Article

Maqasid as a Basis for an Integrated Framework and Methodology

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Abstract

The term Maqasid denotes objectives and purposes, and the maqasid-based Islamic approach to knowledge, manifested in the Maqasidi School of Islamic Thought, has been widely discussed recently. This article aims at taking the discussion to a fundamental and methodological dimension that ensures the genuinity and soundness of the maqasid approach, and introduces the basic fundamentals of a new "Maqasid Methodology". The formative and hegemonic principle here is the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (sas). Three fundamental logical premises are introduced, namely, connectivity, wholism and emergence. Then, a justification of the necessity of using the "Maqasid Methodology" is presented, namely, future, critical and comprehensive orientations. Finally, the impact of this methodology on knowledge and contemporary Islamic scholarship is outlined.

Keywords : Maqasid; al-Qur'an; al-Sunnah; Maqasid Methodology; Islamic Thought.

الملخص

يشير مصطلح المقاصد إلى الأهداف والغايات، وقد نوقش في الآونة الأخيرة المنهج الإسلامي المقاصدي للمعرفة على نطاق واسع، والذي يتجلى في المدرسة المقاصدية للفكر الإسلامي. يهدف هذا المقال إلى نقل المناقشة إلى بعد أساسي ومنهجي يضمن أصالة المنهج المقاصدي وسلامته، كما يقدم الأسس الرئيسة لـ "المنهجية المقاصدية" الجديدة. وينطلق هذا المنهج في جوهره وتكوينه من حوكمة وهيمنة القرآن الكريم والسنة النبوية. كما يقدم هذا المقال ثلاثة أطروحات منطقية أساسية، وهي الاتصال أو الترابط والشمولية والتجلي أوالنشوء، ثم يدعوا المقال إلى ضرورة استخدام "المنهجية المقاصدية"، والتي تحمل في طياتها التوجهات النقدية والتكاملية والاستشرافية. كما يحدد المقال في نهايته تأثير هذه المنهجية على المعرفة والعلوم الإسلامية المعاصرة.

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الكلمات المفتاحية: المقاصد؛ القرآن الكريم؛ السنة النبوية؛ المنهجية المقاصدية؛ الفكر الإسلامي.

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Introduction

Connectivity, Wholism And Emergence

The methodological analysis of the Quran and the Prophetic tradition proves the truth, fundamentality and depth of connectivity (*silah, alaqah*)[1] that takes a web pattern (*nasaq, nazm shabaki*) between absolutely everything: the seen and the unseen, the material and the non-material. It also proves that the study of these patterns of connectivity results in the emergence of complex (*murakkab*) and wholistic (*kulli*)[2] meanings through the relationship between the parts. A primary component of these wholistic meanings is the objectives.

A human, for example, emerges from the connection and integration of his or her organs and dimensions. Allah says in the Quran: "In whatever form He willed, He composed you (*rakkabak*)" (82:8)[3] and "So, We donned the bones with flesh, and then We made another creation emerge (ansha'nahu) so glory to Allah, the best of creators" (23:14). Then, He explained the objectives of that complex composition (*tarkeeb, inshaa*), the human. To know Allah and worship Him in every aspect of life, to rectify earth and preserve humanity, and to connect what Allah orders to be connected, are objectives at a higher level of awareness and integration. These are meanings higher than the functions of each of the organs.

The idea that the constitutive parts give rise to a wholistic entity is very much embedded in the Quran. This whole is then characterised not only by these parts but more importantly by the connectivity or relationships among them and the higher objectives that are an integral and inseparable part and fundamental reason for all creation – both animate and inanimate.

Studying the Revelation in this way results in the emergence of webs of meaning that exhibit two universal laws showing us the consistency and interrelations among them. Interconnectivity (tawasul) and the emergence (tawallud, nushuu') of wholism from the parts. This is true in the realm of interrelations between the revealed meanings and higher objectives in all textual and deduced levels, basically that is how the universal meanings and the higher

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[1] It is to be noted that the difference between silah in the Quranic sense and "connecting" and "networking" in the common sense, is that the silah between everything is divinely created and humans are merely discoverers and preservers of it.

[2] "Wholism" is used instead of the usual "holism", despite the linguistic correctness of both, in order to emphasize the meaning in the root word "whole". Although wholistic/holistic is a recent word in the English language, it is used here as a translation of the Arabic term "*kulli*". Kulli is derived from the Arabic word "*kull*", which is used hundreds of times throughout the Quran and the narrated Sunnah to denote many forms of universality. *Kulli* has been used over the centuries within the Islamic scholarship terminology to denote the meaning of "wholism".

[3] References to the Quranic verses in this article is structured as: (the number of the *Surah*/Chapter:Verse/*Ayah*).

objectives emerge in the cognition of the reader who is reflecting on the interrelationships and the wholistic picture. This also applies, according to the revelation, to the interrelationships in the universe and how studying them causes wholistic patterns and objectives to emerge in the cognition of the researcher.

One cannot study the Quran and Sunnah properly without pondering upon the endless interrelationships and internal references, textually expressed and inferred. The Quran also makes reference and connections to the Sunnah. Thus, Allah states in the Quran: "and follow the Prophet so that you are guided" (7:158), "what the prophet brought you take it, and what he prohibited you desist" (4:80). Therefore, Prophet Muhammad (sas) taught us to connect different verses of the Quran in order to correct understandings and contextualise them within a wholistic view. Allah said: "We revealed to you the Reminder that you may explain to people what was sent down to them" (16:44), and the Prophet (sas) said, "I have been given the Quran and what is like it (in explanation) with it" (Ahmad 17174).

All relationships articulated within the Quran can be read directly or inferred through mindful and detailed readings. Take for example, the assertion that the Quran is above forgeries by people. Any individual with a good sense of the Arabic language could attest to the fact that the Quranic style is unique and unlike anything that Arabs say, including the Prophet (sas). Many pieces of evidence draw a bigger picture; that the Quran is from Allah. "And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it" (2:23). A similar example is that the Quran is a healing and mercy. Allah says: "And He sends down of the Quran what is a healing and mercy for the believers, and it does not increase the unjust except loss" (17:82). The Quran and Sunnah sometimes draw our attention to a particular wholistic theme from the Revelation. For example, the theme of examples/similes (amthal) in the Quran, which are dealt with as a wholistic theme. Thus, we read: "And We certainly have dispensed to people in this Quran of every simile, and the human is mostly given to contention" (18:54).

And when an internal reference is inferred but not directly articulated, a process of *ijtihad* (reasoning) that employs a robust methodology is required. The result is in an infinite number of possible combination of connections, all interacting to give rise to wholistic objectives or the Maqasid of the Quranic Revelation. In fact, one cannot claim an understanding of the texts without the capacity to perceive these internally inferred references and objectives.

It is therefore not possible to explore the Quran with a mere linguistic knowledge of the Arabic words. Properly understanding demands the capacity to connect the meanings of the words through the internal deduction of references. If, for example, we consider the first verse of the Opening Chapter (*Fatihah*): "In the name of Allah, the Merciful Sovereign, the Merciful Giver"[4] (1:1), our cognitive

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[4] The difference between *Al-Rahman* and *Al-Rahim* here is understood by referring to all other mentions in the Quran and Sunnah. The meanings of mercy that are connected to the Name *Al-Rahman*

reaction should be an attempt to draw links between "the name of Allah" and other names of Allah mentioned throughout the Quran. These include the Most Beautiful Names of Allah and references to Allah by Allah throughout. It is only through these connections that a wholistic understanding of Allah and His relation to His creation emerges. One might also consider the names that Allah taught Adam (sas) versus the "names that people invent without any authority from Allah" (53:23). One might also link the above to those who reflect upon tokens (wusum, singular: wasm). "In this are signs for those who by tokens do understand "(15:75). By connecting all references to the meaning of "names", the reader comes to see the connection between Allah and everything in the Quran and in the universe, with everything emerging as an interconnected web and inseparable whole. From there, the reader might link the two attributions of mercy to all manifestations of mercy as the rest of the Quran illustrates. Ultimately, this process of connections continuously and unfailingly leads the cognition of the mujtahid (scholar) to more wholistic understandings of the objectives of the Revelation and its confluence with reality.

Within the same verses of the Opening Chapter, one might consider the internal references between the worlds (al-'alamin) and similar words that have the same Arabic root such as knowledge ('ilm), scholars ('ulama), the known (al-ma'lum), learning (al-ta'allum), teaching (al-ta'lim) and other words related to the same root. Going beyond the strict linguistic similarity, there are important connections in the Revelation between knowledge ('ilm) and mind ('aql), understanding (fiqh), comprehension (fahm), reflection (tadabbur), thinking (tafakkur), visioning (tabassur), encompassing (ihaatah) and other central concepts such as heart (qalb), inner heart (fu'ad), intellect (lubb) and vision (basar). The internal reference of words leads the scholar to explore important connections that expand or constrain meanings, as well as relate them to objectives, values, commands, universal laws, groups and proofs. This is how webs of meaning concerning any query put to the textual sources are constructed and from which theories, principles and eventually rulings, decisions and strategies emerge.

With every cycle of reflection on the Revelation, webs of meaning expand, and more universal meanings are increasingly clarified. In these repeated cycles, more and more meanings such as the objectives of creation, life, death, and other components of the universe become clearer. Similarly, parties such as the pious ones, the believers, disbelievers, hypocrites, the People of the Book, then greater details on each party likewise start to develop in the cognition of the reader, in addition to values, universal laws, and commands, enabling the scholar to develop deeper and broader understandings and build a "framework" (tasawwur).

The Revelation also teaches us essential knowledge about the universe. It does not leave us to explore based on our natural faculties only. As with its approach to itself, the Revelation addresses the universe by connecting all of its components

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are all about sovereignty and power, and the meanings of mercy that are connected to the Name *Al-Rahim* are all about giving.

at the most intricate and sublime levels. This exposition shows us how wholistic meanings are constructed via the integration of the parts. In the true knowledge about the universe, the material world is not separate from what we classify as non-material elements. In fact, the correct classification of these realms is not physics versus metaphysics, but rather seen (*shahadah*) verses unseen (*ghayb*). The universe is alive, connected and interacting by way of its divine creation. This is a different worldview from a pure materialism that sees no such life and makes no such connections, and the difference does have an impact on all fields of knowledge from the Islamic perspective.

It follows that everything in this universe is purposeful, with complex relational expressions with all other related matter. Each relation or set of relations giving rise to greater and greater wholistic manifestations. For example, in Allah's address to the honeybees, He states: "Then eat from all the yield and keep on the ways of your Lord that were facilitated; there comes out of her insides drink of different colour, in it is a healing for people, verily in this is a proof for a people that think" (16:69). This verse shows the relationship between the bees and nature that we classify as "inanimate" such as mountains, or that grow like trees, or that are human-made like trellises. Mountains and trees, according to other sources of revealed knowledge, are alive, connected and communicant. Out of all this comes a drink that is a healing for people and a proof for those who think. The latest scientific findings reveal that bees are highly interconnected with the natural environment - with the web of natural systems - and shows that bees indeed have a central role in balancing life.

Ultimately the interconnectivity, balance and integration of everything is primary evidence for the unifying power (*tawhid*) and ability (*qudrah*) of Allah (swt). Allah says about the Quran: "Do they not ponder upon the Quran? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy" (4:82).

The higher objectives (maqasid) of Revelation are therefore one of the manifestations of the universal laws (sunan) of interconnectivity and wholism that results from an integration or synthesis of the parts. Our inability, due to human limits, to capture the reality and extent of connectivity and wholism toward which the Quran propels us, leads to a search for extensive webs of meaning that come as faithfully as possible to approximating such universal laws and thereby the higher objectives to which they give rise. This is the logic upon which our proposed "Maqasid Methodology" is built and the worldview to which it subscribes (Auda, 2021).

The cognition of everything in the proposed methodology is thus based on the webs of meanings of the verses of the Quran and the sayings of the Prophet (sas). From these webs, seven universal elements are evident, namely: concepts, objectives, values, commands, universal laws, parties and proofs. These are key elements of the fundamental premises of knowledge, awareness and scholarship that lead to a more adequate understanding of Revelation and reality--past, present or future. The logical depth of this methodological shift is a worldview that is more suited to the

needs of Muslims and humanity, especially as it shapes research, education and action in today's world.

Why *Maqasid*?

In principle, an objective-based or *Maqasidi* approach retains the connective and wholistic character that the study of Revelation demands. *Maqasid* Studies have expanded rapidly during the last three decades. Thousands of books, theses, research articles, essays, websites and social platforms can be found all over the world.[5] Many edicts (*fatwa*) and research articles in Islamic thought make explicit reference to the *Maqasid*. Even those who are not directly related to traditional disciplines have called for the mainstreaming and application of a *Maqasid* approach. At the institutional level, a number of *Maqasid*-based research centres and educational projects have emerged around the world, and literature on Maqasid al-Shariah has concomitantly appeared in many languages.[6] Although the exact definition and approach to *Maqasid* may differ among different scholars, there is a common narrative emerging regarding the historical development of *Maqasid* Studies from the time of the schools of jurisprudence and until today.

The *Maqasid* approach for re-envisioning the Islamic scholarship is indispensable for a number of pressing reasons that not only honour the textual sources but that also respond with greater relevance to the challenges of our times. Methodologically, the *Maqasid* approach exhibits future, critical and comprehensive orientations. Together, these three orientations represent important shifts from the methodologies of mainstream disciplines, which is much needed on all levels.

It is to be noted that the (traditional) *Maqasid* Studies themselves require renewal. Most traditional *Maqasid* approaches are not fully capable of affecting this shift in the expression of current Islamic thought. Although diverse, these approaches are incapable of centralizing the maqasid of the Quran, and thus reading the textual sources as required by those sources themselves. In so far as they fall short, they are incapable of providing a robust and genuine worldview that recognises the universal laws of connectivity, wholism and purposefulness. These limitations are a driving force in the development of a new Maqasid Methodology.

Future Orientation

The difference between the logic of causality and teleology is that a cause is connected to a past event that generates a reality, while a purpose (*telos*) is connected to a future that is pulling the reality towards it. From studying the Quran, we

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[5] Thousands of references in various languages are compiled within the Maqasid Library Project at Maqasid Institute. Refer to: *www.maqasid.org.*

[6] For examples, refer to the languages menu at: *www.jasserauda.net.*

concluded that the logical argument of *maqsud*/purpose (*telos*), especially as connected to universal laws, is more evident in Revelation than that of *sabab*/cause.

Every purpose revealed to humanity in the texts represents an aim that they have to strive to align with or realise in their present state and in continuously adapted and improved futures. Examples of such purposes are belief, worship, justice, rectification, purification, guidance, gratitude, success, diversity, beauty, etc. (21:19, 51:56, 57:1, 59:1, 64:1, etc). Divine purposes clearly shape the lives of believers in their immediate reality, but they are of such a nature that ultimate achievement can never be fully realised. Their future orientation demands consistent and continuous effort, with their manifestations and impact ever unfolding in time.

The Islamic ummah needs this future orientation. Generally, current Islamic discourses have a past orientation in their explanation of and reaction to the present. In light of this, Muslims often make individual and collective decisions or render judgments that are not in keeping with short and longer-term well-planned aims. By not asking serious questions about how a more desirable future state can be achieved, Islamic scholars from all streams compromise the future of the ummah and its potential contributions to human civilisation. Without a future orientation through purpose, individuals may take fateful decisions in their personal lives and families, in communities and politics; academic institutions may change programmes and priorities; organisations may adopt or reject major initiatives and projects; and businesses may choose or abandon lines of business based on mis-interpreted signals or inappropriate indicators. We must go beyond direct cause-effect approaches, individualistic emotional experiences, instinctual responses and perpetual crisis management toward greater understandings of the implications of our decisions and actions for longer term strategies that can actually contribute to desired changes in reality.

Humanity at large also needs to orient itself toward its original purposes, i.e. future perspectives that are mandated by Allah (swt) and that thereby are explicitly intended to promote welfare and avert or rectify harm and corruption. Research, disciplines and systems that do not centralise faith and noble human aims must be challenged. We find, for example, that when it comes to strategy and policy exercises, the aims are solely to achieve utilitarian materialistic objectives at the best, and unjust tyrannical objectives at worst. It is rare to find approaches in the wider strategic literature that centralise human welfare for its intrinsic value, which is endorsed by power, authority and resources. Such studies either form the foundation or support unjust causes, including those intended only or mostly to benefit a special economic interest, class or race. The ultimate objectives of such strategies can be reduced to economic domination, political monopoly and social control, even oppression. Today's social movements aim to reverse this tide and give much hope. However, in order for social movements to reject and counter these distorted visions of the future, and the plans that are necessarily associated with them, they must be equipped with all the tools and methods that enable them to see

and formulate a better future. The Islamic higher objectives could contribute some of the best starting points for these movements.

Thus, the "Maqasid Methodology" infuses purpose, future perspectives and long-term planning into the very core of its approach. It does this by dealing with all dimensions of our reality, based on the objectives (maqasid) that it aims to achieve over the course of time. It is also fully cognisant of the dynamic nature of all the parameters that are characteristic of this reality and that are necessarily in constant flux. By placing the objectives (*maqasid*) at the heart of the process of scholarship (*ijtihad*) in all of its possibilities, the scholar acknowledges such dynamism through an equally constant and dynamic oscillation between the textual sources and their manifestations in life at any given moment. Here, stability is a function of the guidance in the textual sources and the maqasid to which it propels humanity. "And upon Allah it rests to show the purposeful/straight/right/good/balanced/core (*qasd*)[7] way" (16:9).

It is important to note that a future orientation does not mean to ignore or stigmatise the past. Studying the past and building on its legacy is an integral step of the Maqasid Methodology. However, there is a difference between studying the past within a future-oriented project and studying the past to maintain an unhealthy status quo.

Critical Orientation

When we ask 'why' in order to explore intents and objectives, we instinctively open a door of critique of our lived reality *vis-à-vis* a particular aim, which is the answer of 'why'. Our reflection upon the Revelation shows that this is one of the primary techniques used for critique and evaluation. For example, when the Quran says that the objective of fasting is the achievement of heedfulness (*taqwa*) (2:183), heedfulness becomes the criteria upon which we can evaluate the impact of fasting in the life of a believer. This is why we find the hadith, "if you do not desist from unjust words and works, so Allah is not in need of your abstention from food and drink" (Bukhari 1903). In other words, fasting misses its value if the objective of heedfulness is not strengthened and may even be nullified. We also know from other verses and Prophetic narrations that fasting is also a "practice of perseverance, a motivation for charity, providence for the believer, and a month to share food with others" (Mundhiri 2/115).[8] These and other purposes are criteria for evaluating one's fasting.

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[7] The translation of *qasd* as: purposeful/straight/right/good/balanced/core is accurate, both in terms of the linguistic root (*qa sa da*) and the webs of meaning that define the purposes (*maqasid*) in the Revelation. For an extensive linguistic analysis, refer to: Muhammad Jabal, (2010). Al-Mu`jam al-Ishtiqaqi al-Muassal li-Alfadh al-Quran al-Karim, Cairo: Maktabat Al-Aadaab,

[8] The hadith stating these virtues of the month of Ramadan was narrated by a few narrators, including Al-Eani, Al-Haythami, Al-Mundhiri and critiqued by them all - and Al-Albani - because of Ali ibn Zaid ibn Judan (d. 130H/748CE); another major scholar/narrator who was rejected by later scholars of hadith because of his "Shia inclination", based on his political opinions and being a student of Imam

It is notable, that the Maqasid Methodology is not limited to one objective in thinking, scholarship and assessment, but rather integrates webs of meanings that wholistically express objectives related to the Seven Elements of the Maqasid Framework–concepts, objectives, values, commands, universal laws, parties and proofs. Every meaning in the Quranic verses should therefore be examined and embedded within the entirety of the Quranic and hadith webs of meanings. These web extensions demonstrate the universal law of connectivity, the emergence of wholism and the centrality of the higher objectives.

Despite the pervasiveness of the justification of 'why' in the Revelation according to the Revelational maqasid, such questioning is generally unpopular in mainstream Muslim cultures and scholarship. The question of objectives and consideration of the maqasid as criteria for rectification opens the door for critical revision of hegemonic systems, herd mentality, popular opinion and inherited ideas that counteract legitimate objectives (Auda, 2015). Let us take the examples of two important Islamic institutions: marriage and government. Indeed, they are of extreme importance to all humanity, which is evident from even the most cursory consideration of their divine objectives (*maqasid*) in the Revelation.

The objectives of marriage are friendship, consultation, mercy, tranquillity, chastity, kinship and child rearing (if any) as the Revelation teaches (2:223, 25:54, 30:21). These core objectives are interconnected with other concepts, objectives, values, commands, universal laws, parties and proofs throughout the texts. The way in which these elements interact gives rise to the webs of meaning that are either directly representative of the institution of marriage, overlapping with it or connected to it with various degrees of urgency and relevance. Through these webs of meanings, we are then able to critique past and present perspectives in mainstream culture that go against the objectives of marriage based on mis-interpretations, mis-narrations or misguided customs. Marriage in Islam is an institution that has many objectives in addition to the material and physical bodily aspects. It is not a utilitarian contract where the mahr or marriage gift (mentioned in 4:4) is some sort of a price for the bride. It is not a prison, especially for women, and partners can actually depart if the "limits set by Allah are not respected" (2:29, 65:1, Bukhari 2493). Nor is the merit of the groom or bride measured against such invalid criteria as race, lineage, wealth versus legitimate criteria of faith, morality and trustworthiness (Bukhari 5090, Tirmidhi 1085). A husband normally holds a place of responsible and supportive leadership (qiwamah, 4:34) in the institution of marriage in the Islamic worldview. However, he is forbidden from abusing his position and harming his wife or children in any way (Bukhari 3560, Muslim 2327). This objective-based definition of marriage is the true and divine definition.

Al-Hasan Al-Basri (d. 110H/728CE) and other anti-Umayyads scholars. In fact, Ali ibn Zaid ibn Judan was offered to take over Al-Hasan Al-Basri's place in the Basra mosque after Al-Hasan passed. He was also accused of 'confusion' as he grew older. It is a fair accusation but does not apply to the meanings of this hadith, which are all supported by other verses and narrations.

The institution of government, as another example, has the objectives of establishing justice, equity, consultation and the satisfaction of people's interests and protecting them from harm, among other objectives (Abdelgafar, 2018). These objectives are not entirely different from those associated with the institution of marriage. As a matter of fact, the webs of meanings emerging from both institutions will inevitably connect and interact. It follows that imbalances in one institution will have reverberations in other institutions where core meanings and connections are shared. Whether we start our inquiry with marriage or government, the objectives of Revelation or maqasid related to either institution and indeed others throughout the Revelation that are associated with human social systems have a cascading effect throughout this connected and wholistic system. Opinions that contradict the revealed higher objectives of government and thereby obscure them—even if they claim to be in the name of Islam—must be critiqued and rejected. Those in authority must not be given legitimacy (*shar'iyah*) based on superficial or misguided criteria, such as a forced "covenant" (*bay'ah*) to an unqualified tyrant, a consultation of an illegitimate council, or blessings from a corrupt "religious authority". The evaluation of historical, present and future systems of government must be measured against their achievement of the objectives of Revelation.

The Maqasid Methodology's critical orientation is directed at two broad approaches. The first is concerned with Islamic thought, both inherited and contemporary. The limitations in contemporary Islamic thought are not an exercise in disregard or obliteration but rather one of value and learning, which aims to advance the affairs of the ummah and humanity at large. Likewise, concern with secular thought,[9] whether it agrees wholly or partially with Islamic thought on some aspects, is in seeking truth and value. Therefore, one of the methodological steps that a scholar must undertake is to perform critical studies of the literature and explore the relationships between his or her Maqasid-based framework and the corresponding elements, if any, in Islamic and secular thought. This analysis will yield agreements or disagreements with the corresponding approaches, based on their relative compatibility with the relevant Islamic framework and general worldview.

The Muslim *ummah* and humanity could not be in greater need of the critical orientation of the Maqasid approach as it shifts humanity toward a comprehensive programme of rectification (*islah*) through connected and wholistic thought. This demands a return to sound awareness of reality at multiple and different social levels, until such collective awareness raises sufficient desire for a much needed and overdue reconstruction of the current unbalanced or broken

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[9] Secular hereby is not defined as simply separating state and religious institutions, which could be a positive policy from an Islamic perspective within how "states" and "religious institutions" are defined in their modern manifestations. Secularism hereby is rather defined as a materialist philosophy/ideology that aims to separate faith/religion from all aspects of life. Abdel Wahab El-Messiri, (2006) Epistemological Bias in the Social and Physical Sciences, London - Washington: IIIT; Abdel Wahab El-Messiri, (2002) *Al-Almaniyah Al-Juziyah wal-Almaniyah Al-Shamilah* (Partial Secularism and Total Secularism), Cairo: Dar Al-Shurouq.

systems. Broad social buy-in is necessary if we are to resist forces of tyranny, oppression and injustice—east and west—that seek to obstruct the establishment of a more faithful, equitable, just, merciful, excellent distribution of resources, opportunities and power. This wholistic drive for rectification (*islah*) goes beyond the objectives of changing certain political representations or proposing partial legislative reforms, to restructuring contemporary systems based on a renewed vision of humanity in light of the Revelation and its shaping of a new worldview.

Comprehensive Orientation

Allah says: "We have not overlooked anything in the Book" (6:38), "And no question/argument do they bring to you but We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation" (25:33), and "O believers, enter into Islam completely" (2:208). Ali Ibn Abi Taleb (ra) related that the Prophet (sas) said: "Verily, the religion of Allah cannot be made victorious except by those who encompass the entirety of its meaning" (Bayhaqi 2/427).[10] Abu Dharr (ra) narrates: "The Prophet taught us knowledge related to everything, including birds" (Ahmad 21361).

The *maqasid* /objectives dimension of any intellectual or material system is wholistic by definition. The objectives express the general direction of the system through consideration of all of its constructive parts, not according to one component or part in isolation from others. Alternatively, a wholistic view also serves to reveal those components or parts that counteract, corrupt or otherwise disrupt system integrity and its functioning towards achieving the objectives.

The webs of meaning that emerge from the Revelation, while clearly derived from Islamic sources, express universal benefits. It is a universal law (*sunnah ilahiyyah*) that the higher objectives of Revelation emerge from the interconnectedness and wholistic meanings of its parts, i.e., the meanings and relationships among the concepts, objectives, values, commands, universal laws, parties and proofs. This applies to any reality, but the onus is on Muslim scholars/thinkers to continually explore and clarify these wholistic meanings with an aim of supporting all social actors interested and involved in moving humanity toward a better state of affairs. The comprehensiveness of a sound Maqasid approach, therefore, offers all of humanity and not only Muslims, viable and valuable guidance. Islam is a faith and way of life that aims to rectify all of humanity to the extent that people establish its dimensions of worship or respect its mode of life or both. Irrespective of an individual's faith, following the divine universal laws leads to success in this life even before the next. Allah states: "Whoever desires the reward

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[10] An authentic and connected narration from Al-Bayhaqi all the way to the Prophet (sas), which was rendered weak only because of Abu Bakr Al-Ghalabi, one of Imam Ali's students, and his non-mainstream political views and related narrations. It is otherwise authentic. The discrediting of narrators purely based on their political views, especially in support of Imam Ali (ra), is in need of rectification.

of this world, then with Allah is the reward of this world and the Hereafter. And ever is Allah Hearing and Seeing" (4:134).

Islam addresses all of humanity. Islamic approaches that speak only to Muslims neglect the comprehensiveness of the textual sources and the express mission of Prophet Muhammad (sas) who was sent as a "mercy to the worlds (rahmatan lil-alamin)" (21:107) and to "all people entirely (*lil-nasi kaffah)*" (Bukhari 438). The Revelation is a message from Allah (swt) to all humanity and does not premise all the knowledge or benefits it proffers in this worldly life on faith or acts of worship only. It is a fact, however, that ultimate success (*falah*) in this life and the next requires faith in Allah and His messengers as part of one's worldview and approach (2:189, 3:130, 3:200, 5:35, 5:90, 5:100, 22:7, 62:10). The next life is real, and every rational person should work toward his/her welfare in it too. Faith in Allah is a definite condition for success in the next life (2:217, 3:85).

This brings us to a final and related point, which is the *Maqasid* emphasis on the realisation of the higher objectives in all facets of life. The comprehensive orientation of the *Maqasid* comes full circle in the arena of earthly life. Our lived realities must be reflective of divine purposes or objectives. It is only in so doing that we can hope to achieve harmony among so many complex, interconnected systems. New ideas generated by *Maqasid* scholarship in the past and present must be translated into research and education programmes at different levels and in all fields, and then from those platforms to re-orient movements and institutions.

It is then necessary that sincere Muslims everywhere endorse this important and advanced knowledge and participate in the future-oriented, comprehensive and critical studies that could help it develop and propel human societies toward the achievement of the higher objectives of the Revelation for the *ummah* and humanity. The interconnectedness of the signs (*ayat*) of the Revelation and the signs (*ayat*) of the universe and souls on all levels require a web-structured framework and an objective-oriented approach.

Scholarship: Applying Knowledge to Reality

A much-needed re-orientation of Islamic scholarship is due to achieve connectivity, wholism and emergence. The three most fundamental aspects here are: (1) knowledge (*ilm*); (2) reality (*waqi*); and (3) scholarship (*ijtihad*).[11] To focus on knowledge in this article, one must consider its dimensions related to the Islamic worldview, namely: knowledge's source, logic and conceptualisations. Awareness of

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[11] It is to be noted that the rendering of these three words: knowledge, reality and scholarship, as translations for the Arabic words: *ilm*, *waqi* and *ijtihad* is not common. They are usually used as equivalent to the Arabic words: *marifah*, *haqiqah*, and *bahth*, respectively. Moreover, the usual/modern translation of: *ilm*, *waqi* and *ijtihad* as: science, actual fact and legal reasoning, respectively, misses the original Quranic and Prophetic concepts of these words and represents the secular hues of the English terms: science, fact and legal reasoning. As part of the "re-orientation" process in the Maqasid Methodology, the words: knowledge, reality and scholarship are meant to be expanded here to imply the Revelational webs of meaning of the three words: *ilm*, *waqi* and *ijtihad*.

the reality includes the dimensions of assessing past and present and planning for the future. Scholarship, the role of which is to translate knowledge into an impact on the reality, includes the dimensions of its scope, scholars and the desired outcome. While these re-orientations are entry points for explaining the methodology, they are also outcomes of its application, that is, they emerged from the construction of Revelational webs of meaning that are generated by applying the Maqasid Methodology itself.

Knowledge: Source, Logic and Conceptualisations

The new Maqasid Methodology is not apologetic, meaning that it does not seek to draw upon and thereby legitimise knowledge frameworks that do not emerge from the Revelation. Prophets are given their messages of truth, light and guidance through Revelation. Allah says: "And it is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him/her except by revelation" (42:51). The Revelation is an essential component of the Islamic worldview. In terms of sources of knowledge, revealed knowledge is the only knowledge that reigns over other knowledge, in order to maintain faith and justice. That is why distorting Revelation is the highest form of injustice. Allah says: "And who is more unjust than one who invents a lie about Allah or says: 'I have received revelation when he has received none" (6:93). This does not mean that other sources of knowledge are invalid.

Source of Knowledge

Any comprehensive Islamic framework must place knowledge of Allah that is transmitted through Revelation at the centre of human knowledge, while acknowledging His worship as the ultimate human objective. Human-gained knowledge must, then, be built around what the Revelation teaches about the seen and unseen universe. Truthful authority is only given to knowledge additions that recognise the centrality of Revelation and does not contradict with it. The Islamic worldview re-orients the idea of knowledge (ilm) in three ways, namely, (1) how Allah is the primary source of true knowledge, (2) how the state of the heart impacts receiving and utilising knowledge, and (3) how knowledge (ilm) is connected to a complex web of fundamental meanings.

The Revelation informs us that Allah is the source of knowledge. When Allah (swt) created Adam, the very first illustrative action that establishes Revelation as the fundamental source of human knowledge was His teaching Adam (sas) the "names of all things" and instilling in him the capacity to convey that knowledge. Allah states:

$$﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْاَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلٰئِكَةِ فَقَالَ اَنْبِئُوْنِيْ بِاَسْمَاءِ هٰؤُلَاءِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ﴾$$

(البقرة؛ ٣١)

> "And He taught Adam all the names. Then He presented them to the angels and said: 'Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful" (2:31).

$$\langle\!\langle\text{قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ}\rangle\!\rangle \text{ (البقرة؛ ٣١)}$$

"He said: 'O Adam, inform them of their names.' So, when he informed them of their names, He said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the unseen of the skies and the earth and I know what you reveal and what you have concealed" (2:33).

These verses in connection with the entire narrative and other textual expressions reveals the intimate relationship between Allah, humans, knowledge and truth. Humans are essentially born in a state of ignorance. Allah states: "And Allah has extracted you from the bellies of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect, that perhaps you may be thankful" (16:78). Thus, all the faculties and media that a human requires to attain knowledge are part of the process of building knowledge throughout the human's life.

Nevertheless, the Revelation also confirms that humanity as a whole started with Adam (sas) and his children at a high point of language, knowledge and commands, and not from scratch. This is a different history of knowledge from a "Darwinian worldview" that does not acknowledge the Divine source of human knowledge. Some humans in some eras, perhaps post-the-great-flood might have lived in a 'stone age' and used a primitive language.[12] Yet, the Revelation points to the possibility of a much more complex human history with knowledge. For example, Allah says: "Have they [humans] not traveled through the earth and seen what was the end of those before them They were more in number than them and mightier in strength, and in the traces in the land; yet all that they used to earn availed them not." (40:82).

Moreover, the Islamic worldview actually includes an affirmation of knowledge and consciousness possessed by all creations. Reflect, for example, upon Solomon's (sas) communication with the hoopoe and the ant. Allah says: "But the hoopoe stayed not long and said [to Solomon], 'I have encompassed in knowledge that which you have not encompassed, and I have come to you from Sheba with certain news'" (27,22), and "When they reached the Valley of the Ants, an ant exclaimed: O ants! Enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his soldiers crush you, unintentionally" (27:18). Even rocks and mountains, according to the Revelation, have knowledge, consciousness, emotions and will. Allah says: "verily among the rocks are those that sink in awe of Allah" (2:74), "Indeed, we offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but the human undertook it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant" (33:72) and, "Surely We made the

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[12] I concluded after extensive readings on the subject that the Great Flood is a scientific, historical, geological and archeological fact, which hundreds of evidences from multiple disciplines support. However, it is being presented in mainstream media and secular academic research as a "theological" or "creationist" theory. Discussing the issue is beyond the scope of this article. The event occurred around 11,500 years ago, 9500 BCE, and there are also numerous evidences of pre-great-flood advanced civilisations (refer to research on Göbekli Tepe, in today's Turkey, for one obvious example).

mountains to sing the glory of Allah in unison with him [David] at the evening and the sunrise" (38:18).

The act of knowing and the capacity to convey knowledge is fundamentally rooted in divine instruction. It is only Allah (swt), the Creator, who can teach the true essence of things including the bestowal of proper names and the relationships among them. The commencement of the message of Islam with the command to read in the name of the Creator revives the objectives of the narrative between Allah, the angels and Adam. Allah states:

﴿اِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ. خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ. اِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْاَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ. عَلَّمَ الْاِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ﴾ (العلق؛ ١-٥)

Read in the name of your Lord who created; Created the human from a substance that clings; Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous; Who taught by the pen; Taught the human that which he knew not (96:1-5)

In the Islamic worldview, knowledge is also associated with the state of the heart of the reader. It is the very organ by which we understand all things, with an intent to establish truth and justify belief. This attitude is not a spontaneous act stemming from evolutionary or abstract thought, but rather is a gift from Allah and a divine inspiration to every human being. Allah states: "And He inspired every soul its corruption and heedfulness" (91:8). Such inspiration can be understood through the Islamic moral code that ensures that humanity strives toward a common norm. Following this moral code is the way to purify one's heart (*tazkiyah*) and hence develop a better capacity to receive higher levels of knowledge, i.e. wisdom. "Certainly did Allah confer favour upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them (*yuzakkihim*) and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error" (3:164). Vice versa, diverting from the moral code with sins and lusts, is a barrier from true knowledge that "covers the heart" (83:14). In the Islamic worldview, the heart is the organ that deals with knowledge.

The Revelation provides us with webs of meanings related to knowledge that enable us to understand its interaction with other essential elements–concepts, objectives, values, commands, universal laws, parties and proofs–making Revelation knowledge's truthful source. Through these connections and the wholistic understandings to which they give rise, we can develop more accurate perceptions of reality and the gap between that reality and the guidance in Revelation. By understanding the diverse and extensive expressions of knowledge, knowers, and know-how in the Quran and Sunnah, we are better able to grasp its truth in our specific historical moment.

Basic Logic

Logic—in the Quran—is the process through which signs (*'alamat*) lead to truths (*haqaiq*). The Arabic word '*mantiq*' denotes both, the true designation of sounds to meanings, which is linguistic implication, and the true designation of premises to

realities, which is logical implication in the philosophical sense. In both cases, when we consider textual expressions in a connected and wholistic sense, we are engaging in a process of logic, i.e. discovering truths from signs. In the Islamic worldview, believers start from the logical premise that the Quran is truth. Believing in the Quran requires reason and reflection, but once belief is established, any reasoning and reflection must start with a basic premise that the Quran is true. The Quran challenges detractors to produce the like of the Quran or creation (2:23, 16:20), or to find fault in Allah's words or creation (4:82, 67:3).

Our concern when approaching the text, therefore, is to understand the truth via the logical proofs of the Revelation itself. A distinguishing feature of this logic is the Maqasid or purpose-oriented arguments. This is not an exercise in binary thinking of truth or falsehood, but rather a multidimensional and complex reflection process in search of how webs of meaning are established, what truths such webs give rise to and why such meanings are critical to our understanding of Revelation and its implications for everyday life and future visioning.

To argue via a purpose (*maqsid*) is the most central and deepest logical argument in the Quran and Sunnah. Therefore, keeping in mind that the Revelation is truth, we direct our lives towards the highest purpose (*maqsid*) of our existence; the worship of Allah (swt). Allah states: "And I did not create the *jinn* and humankind except to worship Me" (51:56). The worship and glorification of Allah (swt) is not limited to humans. All creatures in the skies and on earth worship Allah (swt) and glorify His praises (21:19; 57:1; 59:24).

Purposefulness does not mean that the Revelation precludes other forms of logic from the Islamic worldview. For example, causation can be considered as a secondary method of logic in the Revelation. The experience of causation emerges in all those instances where the Revelation gives reasons for the occurrence of events. Day to day causal relations are referred to in the Revelation, albeit not as extensive as purposes, such as fire and burning, water and plantation, food and feeding hunger, force and defence, and so on. It is important in the Islamic worldview, however, not to forget that it is Allah who made the causes and not to fall in disbelief by associating events solely to causes.

Causes, however, push events from the past to the present while purposes, more notably, push the present to the future. This is a significant feature of maqasid thinking. It is, as mentioned earlier, suggestive of the wholistic, comprehensive and future-oriented nature of the Maqasid Methodology and the way that it attempts to re-orient the Muslim mind and worldview via the Revelation.

Conceptualisations

We now turn our attention to the third fundamental premise related to knowledge: the centrality of authoritative names (*asmaa dhat sultan*) in theoretical and practical conceptualisations. Allah (swt) states: "Say: if the sea was an extension to

the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the exhaustion of the words of my Lord, even so, if We were to bring its like to extend it" (18:109). Therefore, if nothing has been overlooked, and yet Allah's words are clearly not exhausted, then what we experience in the textual expressions of the Quran must both be efficient and sufficiently encompassing the truths required for human success and rectification in space and time.

To capture this comprehensiveness, the Quran employs what it labels as authoritative names (*asmaa dhat sultan*). These are names and associated meanings connected to them upon which Allah has bestowed truth (*haqq*). This truth provides humanity with a stable, divinely defined worldview, to which it can consistently return without flaw or change. The names and their essence are not generated by humans, which serves to protect against human whims and false biases as well as to continually drive humanity toward a divinely ordained normative order. Those who claim that 'non-normativity' is a methodological virtue, they themselves necessarily come from one 'normative' perspective or the other. For example, contradiction is embedded in the terms 'non-normative Islamic studies' and 'non-normative gender studies', since the words/concepts 'Islam' and 'gender' are normatively meaning- and action-laden.

Authoritative names and concepts are essentially hegemonic over humanly devised theoretical and practical conceptualisations. Allah states: … you do not have any authoritative truth [*sultan*] for this; do you say about Allah what you cannot possibly know? (10:68). Every Revelational name helps to build a piece of the Islamic worldview via its conceptual understanding. It is to be noted here that a name (ism) in the Arabic language is a word constructed from a root (*jadhr, asl*) in order to signify a title, person, meaning, adjective, place, time, tool, etc. Using names (*asma*) is the default Arabic expression, and verbs (*af'al*) are words that are derived from the same roots of names (*asma*) to denote an action in certain time, past, present or future. Arabic verbs do not have different structures as they do in other languages such as Latin-based languages.

The process of definition in the Islamic worldview is, therefore, a cumulative and relative process that is tied to all the conceptual dimensions defined by the relationships within the webs of meanings of the Revelation. Because of this cumulative, integrative and dynamic process, it is not possible to claim inclusive and exhaustive knowledge of any particular definition. This is by no means a deconstructionist exercise, but rather an awareness of the capacity of the Islamic concepts to evolve and take new dimensions, on top of their core meanings, as human knowledge grows and as more connections are made between the concepts and the rest of the Revelational web of meaning.

Moreover, people can create suitable instruments and institutions that address important dimensions of their condition and give such institutions suitable names, even ones not mentioned explicitly in the Quran. This is something unavoidable in the course of human affairs. The hegemony of the authoritative

names, however, suggests that any human innovation must yield to the meanings that do have authority/sultan in Revelation. Not finding any name, concept, theme, phenomena, etc., in the Quran that we think is related in any way to our inquiry, means that we have to delve more deeply into the wisdom of textual provisions. In such cases, we might have to reformulate our inquiry or reconsider our premises, until we find that dimension that exhibits sultan in the textual expressions of the Revelation. This does not invalidate the original inquiry but rather guides the scholar to examine core as opposed to peripheral issues, serious as opposed to superficial questions, and genuine as opposed to fraudulent concepts.

The truthful authority of the revealed Arabic names (*asma*) and concepts (*mafahim*) in the Islamic worldview must be in constant dialogue with each other and with relevant dimensions of temporal experience. Because of their authority, these concepts reign over and if necessary, redefine or even void human-made concepts that emerge from other worldviews. Whether a concept is invented based on an Islamic or non-Islamic approach, as long as it does not have authority from the Revelation, the new concept can only base its authority on its respect or conformance to Revelational truths. This is how the entire conceptual framework of existence and the universe is formulated according to the original Islamic worldview.

Concluding and Looking Ahead

The Maqasid Methodology aims to return Islamic scholarship (*ijtihad*) to its comprehensive role as defined in the Quran and Sunnah. In order to accomplish this, it suggests that three shifts must occur in disciplines: scope, scholars and outcome. First, the concept and scope of scholarship itself must be reconsidered. Deep understanding, intellect and leadership (*fiqh*) are not exclusively related to juristic matters—however important they are—but must extend to any area of inquiry that focalises Revelation and takes seriously the hegemonic character of its content. Second, as a result, the concept and scope of a scholar must be reconstituted. Scholars with deep understanding and wise leadership (*fuqaha*) are not solely the class of Muslim jurists - despite their important role—but all those scholars in all fields of knowledge undertaking scholarship (*ijtihad*) to achieve a commendable understanding of their subject matter as just noted. Legitimacy in producing knowledge based on the Quran and Sunnah is not the sole purview of jurists or those dedicated to the Islamic disciplines as they are currently defined, despite the importance of these disciplines - after restructuring them. Third, the outcome of the process of scholarship (*ijtihad*) carried out by a scholar (*mujtahid*) is composite frameworks, formative theories and principles that result from their construction, and then rulings or judgements of benefits and harms in the wider sense - depending on the question at hand, the phenomena studied and the purpose pursued.

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