans are a completely a new creation from God that is not in the same category as animal as humans consisted of the intellect which responsible for his or her knowledge and artistic expressions and scientific discoveries.

One of the challenges in this 21st century is the distraction of media that is filled with propagandas of materialism and corrupted ones. Possibly this effect is obvious in the West but in the East too it should not be neglected, as the internet is an essential part of the modern globalization. To overcome this challenges, one may have the sense of purpose in life by remembering the multiple modes of aspect of God, for example in Islam, there are two aspects that really influences the concept of good and bad or heaven or hell; the names of Al-Jamil which means the Most Beautiful and Al-Jalil which means the Most All-Mighty. One of this aspects will come to our experience in the form of good or bad and it shows our duty not to forget these two aspects. For example, in the time when we were blessed with many good things, we should not be distracted that God as the All-Mighty, can take all this away if we were too adjusted to arrogance, likewise, when despair is hitting us, we should not forget the God is All-Kindness and we should not despair of hope from His generosity. Al-Ghazali already explained this in his *Book of Hope and Fear*.⁵⁷ All this 'check-and-balance' mechanism is important to shape the ethical consciousness of man. It is with this sort of reminder that the spirit of fighting must remain intact and strong. Another important principle in the conception of God in Islam is that He is the Most Merciful, in fact in the metaphysic thought of His creating activity, our existence the prove of His generosity.⁵⁸ If we argue that everything is dependable on God, then His act of

⁵⁵ See my article *The Complaint of Rumi's Reed: It's Significance as the Identity of Man in the Concept of Existence* (2017) from The European Conference on Ethics, Religion & Philosophy 2017 Official Conference Proceedings by The international Academic Forum.

⁵⁶ See Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas' *On Justice and The Nature of Man: A Commentary on Surah Al-Nisa (4): 58 and Surah Al-Mu'minin (23): 12-14*, (2015) published by IBFIM, Malaysia.

⁵⁷ This book is found in his magnum opus *Revival of Religious Sciences* (or as *Ihya Ulumul'din* in the original Arabic) or its shorter version as found in *The Alchemy of Happiness (Kimya'i Saadet* as in the original Persian).

⁵⁸ For the Sufi metaphysicians in the *Wahdatul Wujud* school of thought, existence in its various forms (levels) spread is called "breath of Mercifulness" (*nafas rahmani*). See Toshihiko Izutsu (2007) *The Concept and Reality of Existence*, Islamic Book Trust: Kuala Lumpur. p 85

sustaining is the reflection of Him being all Merciful. Therefore with idea in our consciousness, we may realize that the continuity of humanity, or the existence of humanity within our power is by us being merciful. One clue to understand the principle of being merciful can be understood based on a hadith, or the saying of the Prophet Muhammad that, we ought to be merciful to the weak.⁵⁹ Now, by this definition, the weak we can understand it or interpret it to the various levels in human's consciousness or the society. It also the act of recognizing diversity within us all humans, hence the sense of understanding each other plays an important role here. Therefore with this active consciousness in our mind, we are naturally tend to thrive to ease the burdens that others may feel within our capacity and mean with the realisation of how weak we are individually at the first place. This act of doing the right thing, is a core principle in the act of acting justice and the fire of the spirit must be in continue. The idea of humanity that we have discussed so far is different than Western idea of utilitarianism. Instead of thinking the biggest number of good or happiness we rather exercising the energy of empathy by reflecting ourselves as human in relate to reality as the first principle. So rather, it is the act of acting good for the self rather than others. The others are the subject for the first objective. It also different than the left socialism. Instead of fighting to put liberal values or toleration value within society, it is about taking responsibility towards the society for the self. This sense of sincere responsibility as we had mentioned earlier is the effect of 'love' that we tried to bring it as the center of our discourse. Therefore, as long as 'love' is there, 'hope' is always there too.

When Kant argues that democracy is the way to reach the world peace, he was right in term of that all humans, everybody wants peace.⁶⁰ In fact for Rumi all loves actually pointing to God alone although it may be in different forms. According to Kant, human have an internal faculty where feelings reside, and feelings is an effect as it pointing towards a direction especially the sublime or the beautiful. This aesthetic judgment according to him is universal; therefore, this universality in a sense is the core for unity for humans. But as we have already argued in the previous chapter when humans had demetaphysicized themselves, we can see the crisis where fear in the form of 'greed' and 'gluttony' took over as in the 'realist' world. Through this forgetfulness or the misplacement of humans as themselves – their true self – they play games with each other with the desire to win with lies and tricks. According to Rumi, adults who are in war

⁵⁹ Jami` at-Tirmidhi 1922

⁶⁰ Refer to footnote 29.

actually are in a child game,⁶¹ because their struggle and sacrifices are meaningless in the sense of not to defend the truth or justice but rather to serve a meaningless purpose in the form of lies by politicians to protect the status quo of the elites.

When we observe the politics or the nature of the world, when hatred was sowed in our heart, the ways for that hatred to be truth in our heart is not by our feelings but rather the oratory skills of the politicians instead. Due to our lack in thinking ability we fail to provide a sound reason to argue against the argument presented by the politicians. Therefore, to blindly accept the argument seems to be inevitable. However if we take our time to contemplate and understand the 'enemy' perhaps many discoveries can be found within our own individual capacity. We have observed throughout history of politics how friends turn to enemies and enemies turn to friends. This shows that, what Donald Davidson argued in his *Coherence of Truth* which truth is only a matter of relativism, which means a truth is considered as the truth when it is agreed upon by the individuals or societies as the truth. This observation has showed us the demetaphysicization of epistemology when sense perceptions become the validity of knowledge instead of reason. This thought system in the West is known as *logical positivism*. But this philosophical movement in the West itself is a hypocrisy! If we look at the intellect culture left and championed by the logical positivism movement through the science of today's physic (*big bang, string theory etc.*) and biology (*evolution etc.*) their attitude towards knowledge and reasoning has no different than how the metaphysicians did their works, from ancient Greek to pre-Vienna Circle. The reason is, the physicists observe the movement of particles and through mathematical calculations they introduce their theories of the universe. Today's experiment activities are made to prove these theories are true if a sense perception observation can be made. Likewise, through their observation of similarities in many animals today, the biologists sketch the family tree of humans that range into million of years ago by linking them to a fish as their origin. This intellectual attitude has no difference how the metaphysicians observe nature and stretched their observation to prove the existence of God. Therefore, my point in making this statement, we can see that, how knowledge can presented by a talented orator to be false and can be used to trick us into believe what is not necessary real.

When knowledge is in utter confusion, the French mathematician and philosopher, Descartes, went into a deep meditation in the form of radical doubt and from thereon he formed his epistemology structure. He found out that, the only thing that is certain is himself, hence the phrase: "I think therefore I am".⁶² But this radical doubt as meditation

⁶¹ Mathanawi I: 3435

⁶² See Renée Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*.

was not the first when Descartes performed it. Hundreds of years before him, the Sufi theologian, Al-Ghazali asserted that, there were two ways to reach the truth.⁶³ One way he refused to open up about it publicly, but the other way he revealed, is through contemplation on the self deeply, but not too deep as the effect would be backfire to the experience.⁶⁴ That is why, mathematicians like Georg Cantor, Ludwig Boltzmann, Kurt Gödel and Alan Turing ended up in tragic as they tried to solve ‘infinity’.⁶⁵ But Descartes’ meditation is very limited. As much as the self is a mystery, the conception of God derived from the contemplation of the self also is a mystery. That’s why for Al-Attas, knowledge from “revelation” is necessary as for him, as in the worldview of Islam, God is an active being. Muhammad Iqbal, the Indian poet and philosopher, in his famous *Reconstruction of the Religious Thought In Islam*, had performed a philosophical test in order to justify the ‘revelation’ of the Quran. He argued that, with the verses in the Quran such as the alteration of night and day as a mean for us to ponder on the conception of time and the expansion of universe as written in Quran seem to confirm Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity.⁶⁶

The purpose of this monograph is not imposing Islam to non-believer readers, but rather what I am doing here, I am trying to show the epistemic principle in Islamic tradition. The Quran said that God will not change the condition of the people unless they change themselves. According to Iqbal, based on the story how the Prophet Muhammad have reach the high heaven but yet chose to come down to earth for the his people shows that as he explained his *Reconstruction*, the true culture of Muslim people or the true Islamic culture is the culture of intellectuals.⁶⁷ Al-Attas wrote in his book *Islam and Secularism* that “Islam is not a religion meant for fools.”⁶⁸ Before we may come to a wrong conclusion that reasoning is the most important aspect of human, we ought to revisit the Kazak poet and philosopher Abai on how the ‘heart’ is more important – or precede – both ‘reason’ and ‘will’.⁶⁹

In his book *Book of Words*, Abai shared with us his reflection on the state of the Kazaks at that time and offered the solution which is very relevant in our time. He observed, that the

⁶³ See Al-Ghazali’s *Deliverance from Error (Munkidh al-Dalal)*.

⁶⁴ See Al-Ghazali’s *Alchemy of Happiness (Kimayet Saadet)* on the chapter, *Knowledge of the Self*.

⁶⁵ See the BBC documentary “*Dangerous Knowledge*”.

⁶⁶ See chapter II.

⁶⁷ See chapter V and VI.

⁶⁸ See Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (1993) *Islam and Secularism*, ISTAC: Kuala Lumpur, p. 109

⁶⁹ Abai (2005) *Book of Words*, Abai International Club: Semey. p. 110-111

problem in the Kazak society was psychological in the sense how they understood life, family and education. The solution to this was according to him is the revision to the concept of human as the highest capability is to contemplate on beauty and God's revealed beautiful Names and Attributes. Al-Attas in his *Islam and Secularism* suggested that the problem with the muslims is the loss of adab, which means they are doing injustice to themselves through the confusion and corruption of knowledge through the cause of false and pretentious leaders.⁷⁰ However, Al-Attas did say that according to the Quran God created human to know and to distinguish right from wrong, and justice from injustice.⁷¹ This epistemic statement strengthened when the Prophet Muhammad said that we ought to consult our own 'heart' and sin is defined when the 'heart' is in unrest.⁷² In Abai's work, he said, as 'reason' can come up with good ideas or bad, likewise, 'will' can perform good or evil, it is the heart that brings comfort or discomfort to indicate if the 'action' is right or wrong.⁷³

In the Mathnawi, there was a story of how a hare complaint to the lion that there is another fierce animal than him in the jungle. The lion with a challenge to his ego asked the hare to lead him to the other lion. The hare brought the lion to a well. As the lion was looking down at the well, he saw another lion, so he jumped in to fight that other lion. Little did he knew that the other lion was only his reflection in the well and the lion injured himself instead from the fall.⁷⁴ From that story, Rumi reminded us that what we saw on others is the reflection of our own ego. Therefore, the 'good' and the 'bad' we see on others are the reflection on ourselves. We may or may not exhibit the nature of that thought, evil or good, on us, which is a matter of ethic, but the potential reside within us. The reason we understand it as 'potential' is because we can recognize the pattern of that thought on others which we categorized as 'good' or 'evil', although we do not exhibit these thoughts in our own behaviour. It is at this point when the question of ethic comes, it is either we choose to actualize the 'good' potentiality or the 'evil' potentiality in us. Therefore, as an example, when we see an injustice leader, we have the option to be like him, or not to be like him. Furthermore, human is an active being. This being said, human cannot be neutral agent, but either a positive agent or a negative agent. What is being suggesting here is that, when man chose not to be injustice, at that moment too he is being justice (in proportion) –

⁷⁰ See his *Islam and Secularism* chapter IV.

⁷¹ Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, p. 109

⁷² 40 Hadith Nawawi 27

⁷³ *Book of Words*, p. 110-111

⁷⁴ Mathnawi I: 1304-1338

it is impossible to say that he is doing nothing, as Kant has argued that for someone to waste his life has deny the benefits he could contribute to the society.⁷⁵ Therefore, when we observe and reason the world and we know the injustice is being done, we have the option to follow or not to follow suit. When we refuse to do the act of injustice, there are two outcomes: i) we stop the influence of injustice and hence deny its potentiality to spread, and ii) we create a justice space (or environment) for others to be in their right place. All this formula is in proportion, as how Al-Ghazali explained the benefits and the punishment for the soul is in proportion to the balance of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ in the heart⁷⁶ – furthermore in Islam, the weight of ‘goodness’ is three times more than ‘evil’. Therefore, with this Islamic principle, in the age of ‘despair’ and ‘dark’, the spirit to fight for what is right is strong.

In the Quran it did say that, after every hardship there is ease.⁷⁷ This understanding is a principle to the aspect of being patient which in Islam it is known as part of the faith. Patience is not about being ignorant, but rather the opposite, it is about doing the right thing with sound judgment and justice. The Quran did explain that humans are hastening.⁷⁸ What is meant by ‘hastening’ here is the act out of assumption and ignorance which is the opposite of the true Islamic culture according to Iqbal. But of course here, we can understand ‘haste’ by the meaning of acting irrational without proper judgment. Therefore we can see that the aspect of ‘thinking’ in the sense of sound judgment is very important in the concept of being a human, to distinguish what is wrong and right – of what is necessary and unnecessary – which will result in justice. ‘Thinking’ according to Aristotle is the act of ‘imagining’.⁷⁹ Albert Einstein was not wrong then when he said “imagination is more powerful than knowledge”. What he meant in this quote is not for us to disregard knowledge, but rather, the importance of the activity of ‘thinking’ – to produce knowledge from other already presented knowledge as according to Al-Ghazali. Knowledge is important as it is the basis for ‘thinking’, in other words it is necessary as no fruitful activity of ‘thinking’ will come without ‘knowledge’ precedes it. This is why, the first activity (or science) after Islam is tefsir, or exegesis – the science of the interpretation of the Quran in a deep philosophical and intellectual manner. Rumi’s Mathnawi is a commentary or interpretation of the Quran and it was nicknamed as the Persian Quran.

⁷⁵ See Kant’s Universal Maxim.

⁷⁶ See Al-Ghazali’s *Book on Sincerity* as found in the *Revival of Religious Sciences (Ihya Ulumuddin)*

⁷⁷ Quran 94: 5

⁷⁸ Quran 21: 37

⁷⁹ See Aristotles’ *De Anima*.

The exercise of thinking is important as in relate to us as being human is us being justice to the self. This also a principle of ethic. Since the time of ancient Greek philosophies to Muslim mysticism and Western liberties, the ethic is very associated with rationality. In Aristotelian metaphysic, to distinguish or classify attributes into characters is important to establish a definition. Philosophers and scientists have used this approach in establishing their literatures and it is their literatures that shaped civilizations. Even great artistes are great thinkers for they think what was unthinkable before; they become the voice of consciousness through artistic expressions. All these activities have defined human in anthropological sense and the power of intellect also have been used as tools or weapon for humans to reach their greater agenda, how Abai had expressed that, 'reason' can be used for both good or evil. The origin of good and evil if we traced it in the Quran we can found them in the story of how Iblis refused to bow down to Adam. As God commanded all angels to bow down to Adam, Iblis refused due to him being made of fire whilst Adam was made out of clay. But God created Adam in higher degree, because he was given knowledge – a quality which distinguish us humans than other creatures. The angels understood this when they acknowledge that they 'did not know' and because if this the angels bow down to Adam. Iblis, out of this envy, vowed to misled the children of Adam until the End of Time.⁸⁰ From this story Rumi in his Mathnawi have shown an aspect of reality in our life. When Iblis was condemned by God, he blamed God for God the all powerful had misled him and made his strayed. This is true, but it is not a point as what we are trying to get to here. The point is, when Adam did approached the 'forbiden tree' after tricked by Iblis and was sent down to earth, he did not blame God instead he asked from God forgiveness. Interestingly enough, as Rumi pointed out, God taught Adam all the names, which Adam had the knowledge of everything and despite of this, he failed and could not save himself from the tricks of Iblis. According to Rumi, when Iblis blamed God, there was not a union between him and God, whilst when Adam asked forgiveness from God, there was a union between them two.⁸¹ The reason is, when Adam asked forgiveness from God, the aspect of God being the Most Merciful, which is the essence of existence, is manifested and expressed in that prayer of Adam. Hence, in the aspect of God being the Most Merciful, Iblis is in ignorance whilst Adam witnessed it within himself. When Iblis vowed to mislead the children of Adam, it was to sabotage this spiritual growth in humankind. For Iqbal, spiritual growth is intellectual growth because as much as spiritual

⁸⁰ The story is constructed from multiple verses found in the Quran.

⁸¹ *Mathnawi I* : 1234-1262

is associated with feelings, in active participation is about experiencing and reasoning.⁸² In traditional and classical mystics through out ages and different traditions and religions, it is the temptation of materialism, which is the hindrance for humans to reach their highest potentiality. For Al-Attas, at least in the 20th century, it is the corruption and confusion of knowledge.⁸³ If we take these two observations and adapt in under Marxian and Chomskian lenses in this our 21st century, we can see that within modern political structures, education and media were used by certain ‘greedy actors’ to misled people for the benefits of their greediness.

If now we argued that, it is them (the unjust greed capitalists) as the cause for the challenges we are facing in this 21st century, then if we are in dire to fight or struggle for justice, the best way is to ‘outsmarting’ them. Why ‘outsmart’? It is because through intellectual deprivation that they able to protect their status quo. For example, in recent times, women movement against men’s sexual misconduct have risen to the level that have put these men to shame and in fear of ‘witch hunt’. These movements have been seen as a progression in Western civilization. It shows that, if women were not aware that the humiliation they had from inappropriate sexual assault from men were injustice, then these ‘pervert’ men in power would have still enjoyed their ‘misbehave’ through the ignorance of these women. One way for them to keep these women in ignorance of their right, is through the normalization of ‘sexual assault’ in the guise of social norms in work place such as the opportunity to climb the career ladder for better economic opportunity and freedom. Taking this example’s structure in a bigger context, let’s imply that war corporate companies gain money from wars through selling weapons etc. We can see clearly how governments from around the world spending billions of dollars for defense. Therefore, the most profitable clients for these war corporate companies are the governments; and politicians run the government. A politician can be in power as far as people give him the power. People, in truest sense as much as they are the source of a nation’s wealth, through their work ethics and their right to inherited the wealth of mother nature, they are also the giver of legitimacy to a political leader regardless in whatever political system they are in. Therefore, when the people are in ignorance or in confusion, they tend to be in ‘fear’. Within this fear, ‘anger’ should be expected and through this ‘anger’ the rise of right nationalism is inevitable hence the rise in spending for military weapons for war and fighting also is very obvious by the leaders who took advantage the people’s anger. Perhaps, these leaders gained good commission from the corporate war companies.

⁸² See Muhammad Iqbal’s *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, chapter V.

⁸³ See Al-Attas’ *Islam and Secularism*, chapter IV.

Through medias, people distracted by materialism propagandas, and the unjust perception of others blurred their sense of judgment. Through education, regardless in the levels of university, media or public debates, knowledge of what is right or wrong which includes the necessities and unnecessary aspects in their epistemic methods and judgments will keep the people in ignorance or arrogance. For example in apply and social sciences, they had dehumanize the spiritual aspect of humans which led them to be more materialists, not only on the aspect of material wealth, but also unnecessary pride. In religious education, they have narrowed the intellectual interpretation aspects of religion into merely literal readings with blind faith, hence, they will be blind to the injustice that is being done on them, and this will lead them to be injustice to their children also. To sabotage the intellectual aspect of humanity is the best move to destroy humanity, because the strength of humanity lies on this intellectual aspect. In a war, it is not the amount of attacks that defeat the enemy, but rather, how ahead we are in outsmarting the enemy. This principle was recorded by the ancient Chinese war general and philosopher, Sun Tzu, in his what was used to be a secretive masterpiece by ancient Chinese imperials, called *The Art of War*. Therefore, as the act of intellect is the property of our soul, as long as we the have 'love' within us for what is beautiful and just, we should exercise our intellect toward reaching this goal the effect should be manifested in our personal ethic, work ethic and being a positive impact for society and beyond.

In the Mathnawi, Rumi started his masterwork with "listen to the reed how it complains telling a story of a separation". One of the greatest Turkish scholars on Rumi, Abdalbaki Golpinarli, wrote in his commentary that the separation tells how man was separated from God and through the pain of separation, which is the evidence of 'love' he is longing to return to God. In fact, Rumi's death night is known as the Wedding Night, and this night is celebrated by mystics from around the world annually in Konya. This separation for Iqbal is the perquisite for man to fulfill the potential to be his true purpose⁸⁴ and for Al-Attas this is the beginning of religion, when in separation, humans declared that God is the Lord.⁸⁵ For this reason, in this world, we feel the pain because we have known the beauty before, either we are aware of this pain or not. This idea is very core for any philosophy education and a very influential one too; it is traced back to Plato's idea of the form. Plato argued that, 'learning' is actually 'recollection', which means the reason we can understand something as 'knowledge' it is because we can recognize it hence it means also we have

⁸⁴ See Muhammad Iqbal's *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, chapter IV.

⁸⁵ See Syed Naquib Al-Attas' *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, chapter I.

known it before.⁸⁶ Therefore, applying this logic in our discussion, the reason we have the urge to fight for justice in this world where we can know it is unjust is because we have known what is justice beforehand. In Islam, 'Justice' is one of God's names.

What we have discussed in this monograph so far is our understanding of the saying "where there is water flowing, there is greens; where there is a tear flowing, there is a blessing" of the 821st of the first volume of Mathnawi by Rumi. In the limited space of this small monograph, we discussed the couplet by showing that the root of our misery is the confusing knowledge that is presented available to us, and we somehow to certain extend managed to show that this confusion is only benefiting certain people to maintain their status quo. We further have suggested a way to fix this problem by suggesting a revision on the spiritual aspect of human beings and the potentiality to 'love' within it through intellectual development and struggle. We also have demonstrated that as long as 'love' is vital, the hope of justice is vital too – and this is one of the many interpretations of the 'blessing' behind our 'tears' from the given couplet.

Bibliography & References

- [1] AL-ATTAS, Syed Muhammad Naquib (1995) *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition Of The Fundamental Elements of The Worldview of Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC
- [2] AL-ATTAS, Syed Muhammad Nquib (1993) *Islam and Secularism*. ISTAC: Kuala Lumpur
- [3] AL-GHAZALI (2007) *Kimiya-e Saadat: The Alchemy of Happiness*. Field, C. (trans.) Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust
- [4] ARISTOTLE (2011) *The Philosophy of Aristotle*. Wardman A. E., Creed, J. L. (trans.) United States: Signet Classics
- [5] CHOMSKY, Noam (2008) *The Essential Chomsky*, Arnove, A. (ed.) United States: The New Press
- [6] GAZALI (2011) *Kimya-yi Saadet*. Muftuoglu, Mehmed A., Yavuz, A. Fikri, (trans. in Turkish) Istanbul: Celik Yayinevi
- [7] GOLPINARLI, Abulbaki. (1985) *Mesnevi ve Serhi. I. cilt*. Istanbul: Milli Egitim Basimevi
- [8] GOLPINARLI, Abdalbaki (2015) *Mevlana Celeleddin: Hayati, Eserleri, Felsefesi*. Inkilap: Istanbul
- [9] IQBAL, Muhammad (1962) *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. Lahore: S.H. Muhammad Ashraf

⁸⁶ See Plato's *Phadeo*.

- [10] IZUTSU, Toshihiko (2007) *The Concept and Reality of Existence*. Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust
- [11] JALALU'DDIN RUMI (2004) *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'ddin Rumi I – VI*, Nicholson, R. A. (trans.) Istanbul: Konya Metropolitan Municipality
- [12] KANT, Immanuel (1994) *Pure Practical Reason and the Moral Law*, Peter Singer (ed.) *Ethics*. Great Britian: Oxford University Press
- [13] KANT, Imanuel (2008) *Critique of Judgement*. United States: Oxford University Press
- [14] NASR, Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1997) *Mand And Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man*. Chicago: ABC International Groups, Inc.
- [15] PLATO (2015) *Great Dialogues of Plato*. Rouse, W. H. D. Rouse (trans.) New York: Signet Classics
- [16] RAY, Christopher (2001) *Logical Positivism*. Newton-Smith, W. H. (ed.) *A Companion to the Philosophy of Science*. Great Britian: Blackwell Publishers
- [17] RUMI (2006) *Discourses of Rumi*. Arberry, A. J. (trans.) Malaysia: Masterpiece Publication
- [18] TURKMEN, Erkan (2002) *The Essence Of Rumi's Masnevi Including His Life And Works*. Ankara: Ministry of Culture Of The Republic Of Turkey
- [19] WAN DAUD, Wan Mohd Nor (1998) *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas: An Exposition of The Original Concept of Islamization*. Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC

Additional Remarks: *This monograph was written from the 14th of January 2018 in Tehran, Iran and completed in Konya, Turkey on the 4th of March 2018.*

Konya, Turkey

17th of March 2018

“Where There is Water Flowing, There is Greens. Where There is a Tear Flowing, There is a Blessing.”

بود سبز ه روان آب كجا هر

شود رحمت روان اشكي كجا هر