

On Transcendent Communication

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Abstract: Current semiotic and linguistic perspectives on man, mind, information and communication, do not seem to cover the full image of the minded creature. Limiting perspective to the receiver's side of the process contradicts Jakobson's communication functions and Plato's text typology in which the conative function of communication is clear and binding; the message-receiver relationship obliges man to respond in some way to information targeting him. Considering the unique position of man, this paper introduces the idea of Transcendent Communication in the Holy Qur'an as presented in Suras 55 and 87. The receiver requires a justification of his temporal physical mortality, which reason alone, cannot answer. It attempts to illustrate the implicit value system of the Transcendent Message, which puts the receiver in the know as to his coming, mission, departure and final abode.

مقالة في التواصل التجاوزي

ملخص: تقصر بعض المناظير العلاماتية واللغوية للإنسان والعقل والعلم والتواصل، عن عرض كامل الصورة للمخلوق العاقل، حين تحصر زاوية النظر في جانب التلقي، مما يخالف أغراض الكلام عند رومان يكوبسن، وتصنيف النصوص عند أفلاطون، والتي تبرز قصدية وظيفية التواصل، واضحة ملزمة؛ فليس أمام المتلقي، وفق العلاقة القائمة بينه وبين الرسالة، غير الاستجابة لما يصله من علم، سواء صدق أو أنكر. آخذين في الحسبان المركز الفريد للإنسان. تطرح هذه الورقة فكرة التواصل التجاوزي في القرآن الكريم كما يرد في سورتي الرحمن والأعلى؛ فالمتلقي تواق الى بيان علة فناء البدني وزواله رغم حبه للحياة، الأمر الذي لامجال للعقلان فيه منفردا. ومن ثم تسعى هذه الورقة أيضا الى بيان النسق الضمني للقيم في الرسالة التجاوزية للقرآن العظيم، مما يضع المتلقي التواق في النور حيال خلقه ورسالته ومعاده وقراره.

Introduction

In *Conative Utterances: a Qur'anic Perspective*, Alomary (2011) outlines Jakobson's (1960) communication functions. The *thesis* elaborates on the *conative function* binding the receiver with the message. At this level, communication operates within the boundaries of reason. Jakobson and Bühler as well (1930) draw on Plato's (*Cratylus*) typology of the referential *it* text, expressive *I* text, and conative *you* text. Persuasive discourse in conative utterances occurs within the matrix of relative links binding minded receivers. Persuasion in this context may involve utilitarian, coercive or emotive elements.

This paper introduces Transcendent Communication (TC) in the Qur'an as seen in Suras 55 and 87. It establishes its argument on and illustrates the

implicit value system of the Transcendent Message (TM). It also outlines the TC between the Creator, henceforth, Transcendent Sender (TS) and the minded creature, henceforth, conative receiver (CR) as seen in the Qur'ān. To familiarise the reader of their sense and relevance as used here, the key terms *transcendence* and *conation* are illuminated in sections 1.1 and 1.2.

1.0 Transcendent Communication

The post-structuralist framework assumes that signs have a functional meaning only within the matrix of binary relations that they have with others. Signs have meaning not because they somehow correspond to something real or fundamental but rather emerge within a network of binary oppositions, differences and contrasts that make up any given language. The significance of the principle of binary oppositions not only applies to words in language (black and white, hot and cold, and so on), but also applies to central concepts of thought (truth and falsehood, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, and so on).¹

As thought and speech are both subject to the principle of binary oppositions it is essential to grant that the transcendent utterances of the Qur'ān come from the Self-Sufficient and Infinite Sender Who has imposed such limitations on the dependent receiver. The TM claims its freedom from 'inconsistencies'² and offers its self-authentication foundation as coming from *Al-Haqq*³ Himself.⁴

It is assumed that thinking is essentially the activity of operating with signs,⁵ and that we have no power of thinking without signs.⁶ Thought is also assumed to be expressed in words and that it comes into existence through words.⁷ As such human cognition is a specific form of cognition,⁸ transcending that of other animals. The minded being despite his inability to transcend his cognition is imparted with an articulate thought/speech that enables him to communicate not only with his conspecifics but with his Creator.

Given the infinity of the Sender He can be neither known empirically nor conceptually because both of these forms of knowledge would entail putting limits to an infinite being. The human comprehension falls short of capturing the Infinite Sender. The two sources of information in line with the TM are *al-Shahada*, the perceptible realm, and *al-Ghaib*, the realm beyond perception. The TM states it descends from the realm of *al-Ghaib*. As the transient receiver (TR) cannot get behind his consciousness,⁹ the role of *ʿaql*, the minding, process, concerning TM is to ascertain its source and transmission.

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Having the conative receiver's role, the TM holds the dependent and transient minded creature accountable to the TS. Sura 55 predicates the rationale for creating man on his mission being the CR (55:2-4):

AL-RAHMĀN (1) has imparted the Qur'an [unto man]. (2) He has created man: (3) He has imparted unto him articulate thought and speech. (4). (55:1-4, revised)¹⁰

الرَّحْمَنُ ﴿١﴾ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿٢﴾
خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ﴿٣﴾ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ
﴿الرحمن: ١-٤﴾

Sura 86 excels man over other organisms; the mere growth of plant and sense of animal are culminated with the articulate thought/speech of man making him eligible to receiving Transcendent Information (TI) (86:1-4).

EXTOL the limitless glory of your Sustainer's name: the All-Highest. (1) Who creates, and then proportions, (2) and who disposes and then guides (3) and who brings forth herbage, (4) and thereupon causes it to decay into rust-brown stubble! (87:1-4)

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ﴿١﴾ الَّذِي
خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى ﴿٢﴾ وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ
فَهَدَى ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعَى
﴿الأعلى: ١-٤﴾

Ideas of Transcendent Communication are predicated upon the assumption that the TS appreciates the position of the conative receiver and appeals to his mind.¹¹

Verily, We did offer the trust [of reason and volition] to the heavens, and the earth, and the mountains: but they refused to bear it because they were afraid of it. Yet man took it up - for, verily, he has always been prone to be most wicked, most foolish. (33:72)

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا
وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ
كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿الأحزاب: ٧٢﴾

The term ^c*aql*, minding, and its derivatives recur in the Text about 1000 times. The principles of the Universe coincide with those of Mind: the mind does not accept anything without a cause or without a purpose, nor accept anything and its contradiction.¹² The TM frames its content in patterns of argument to show just how that material engages the receiver—how he is to ponder it, understand it and act upon it,¹³ as illustrated in (2:164):

Creation of the heavens and the earth, alternation of night and day, and sailing of ships across the ocean with what is useful to man, and the rain that God sends from the sky enlivening the earth that was dead, and the scattering of beasts of all kinds upon it, and the changing of the winds, and the clouds which remain obedient between earth and sky, are surely signs for the wise. (2:164)

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ
اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي
الْبَحْرِ مِمَّا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ
السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا
وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ
وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِينَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ
لَايَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٦٤﴾

The TS argues by cause and effect, but the cause is Himself as Creator of the order of nature. The TS invites man in TM to consider the evidence of His Signs, but He shows that the scope of induction is not absolute by reminding him that his perception is limited, that he tends to forget and go astray, and that the conclusions of his specious reasoning often are not only untrue but invalid and hence absurd.¹⁴

1.1 Conative Function of Communication

An elaboration of the exponents of the conative function reflects the intrinsic Sender-receiver relationship¹⁵. The conative function employs vocative, interrogative and imperative utterances to move the minded receiver to rational thought and necessary response. The TM invites the receiver to reconsider his self-referential position on his creatureliness and resultant relationship.

Alomary (2011: 212-213) argues that the minded receiver by virtue of his dichotomous minding process¹⁶ cannot reach the realm of *al-Ghaib*, which is not perceived through the sensible semiotic medium of binary opposites. The minded receiver, however can intelligibly access the realm of *al-Ghaib* through TI. The surpassing realm of *al-Ghaib* is not available to sensible experience due the receiver's conative mission. The TM therefore comes down from the TS to the minded receiver, endowed with the ability to use and understand natural and verbal signs, to instruct him and reconstruct the relative social cognition of his position and obligation to his Creator, the Sender of the TM.

Natural signs address the senses whereas verbal signs address the intellect. A combination of both media makes possible the persuasive function of the rhetorical argument of the TM, which does not address the vegetal or animate aspects of creation, but addresses the intentional creature endowed with the ability to appreciate causality (55:4; 21:16; 44:38) (Al-Jurjāni 2003; Lyons 1987; Mises 2008; Tomasello 1999).¹⁷

The TM recurrently praises the conative receiver's obligation to put his intelligence to use because it is the platform of communication, the foundation of conative function (50:37), and the solution to the creatureliness of the symbolic being (55:2), (Saussure 1916/1969; Peirce 1931; Becker 1995). The TM therefore employs the persuasive argument of rhetorical interrogation through the appeal of vocative to move the receiver to ponder and act in the light of his essential creatureliness and his contingency on TI, which transcends his relative individual consciousness and collective construction of social cognition (7:71; 12:40; 53:23).

Alomary (ibid: 213) illustrates how the TM moves from the sensible aspect of the verbal sign to the intelligible implications of the TM. He considers

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implications of the conative function based on the causality relationship between the Signifier and Signified, and in particular the Creator-creature and Sender-receiver relationship termed as ‘religion’, tying the truly dependent creature back to His Sustainer, and ‘accountability’, holding the conative receiver responsible to his TS, in the TM.

Between the CR and the reach of the functionally concealed tangible truth of his temporal existence, the TM implies, is his term of temporal life:

For behold, unto Us will be their *return*, (25) ﴿٢٥﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ
 and verily, it is for Us to call them to account. ﴿الغاشية: ٢٥-٢٦﴾
 (88:26)

The TM attempts to alert the *negligent receiver* in particular that the limits placed on his cognition are due to the nature of his receiver’s role tried through his response to TC:

"You were *oblivious of this*, so we have لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا
 removed the veil, and how keen is your sight عَنكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ ﴿٢٢﴾
 today!" (50:22, Ahmed Ali)

The conative utterances in the TM tend to warn against one’s mindlessness. Limitations imposed on his ability to reach beyond his cognition during his temporal term need not tempt him to disregard his non-conative return to the TS. Sign 50:22 serves to reveal the adjacency of this hidden transcendent dimension. It uses the emphatic derogative address *you were oblivious of*, the indexical *this*, the perfective *removed*, the explanatory *veil* and the exclamatory *how keen* introducing *your sight*. The TM tends to urge the CR that the apparently transcendent dimension is closer than one would expect.

1.2 TC in Sura 55

The Qur’ān presents the Creator of life as the Sender of the TM. The reader may start anywhere in the Qur’ān to find the three essential factors of the communication process: Sender, Message, and receiver. However, Sign 2:30 unfolds the Sender-receiver polarity. God creates man a successor on earth. He grants him the articulate faculties of thought and speech (55:4). However, prior to the creation of the receiver, the Sender announces the imparting of the Message (55:2). The transcendent function of communication is established through the creation of the universe followed by sending down the minded creature to inherit the earth in order to establish *Equilibrium*, the 4th principle of TM system of values (55:7-9).

The quality of transcendence in the Creator-creature communication is based on the fact that the Sender creates rapport with the receiver about the realm existing beyond his perception. The receiver is required to take faith to heart on things beyond his direct perception. Nevertheless, the TM asserts

it is sent with the truth and by the truth (17:105). Nevertheless, it does not depart from the principles of reason and logical argument based on its rational appeal inherent in exponents of conative functions.

The Transcendent Text (TT) explicates an act of imparting – an act of reading moving from the sensible signs to the intelligible Signs – prior to the acts of creating the agent of reading and the sending down of TM:

AL-RAHMĀN (1) Bestowed the Qur'an, (2) الرَّحْمَنُ ﴿١﴾ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿٢﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ
Created man, (3) And taught him to express
clearly. (55:1-4, Ahmed Ali) ﴿٣﴾ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ﴿الرحمن: ١-٤﴾

The Singularity of the Sender does not have an equal: *Al-Rahmān*. This noun is another name of God. It does not have an oppositive equivalent. It is the Absolute One that none comes before or after. This Sura is part of Axis VI of the thematic model, which substantiates faith in the hereafter. The Name *Al-Rahmān* (55:1) allows for no partnership or opposition whatsoever. It is a self-contained Sign, i.e. utterance, which gives full meaning despite the covertness of its predicant هو 'he', 'He is *Al-Rahmān*'. The covert meaning of pronominality is most pronounced when no equal can occupy that unique position such that it is an exclusive proper noun of the Referent.

The Sender's situating the creature in opposition to the Creator is entailed in the subsequent three instances of perfective verbs: علم, خلق, علم: 'imparted', 'created', and 'bestowed'. Sign 55:2 does not refer to the receiver of the imparted action. It ascribes the action to *Al-Rahmān* but does not state a target. Sign 55:3, خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ, 'created man' then discloses the causative relation behind the act of creating man. The bestowal of speech is revealed in 55:4 عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ, which entails thought. The objective pronoun suffix هـ, indicating absence, singularity and masculinity, creates the oppositive polarity. Four informative utterances arise:

1. Confirmation of Who Sends the Transcendent Message: He is *Al-Rahmān*
2. Assigning precedence of the purpose of creation
3. Ascription of the act of creation
4. Justification of granting the receiver speech and thought

This exposition of Sender, instruction, creation, and the rationale in a descending order in the narrative explains the dual polarity of the Independent Sender and subordinate receiver. This transcendent communication scheme is the cause of creating the receiver. In an ascending order we see that *Al-Qur'ān* is transmitted to a distinguished receiver created and endowed with articulate thought/speech. The creation of the cosmic environment is expounded in the subsequent Signs:

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[At His behest] the sun and the moon run their appointed courses; (5) [before Him] prostrate themselves the stars and the trees. (6) And the skies has He raised high, and has devised [for all things] a measure, (55:5-7)

السَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ﴿٥﴾ وَالنَّجْمُ
وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ ﴿٦﴾ وَالسَّمَاءَ
رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ﴿٧﴾ الرَّحْمَنُ: ٥-٧

The glowing star, the sun, and the illuminating satellite, the moon, we are informed, run in an appointed and computed course (55:5). The exposition of Signs moves in a descending manner from the galactic to the planetary scene; the hearer then learns that grass and trees prostrate (55:6). Then, the lenses of transcendent speech turn back to the galactic plane to see the sky raised and the scale positioned (55:7). The reader can perceive neither the sky nor the scale. The same applies to the prostration of grass and trees. Given the metaphorical nature of words the reader finds no oddity in such utterances. The prostration of grass and trees implies their being non-conative creatures behaving at His behest. This notion frames an implicit polarity of the non-conative and conative creatures that will emerge in the subsequent refrain Sign starting with 55:13 ‘Which given signs of His Power could you deny?’ The power to deny or to acknowledge is the manifestation of conation in the receiver of favours, which are tokens of the signs denoting the Sender’s power expounded throughout the Sura and the wider Text.

Raising the sky and situating the measure is a consequence of the will to teach *Al-Qur’ān*, i.e. the process and the content of reading. *READING* is the catalyst of creation. ‘Reading’ here involves the ‘Book’, the Author, and the receiver. However, this is not a normal reading process. It is a ‘transcendent reading’. The signs forming the morphological divisions and forms of this communication system are neither arbitrary nor conventional. Removing these attributes from the social communication device, we transcend the arbitrariness of linguistic signs and the relativity of conventional phonological units. We rise above the normative level of signification through the planetary and galactic levels to the transcendent level of signification where we come to the threshold of existence. At this level, the concept of Sign is wider than the linguistic sign. We annotate this concept as the ‘Transcendent Sign’. Signs at this level are not arbitrary, normative or conventional as in social semiotics. Signification here is not liable to the relativities of the minded interpreters of signs. Signs here interpret themselves. In other words, the Authority creating Transcendent Signs is the Participant Who determines their referents.

None but the Creator can justify His creation. The TS starts the dialogue with the hearing and seeing receivers. He explains our existence and

transience. Our consciousness and avoidance of the thought of death are granted. We may deny the causal agency of our existence, we may deny equal rights to others, and we may not acknowledge the possibility of return after death. We may assume such social cognitive positions due to our immersion in our own separate realities. We create our own thoughts and we tend to think that our thoughts are representations of real realities. This receiver's cognitive stance does not exceed self-reflection.

The TM moves the receiver to concede to the argument of the Sender's persuasive strategy on the issue of his need for the TM. Rejecting the receiver's relative cognitive stance dispels his baseless belief by removing the grounds of a perceptual fallacy (cf. 50:22). The TM explicitly underlines the limited receiver's perceptual quality. The propositional content of the utterance in 50:22: 'man needs to assume his assigned receiver's role because he cannot determine the true state of his existence apart from the Sender's advice. The binary nature of the minding process, and, consequently 'the structure of language' (Lyons 1987: 271) is crucial in this respect. Lyons considers 'binary opposition [to be] one of the most important principles governing the structure of languages' (ibid). We are able to produce un-gradable notions by contrast, but we cannot conceive of a non-contrastive notion. This explains why we cannot conceive of the 'how of the divine entity' simply because it has no opposite. The TM, hence, cuts short any attempt to ponder that entity, because it leads nowhere. Instead, man is called to ponder the Signs of TS, which are perceivable. Two Signs are relevant to this argument: 42:11 and 4:82.

The conative function of communication and the contrastive values involved in the subsystems of language tell us that reading involves sending and receiving. A sender transmits a message to a receiver. Sending and receiving are complementary actions. In other words, the one implies the other. They constitute a give-and-take process. The CR is on one side of TC and the One-and-only Author of Creation on the other. The Message mediates between the Sender and receiver.

Most prominent in the *reading-Reader* polarity is its opposite sending-Sender polarity. The Sender of the *Reader*, i.e. '*Transcendent Message*', imparts the *reading* faculty on the *reader*.

1.2.1 Sender-Receiver Polarity in TC:

An analysis of 55:1-4 reveals a typical profitable enterprise. God create a minded creature who will freely submit to His will. Consequently, He repays for their actions in line with a covenant. In trade, the two parties are motivated by earnings. Business is naturally triggered in dependent beings by calculations of profit and loss.

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There seems to be a covert agreement between *Al-Rahmān* (55:1) and *Al-Insān* (55:3). The Sender created the receiver (55:4) but the utterance sequentially states a prioritised act to that of creating this particular receiver. The Sender imparted *Al-Qur'ān* (55:2). The word that stands for the Independent Entity *Al-Rahmān* occurs in the single-word utterance (55:1). This Uniqueness of the Referent, the distinction of the Creator, prevents His being shared by others. This single-word utterance offers the answer for the major questions that seem to puzzle man whenever he alienates himself from the key to his existence. The single term implies the Uniqueness and Independence of the Referent.

Facing the question on the origin of man, speech, and the universe, before all, the logical answer in the TM is الرحمن, 'It is He *Al-Rahmān* Who – willed to be exalted by a wilful creature – bestowed on him the distinctive reading-writing faculties'. The readiness in man to acquire the thought-speech faculty implies the reason for the creation of a wilful creature who – seeing the favours of *Al-Rahmān* – opts to wilfully revere Him.

The non-conative creation conforms to the will of *Al-Rahmān* through their constant conduct. The minded creature on the other hand is endowed with discretion to opt to conform to the System of *Al-Rahmān* despite though he is capable of the opposite action. The TM elaborates the Creator-creature Covenant. The Uniqueness of the Examiner seems appreciable. His purpose of creating the receiver will exalt Him over opposites. However, because He is addressing the minded creature, the receiver will grant the implicit and elliptical parts of the utterance. How could he not do so when he is the second party of the Covenant with the TS, his Sustainer and Master?

The polarity of participants in the sending-receiving process is clear. The Sender creates a wilful receiver to choose to follow the will of his Sustainer. To impart TM, the Sustainer creates a distinctive receiver and imparts unto him thought/speech. Prior to asking the receiver to do anything, the Sender refers him to mind the burning star and the illuminating moon in 55:5, which have computed courses. However, if the receiver is not prone to read stars and satellites he will find a near reference in the grass and trees, which are at the Sender's behest, too. They too follow an unfailing appointed course of conduct (55:6). The enjoinder commences with the statement that He raised the sky and set the scales of equity by devising for everything a measure (55:7). Consequently, the receiver will find in Signs 55:8-9 the transcendent will culminating the injunctions provided in the wider Text:

So that you [too, O men,] might never transgress *أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ﴿٨﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا*
the measure [of what is right]: (8) weigh,

therefore, [your deeds] with equity, and cut not the measure short! (55:8-9) الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ
﴿الرحمن: ٨-٩﴾

The affective language in 55:8-9 reveals the conative nature of the receiver. The neg-imperatives (أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا) and (لَا تُخْسِرُوا) and the imperative (أَقِيمُوا) expound the purpose of the Sender: to wilfully observe this equity by maintaining all due measures. The dichotomy between the non-conative and conative is clear. Submissive beings need no affective language. They run through a computed course. Galactic submission unfolds in the burning star and illuminating satellite in 55:5, planetary submission in the prostrating grass and trees in 55:6.

Covert in this exposition is the unsaid parallel call to the dependent but wilful creature to observe the cosmic law of equity and maintain due measures in 55:7. They implicitly call for *Equilibrium* because it is the trigger of existence and placement of conative receivers. The receiver throughout the Text is reminded of the motivation of his placement on earth: *so that He might try you by means of what He has bestowed upon you* (6:165); *so that We might behold how you act* (10:14). He is warned against assuming a negligent stance: *behold, then, what happened in the end to those people who had been warned [in vain]* (10:73). The Text sums up the narrative: *Hence, he who is bent on denying the truth [of God's Oneness and Uniqueness ought to encompass that] his denial of this truth will fall back upon him* (35:39, revised).

To recap, Sura 55 relates the story of the sender and receiver from the TM perspective. The reductionist view of communication tends to typify the process from the receiver's side. Given the limitation and relativity of the receiver, the outcome remains speculative and conjectural. The existential qualities of the receiver naturally reflect on his telling of the story. He was not there when he came into being and he has no power or information as to his moving from one phase to another. The following section presents another case substantiating TC in the TM.

1.3 TC in Sura *Al-a^clā*

This section introduces TC in Sura 87, which is an exponent of the Eschatological Aspect of *Tawhīd*, the 1st principle of the Value System in the TM. The commentary of Ibn Sīnā¹⁸ is relevant to modern discourse. His position as a philosopher and physician reflects on his appreciation of the conative nature of the Signs in this Sura. This commentary may easily locate in modern perspective.

A significant theme of the commentary is highlighted a conclusive statement that ultimate information is confined to the three aspects of

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Tawhīd – the Divine Unity, Prophecy and eschatology – and the supreme pursuit of the receiver, endowed with intellect, is to attain them. To seek any information beyond these three is sheer futility. This implicitly minimises the importance of the relative groping of the mind.

The Qur’ān targets man as the receiver of TC. This commentary by Ibn Sīnā comes in his *Risālah Fi Tafṣīr Surat Al-a^Clā* ‘an epistle on the interpretation of Sura 87, *Al-a^Clā*’, الأعلیٰ ‘the All-Highest’ and conforms to TC perspective. HE explicates the principle of *Tawhīd* in the TM, which underlies the Unity of the Divine, communication with the receiver and the Herein and the Hereafter. My choice of this Sura does not mean that TC is exclusive to it. TC permeates the Text. However, Sura 87, like Sura 55, involves a distinctive Attribute of the Sender, i.e. the All-Highest. The Sura’s symbolic name comes from the significant attribute الأعلیٰ, *Al-a^Clā*’, implying the Highest Ideal for the receiver to consider in TM instead of the low high ideals he creates. Sura 76, entitled الإنسان *al-insān* ‘man’, may be used to elaborate TC with the conative receiver in focus. TC in these Suras fits the discourse emphasising the 2ⁿ^d and 3rd principles of the TM System of Values, i.e. *Freedom* and *Responsibility* of the individual CR. It caters for the sublime aspiration of the rational receiver searching for venues beyond boundaries of perception. The 4th principle is Equilibrium, which complements the quartet of values in the TM.

Sura 87 combines the three basic doctrines of TM: (a) affirmation of *Tawhīd*, (b) Prophethood, ‘TS communication with the receiver’, and (c) establishment of resurrection. The *Unity* of the Sender is instituted through the wonderful design and the great purpose in creation, that the Creation is the act of the infinitely Subtle, All-Encompassing and Omnipotent Creator, who creates with His infinite encompassment and absolute freedom. Only He, therefore, is the Creator and He has no partner in creation, because creation is His prerogative and exclusive privilege:

GOD is the Creator of all things, and He alone
has the power to determine the fate of all
things. (39:62)

اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿الزمر: ٦٢﴾

Oh, verily, His is all creation and all
command. Hallowed is God, the Sustainer of
all the worlds! (7:54)

أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ
الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿الأعراف: ٥٤﴾

There is no other source of creation besides God. Even natural processes have no creative role, for they work in a uniform manner, performing some specific functions, having no freedom or choice in creating anything. The three doctrines in the Sura constitute TC. The **first doctrine** establishes *Tawhīd*:

EXTOL the limitless glory of thy Sustainer's name: [the glory of] the All-Highest. (1) Who creates, and then proportions, (2) and who disposes and then guides (3) and who brings forth herbage, (4) and thereupon causes it to decay into rust-brown stubble! (87:1-5, revised)

سَبِّحِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ﴿١﴾ الَّذِي
خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى ﴿٢﴾ وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى ﴿٣﴾
وَالَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعَى ﴿٤﴾ فَجَعَلَهُ
غُثَاءً أَوْ حَوَى ﴿٥﴾ الْأَعْلَى: ١-٥

‘These Signs expound two kinds of proofs on the existence of God’, asserts Ibn Sīnā. The first proof is the creation of animals (87:2). ‘The animal is made of body and soul. The seeking of proof here exactly corresponds with ‘Who creates and then proportions’. The proper determination of *taqdīr* is implied in the *خالق* *خالق* i.e., ‘creation with due determination’. ‘It is very necessary that every element should be in due measure and proportion to produce the desired mixture and temper; otherwise if some part or element were to increase or decrease, the result would be a constitution or temper other than what is designed for. This due proportion and balance is expressed in *تسويته* *taswiyah* i.e. order and balance in the animal body’.¹⁹

‘Seeking the evidence in the creation of the animal soul corresponds with ‘and He disposes and then guides’ (87:3). God grants for every part of the body a particular function as a characteristic trait of that part. Then He renders each function a source of benefit to the animal. God, for instance, determines the function of sight for the eye, hearing for the ear and digestion for the stomach, and one organ cannot perform the function of the other. The activities of the senses are, in reality, functions of the soul, and every faculty is a source of blessing to the animal’.²⁰

The TS cites the second proof of His existence in the creation of the plant. He says, ‘And Who brings forth herbage ...’ (87:4-5). In this argument, the TS mentions the conditions of animals before that of plants as animals are superior to plants and because the wonders of animal creation are greater in number than those of the plant world. Is it permissible for the receiver to think that the process of procreation in the animal and plant is caused by blind coincidence? Ibn Sīnā poses the question and answers it:

The proof of this is that the body of a sperm is similar by nature. The effect and influence of natural bodies such as heaven, earth, sun, moon and stars are alike in it. A uniform and unvarying body, when affected by an equally proportionate cause, can never produce mutually different conditions. Do you not see when a candle is placed on a table, it lights with an equal measure in all directions? It is impossible for the candle to illuminate five feet on one side and two feet on the other side. This is inconceivable. Now it becomes evident that the effect of the action of nature on natural objects is always alike and invariably similar and monolithic. However, in the case of

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sperm, we find that some part of it becomes bone, some constitutes muscle and others change into hair, vein, blood etc. The purposeful variation in innumerable forms can never be caused by the effect of natural process, but by the action of a Cause or Creator who creates with free power and free will and choice.²¹

Total emphasis is put on the fact that God is the Creator, that He has no partner in the act of creation, for creation is exclusively His prerogative. A recurrent theme in the TM is that only God is the Creator and Sovereign.²²

The Sura thus establishes *Tawhīd* through the Act of Creation, and denies natural processes any creative role. Likewise, this doctrine, *Tawhīd* through Divine creation, explicitly rejects the concept of Naturalism.

The **second doctrine** of this Sura establishes Prophecy. Ibn Sīnā maintains that prophethood is a Divine act, which the conative receiver cannot reach through self efforts:

God *encompasses* best upon whom to bestow His message. (6:124, revised) اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ ﴿الأنعام: ١٢٤﴾

It is, therefore, the TS Who acts as the only Teacher and Guide for a Prophet to make him a perfect and accomplished man. 'The Prophetic consciousness is the climax of the human state, possessing all human faculties in their plenitude and perfection'.²³

The Prophet is the recipient of the Divine manifestation as a TC. Man's theoretical faculty becomes perfect only with TI and wisdom, and likewise his practical faculty is perfected through the remembrance of the TS. The Prophecy doctrine consists of three aspects. The *first aspect* deals with the attributes of a Prophet relating to his self and essence; the second relates to the nature of his effort when inviting misguided and ignorant people to the Truth; and the third concerns the inherent differences in the nature of the CR and his capacity to accept the Prophetic Message:

The first aspect deals with the explanation of the personal traits and character of the Prophet and the nature of the substance of his soul as reflected in his *ilm* and behaviour. In this context, you must know that according to the fundamental principles of *ilm*, the human soul is endowed with two faculties, one is theoretical and the other is practical. The theoretical faculty as such manages the affairs of the body and by means of the body, it subjugates the physical world in a proper manner and in the best way. Since it has been established by rational proofs that the theoretical faculty is essentially better than the practical one, it has been mentioned first.²⁴

Sign 87:6 alludes to the theoretical faculty:

WE SHALL teach thee, and thou wilt not forget سُنْفِرُكَ فَلَا تَنْسَىٰ ﴿الأعلى: ٦﴾

[aught of what thou art taught] (87:6)

The TS strengthens the substance of His Prophet's soul spiritually and perfects it intellectually to transform it into a holy soul, endowed with TS. Becoming thus perfect and perfected, the Prophet's soul never forgot what it had once received. However, Sign 87:7:

Save what God may will [thee to forget] - for, إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ
 verily, He [alone] encompasses all that is open to وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ ﴿الأعلى: ٧﴾
 [man's] perception as well as all that is hidden
 [from it]. (87:7, revised)

implies that the substance of the human soul is not absolutely perfect in its power and, that is why it is susceptible to error and forgetfulness. The TS also promises the Prophet to enable the substance of his soul to encompass all things that are conformable to it and surround it. It is logical and ontologically true that a cause is invariably greater and more powerful than its effect in every state. If the TS were not the All-Encompasser of the totality of created objects, He would not have been able to make the Prophet encompass things relevant to his mission and to protect him from error and forgetfulness. Sign 87:8 alludes to rendering the Prophet's soul perfect in his practical faculties:

And [thus] shall We make easy for thee the path وَيُسِّرُّكَ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿الأعلى: ٨﴾
 towards [ultimate] ease. (87:8)

In the light of 87:8 that all men are equal in their capacity for action; but there are some people for whom chastity is easier and who are instinctively more inclined to it. This easiness or ingrained tendency to do good or evil is *خُلُق* *xuluq* 'character'. Whoever is blessed, chaste, pious and honest, his soul is endowed with the character of chastity and integrity; and the opposite character marks whoever is wretched. In this context, Sign 87:8 indicates the Prophet attained the highest degree of moral integrity.²⁵

The *second aspect* of the Doctrine of Prophecy relates to the Prophetic effort when inviting the receivers to the Truth. When a man attains to the perfection of his theoretical and practical faculties, yet is not capable of leading a community to human perfection, then he is a *ولي* *Walī* 'saint'; but if he is powerful enough to guide a people to the perfection of humanity, then he is a *نبي* *Nabī* 'prophet'. Prophethood transcends sainthood precisely because Absolute Transcendent manifestation cannot be otherwise than total. The Prophet, due to the perfection of his theoretical and practical faculties, realized the highest level of the Divine Theophany. It is axiomatic that the Prophet's transcendent invitation, i.e. guidance, to the truth is perfect and effective. However, the conative receiver is an interactive element:

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REMIND, THEN, [others of the truth, regardless of] فَذَكِّرْ إِنْ نَفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَىٰ ' whether this reminding [would seem to] be of use [or not]: (87:9) ﴿الأعلى: ٩﴾

The Transcendent Command to invite people to the Truth explains that this invitation does not profit all rational souls; receivers differ in their response to guidance. The *third aspect* of the doctrine of Prophecy concerns the inherent differences in man in accepting the Truth:

In mind will keep it he who stands in awe [of God]. (87:10) ﴿الأعلى: ١٠﴾ سَيَذَكِّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَىٰ '

So far, the TM states the Doctrine of Prophecy in a summarised form. Sign 87:10 states the receivers' attitude and the nature of their response to the invitation, which constitutes the mission of Prophethood. People in general diverge into two groups after hearing the prophetic invitation to Truth. Only one group benefits from the TM. Lacking diligence, the other group will not:

But aloof from it will remain that most hapless wretch. (87:11) ﴿الأعلى: ١١﴾ وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا الْأَشْقَى '

The TM renders the receivers conscious and cautious of the Sender. How can their souls be perfected without taking the Prophetic guidance wholeheartedly? The motive-force behind the acceptance of the Prophetic message is the terror of the creatureliness of man.²⁶ The realisation that one is bound to perish, the transiency of life, validates the Prophetic message. The inevitable end of life invites the necessary provision for the Hereafter. This awareness urges the theomorphic being²⁷ to ponder over the Prophetic message and to make provision for immortality. Negligence of TM denies the receiver its benefit and burdens him with the unforeseeable:

He who [in the life to come] shall have to endure the great fire. (87:11-12) ﴿الأعلى: ١٢﴾ الَّذِي يَصَلِّي النَّارَ الْكُبْرَىٰ '

The conative receiver will suffer precisely because he persistently refrains from making any provision for the Hereafter. To remain exclusively pre-occupied with worldly pursuits, running after carnal enjoyments, desires and lusts; while all of a sudden death snatches us away forever from our worldly satisfaction, leading us to enter a world with which we are not acquainted and with whose dwellers we are not at all familiar. Parting company with our worldly loves will intensify the fire of our yearning and sorrow. Moreover, our entry into an unforeseen and unfamiliar kingdom will cause us untold loneliness and aversion. Such is the plight of the receiver who trivialises TM having no access to solid evidence. Reducing the communication process to self-talk alienates the receiver from the Consequential Sender:

Wherein he will neither die nor remain alive. ﴿الاعلى: ١٣﴾
(87:13)

Dividing the receivers into two groups, TS refers to the first one as Sender-cautious (87:10). He goes back to state the characteristics of those who fear Him:

To happiness [in the life to come] will indeed attain he who attains to purity [in this world], and remembers his Sustainer's Name, and prays [unto Him]. (87:14-15)

Here TS states clearly that the receivers who benefit from the Prophetic invitation attain to three stages of perfection through their consciousness of Him. The first stage is the purification of the soul from false beliefs and vile characteristics. This implies the removal of what is unbecoming and undesirable. 'It is undoubtedly true that the total effacement of a false inscription from the mental tablet is a prerequisite for installing a perfect and pure inscription on it'. As the soul removes what is despicable, its theoretical faculty ascends with spiritual encompassment of the TM.

Signs 87:14-15, assert that the perfection of the theoretical faculty is not enough. It must be strengthened and perfected through the practical faculty, consisting of appropriate actions and worthy activities. It is precisely because the greatest of virtuous acts are ultimately reducible only to submission to TS with total obedience and sincere worship. Sign 87:15 culminates the aspects of Prophethood.

Sign 87:16 presents *al-ba'at* 'resurrection' as the **third doctrine** of the Sura. The Sender here explicates a general disposition of the receiver towards an improvident preference with respect to the Hereafter:

But nay, [O men,] you prefer the life of this world. (16) Although the life to come is better and more enduring. (87:16-17)

The TS states implicitly that the soul is immortal and the receivers come to life after death. As the receiver cannot refute the transcendent assertion, he is taking a massive risk by disregarding TM. Sign 87:17 uses *al-āxira* 'life to come', which entails the meaning of resurrection. The gravest mistake of the receiver is not merely rejecting the truth of *āxira*, which is axiomatic, but disregarding the transiency of this short-lived life.

The TS, establishing fully the statement of the three doctrines, concludes the Sura:

Verily, [all] this has indeed been [said] in the earlier revelations. (18) The revelations

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of Abraham and Moses. (87:18-19)

All Transcendent Books sent to His Prophets aim at nothing but reaffirming and reiterating the three doctrines التوحيد *Tawhīd* ‘Unity’, النبوة *Nubuwa* ‘Prophecy’ and الآخرة *Āxira* ‘Hereafter’. The last TM is the first TM and the Sender is the Sender. The receiver has no recourse but to respond to the Message at his own expense.

1.3.1 Communicative Appraisal of TC in Sura *Al-a^clā*

The Bühler-Jakobson-communication perspective²⁸ integrates the elements of the communication process. The conative function of communication entails the sender, message, and receiver. The TC process entails the additional element of transmission, i.e. Prophethood, linking the minded receiver to the Transcendent Sender. This is necessitated by (1) the conative function, (2) the Transcendence of the Ultimate Sender. The former underlies the role of the receiver. The latter underlies the nature of the mission, based on the receiver’s volitionality and response to TS credibility. The test of the recipient’s discretion is made through his faith in, i.e. response to, the Creator of life, reason and information. The Sender-related *faith* is not the receiver-related *belief*. The former entails the Sender’s meritability; the latter entails the receiver’s *Umwelt*, i.e. interpretation of his self-centered world²⁹. The receiver will have no succour in alienation from the TS. The receiver’s gullibility combined with the antagonism of *Iblis*, i.e. the hidden persuader, explains the receiver’s vital need for constant guidance to and maintenance on the Right Path.

The other aspect of the TC process involves the causal loop and feedback.³⁰ TC builds on the fact that ideas have consequences.³¹ The TM is established on the principle of discretion, i.e. free will and responsibility. The TM hence stresses the fact that the actor is free; however, his freedom is not absolute and the Sender, encompassing everything, holds the receiver accountable within the terms of the Covenant:

CONSIDER the night as it veils [the earth] in darkness, (1) and the day as it rises bright! (2) Consider the creation of the male and the female! (3) Verily, [O men,] you aim at most divergent ends! (4) Thus, as for him who gives [to others] and is conscious of God, (5) and believes in the truth of the ultimate good (6) for him shall We make easy the path towards [ultimate] ease. (7) But as for him who is niggardly, and thinks that he is self-sufficient,

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١﴾ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٣﴾ إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّىٰ ﴿٤﴾ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَاتَّقَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٦﴾ فَسَنَسِّرُهُ لِّلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿٩﴾ فَسَنَسِّرُهُ لِّلْعُسْرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾

(8) and calls the ultimate good a lie – (9) for him
shall We make easy the path towards hardship:
(92:1-10)

TC is not based on the mere *perceptions and private worlds* of receivers. It is based on the Encompassment and Wisdom of the TS. The receiver's temporal and spatial settings seem to necessitate TI conveyed from beyond our consciousness. The TM literally claims its origin as coming down from the *Unique Source* of TI³². As such, TC entails a transcendent system of Universal Ethics integrating a consciousness of the TS *Unity*, and invitation for *Equilibrium* along with the *Freedom and Responsibility of the receiver*. This will be elaborated under section 1.5.

TC furthermore offers a practical solution to the receiver's controversies about TM versions the TS sent down through His Transmitters. The solution offered is implicit in the distinction between the receiver's conjectural *belief systems* based on divergent *Umwelten* and the validity of *faith* based on the TS Uniqueness, Meritability and Credibility. The TM *falsifiability* is the standard of its truth³³.

TC offers a different perspective of the mind as *a cognitive process* rather than the standard of the *transcendent truth*. This perspective is implicit in the distinction between the perceptible and imperceptible realms. Consciousness does not exceed itself. The minding process is restricted to perceptible aspects of existence. The imperceptible dimension is a matter of faith in the Informer.

1.3.2 Summary of TC in Surah *Al-a^clā*

To recap, Sura 87 has one theme – *Tawhīd*, the Unity of TS – the central doctrine of TM. It emphasizes the primacy, and ultimacy of information sent on *Tawhīd*. For the TS to establish communication with conative receivers there needs to be a medium of transmission. The *Messengerhood* Principle affirming that the central theme of *Tawhīd* necessitates the mediate Principle of Prophethood. The institution of *Prophethood* is established to convey TM, proffering the receiver TI on his non-conative return to TS. The Sender's Unity is instituted through the wonderful design and great purpose of creation, that the Creation is the act of the infinitely Subtle, All-Encompassing and Omnipotent Sender, the Creator, who creates with infinite encompassment and absolute freedom. Having the exclusive right to be followed TS proffers TM to man. Endowed with discretion and sublime qualities, the receiver is in a position to accept or reject TM. As a receiver, he is entitled to exercise his volitionality concerning TM, but as a minded creature, man is bound by the responsibility entailed in the Sender-receiver

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relationship. God's ultimate freedom and power obliges man to mind his CR's role, with favours granted, dignity conferred, the consequence of declining the Right Guidance reiterated in every TM.

Having established TM rationale, it is necessary to establish the ethical argument of TM. There is no escape from the Sender but to Him, asserts the Qur'an frequently.³⁴ The following section therefore presents the system of values behind TM.

1.4 TM Value System

The TS attributes of Perfection qualify Him to tell the story of being and communication in the light of this Perfection. The reductionist telling of the story, however, is not new. It is typical of the receiver when he declines to use his reason to see none but himself in the picture. The telling of the story of man reflects in his conative utterances:

Now as for [the tribe of] Ad, they walked arrogantly on earth, [offending] against all right, and saying, "Who could have a power greater than ours?" Why - were they, then, not aware that God, who created them, had a power greater than theirs? But they went on rejecting Our messages; (41:15)

فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿فصلت: ١٥﴾

The interrogative 'مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً' is rhetorical from the receiver's side. It seeks no information, simply conveying a tone of arrogance. From TS side the question is real. It is answered with another question seeking no information. The informative question 'أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً' dispels arrogance of the receiver who closes his eye to natural signs.

The Sender's Version of the story reflects Perfection. His conative utterances reflect His attributes. When He asks a question He seeks no information.

Sign 6:31 reports lament over disregard of TM. 36:30 is a lament over the receiver's derision of Messengers. 19:39 starts with a directive to warn the receivers of the remorse the negligent will have on 'Decision Day'. 39:56 warns of the lament the cynic will have over scoffing the truth. 69:50 emphatically declares the regret the rejecters will experience.

The common theme of the above cited Signs is حَسْرَةٌ, 'regret':

1. The receiver depends on external favours,
2. the receiver derides TM;
3. the receiver cannot help the Sender's decision on his response to TM;
4. the Sender decides the ultimate state of affairs.

Communication process involves the sending-receiving interactive participants. Interaction takes place throughout the message. The message is

necessarily transcendent, i.e. informing of matters beyond direct perception. This does not mean it exceeds reason. The use of reason is the means to appreciate TM. Mind is able to approach the truth.

The poles of TC Process, God and man, share qualities of life, will, ability, hearing, seeing, speech and encompassment. These qualities are relative for man as the receiver seems to fulfil a mission offered by the Sender.

To understand conation in the Qur'ān it is necessary to elaborate on the ethical grounds of TM. The study of *conative utterances* is established on the four principles embedded in the Transcendent Text (TT). The receiver-related principles are الإرادة الحرة *al-irāda al-hūrra* 'free will' and المدنية *al-madīniyya* 'responsibility'³⁵. The Sender-related principles are التوحيد *al-Tawhīd* 'Unity' and العدل *al-^cadl* 'Equilibrium'. The former qualify the receiver. The latter oblige him.

TM proffers an integrated, balanced and realistic perspective on the receiver's nature and social role. This Qur'ānic exclusive perspective of the ethical principles of Unity, Equilibrium, Freewill and Responsibility is unfolded below.

1.4.1 Unity

The TM ethical system, encompassing the entire receiver's life on Earth, seems to reside eternally prefigured in the concept of التوحيد *al-Tawhīd*, 'Unity', which, in an absolute sense, relates only to God. However, insofar as man is theomorphic, he also reflects this Divine quality. There is nothing anthropomorphic in this argument, since man is the receiver of God's Will and must therefore reflect His essential qualities. To deny this would be to maintain, according to Frithjof Schuon, that 'there is no resemblance between the moon and its reflection in water, because if there were a resemblance, the moon would have to be liquid like water'.³⁶

Man in TM is nothing but the receiver of *Al-Hāqq* the Truth, Who reflects His glory in all worldly manifestations:

In time We shall make them fully understand Our messages [through what they perceive] in the utmost horizons [of the universe] and within themselves, so that it will become clear unto them that this [revelation] is indeed the truth. [Still,] is it not enough [for them to know] that thy Sustainer is witness unto everything? (41:53).

سَتْرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي
أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَّبِعِنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ
أَوْلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿فصلت: ٥٣﴾

Unity is both an all-exclusive and an all-inclusive principle. At the level of the absolute, it differentiates the Creator from the created, requiring unconditional surrender by all to His will:

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Judgment [as to what is right and what is wrong] rests with God alone – [and] He has ordained that you should worship nought but Him: this is the [one] ever-true faith; but most people know it not. (12:40).

إِنِ الْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿يوسف: ٤٠﴾

On the level of human existence, this principle also provides a powerful integration rule, for all receivers are united in submission to Him:

Say: "Behold, my prayer, and (all) my acts of worship, and my living and my dying are for God [alone], the Sustainer of all the worlds. (6:162).

قُلْ إِن صَّلَاتِي وَتُسْبُحِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿الأنعام: ١٦٢﴾

In a deeper sense, the Unity principle constitutes TM vertical dimension. It integrates, along a vertical line, the political, economic, and social aspects of the receiver's life into a homogeneous whole, which is consistent from within as well as integrated with the vast Universe without. Within the compass of one faultless, divinely revealed perspective, Unity shows the interrelation of all that exists. In the TM perspective, perfectly co-ordinated and necessary, the Universe, life on earth, and man all relate to an all-encompassing Unity, wherein the perceptible and the imperceptible, material abilities and spiritual potentialities combine to highlight the sublime character of man. Through the *direct information* of all the things created, which alone makes a *unified* perspective possible, the dream of a humanity marching in unison towards the Ultimate Truth can be realised on earth. The integrating force that Unity operates not only within a particular society but among all societies as well, points to TM universal character:

O men! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him. Behold, God is all-encompassing, all-informed. (49:13, revised).

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿الحجرات: ١٣﴾

Thus receivers are united not only in guidance from TS, but also in their recognising each other. Indeed, the two modes of information seem to be facets of the common pursuit of the ultimate truth.

Logically related to the integrative function of *al-Tawhīd* is that it provides man with a perspective of certainty, deriving from a deep sense of the Divine Equation between God and man.³⁷ The receiver's search for *al-hāqq*, the truth, cannot fail to be fruitful if he is guided by the One, the only One, Who encompasses the entire truth, indeed, is *Al-Hāqq* Truth Himself:

Say: "It is God [alone] who guides unto the truth." (10:35).

قُلِ اللَّهُ يَهْدِي لِلْحَقِّ ﴿يونس: ٣٥﴾

God alone is the Ultimate Truth. (24:25)

اللَّهُ هُوَ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ ﴿النور: ٢٥﴾

All this [happens] because God alone is the Ultimate Truth, and because He alone brings the dead to life, and because He has the power to will anything. (22:6)

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿الحج: ٦﴾

Thus it is, because God alone is the Ultimate Truth, so that all that men invoke beside Him is sheer falsehood, and because God alone is exalted, great! (22:62)

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿الحج: ٦٢﴾

This perspective dispels hesitation and doubt because a wisdom that is prefigured in the Absolute Sender cannot fail to show, guide and maintain the receiver on the right path:

He whom God guides, he alone is truly guided. (7:178)

مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِي ﴿الأعراف: ١٧٨﴾

Furthermore, this self-evident certainty reinforces the integrative force by informing it with a sense of the mission and assurance of ultimate fulfilment:

Hence, place your trust in God [alone] - for, behold, that which you uphold is truth self-evident. (27:79)

فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ ﴿النمل: ٧٩﴾

1.4.2 Equilibrium

Along with the vertical dimension of Unity, *العدل* *al-^Cadl*, which in a deeper sense denotes a balance of forces of Equilibrium, constitutes the TM horizontal dimension. Frithjof Schuon (1963) briefly notes this dimensional characterization of TM. In yet another work, he notes 'It is the aim of Islam to combine the sense of the absolute with the quality of Equilibrium'.³⁸ To avoid confusion, we should carefully note that 'Equilibrium' is used in a special sense denoted by *al-^Cadl*. To the possible objection that *al-^Cadl* means 'Justice' and not Equilibrium, we answer: if justice is introduced everywhere, what TM would assert, then a delicate balance, i.e. Equilibrium, will hold throughout such a society.³⁹

At the absolute level, *al-^Cadl* is the supreme attribute of the Sender; in fact, its denial constitutes a denial of God Himself. It follows that, at the relative level, the quality of Equilibrium must also characterise all His creation, which must reflect His qualities. According to this precept, the TM perspective of life derives from a Divine Model of an all-pervading harmony in the Universe:

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No fault will you see in the creation of Al-Raḥmān. And turn your vision [upon it] once more: can you see any flaw? (3) Yea, turn your vision [upon it] again and yet again: [and every time] your vision will fall back upon you, dazzled and truly defeated. (67:3-4)

مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوتٍ
فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ﴿٣﴾
ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ
الْبَصَرُ خاسئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ ﴿المالك: ٣-٤﴾

Indeed, Divine Perfection, reflected in Equilibrium, exists in the very order of the Universe, hanging together in a delicate balance:

Neither may the sun overtake the moon, nor can the night usurp the time of day, since all of them float through space [in accordance with Our laws]. (36:40)

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا
الَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ
﴿يس: ٤٠﴾

Within the homogeneous whole that is life in the TM perspective, its various elements have to be equilibrated to produce the best social order:

For it is He who creates everything and determines its own due measure. (25:2)

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا
﴿الفرقان: ٢﴾

BEHOLD, everything have We created in due measure and proportion. (54:49)

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿القمر: ٤٩﴾

Human existence itself carries all the basic life-giving qualities in an ‘undifferentiated equilibrium’, so that any rupture of it is the negation of life itself, and therefore a positive evil. In fact, in an historical perspective, the Text represents a providential synthesis equilibrating perfectly and finally the various aspects of TM. Schuon has remarked ‘The equilibrium between the two Divine aspects of Justice and Mercy constitutes the very essence of the Mohammedan Revolution, in which it re-joins the Abrahamic Revolution’.⁴⁰ This also explains the logic of the TM injunction:

Say: "God has spoken the truth: follow, then, the creed of Abraham, who turned away from all that is false, and was not of those who ascribe divinity to aught beside God." (3:95).

قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿آل
عمران: ٩٥﴾

The way of the Messenger Abraham represented ‘equilibrium between the exoteric and the esoteric, between Mercy and Justice, a balance which TM seeks to re-establish’.⁴¹ It follows that the property of Equilibrium not only obtains, but must be achieved through conscious purpose if it already does not exist: *it is not only a property but also a necessity*. Thus Equilibrium, or social harmony, is not so much a static property in the sense of a plea for the *status quo* as a dynamic quality releasing powerful forces against evil both within and without ourselves. Indeed, resisting evil within one's self is a higher form of *Effort*, which points to TM dynamic quality.

Equilibrium must exist in our individual lives as well. The innermost of each individual, itself a living shrine of truth, is unified with it vertically as a homogeneous whole and is equilibrated with respect to the elements within this whole. Within the receiver, there is a world of errant desires and erupting ideas, which must be contained and held together in correct proportions to produce a just human being⁴².

‘Equilibrium’ here, carries with it definite *normative* supports. On the level of social existence, it denotes a binding moral commitment of receivers in any society to uphold a delicate balance in all aspects of their lives. Hence, this concept must be distinguished from ‘equilibrium’ in mechanics or economics where it has no normative or ethical significance. The TM emphasises the *fact* of Equilibrium and insists on the *quality* of Equilibrium. Thus, no ‘trivial Equilibrium solutions are admissible in the Qur’ānic perspective’.⁴³ In a special sense, Equilibrium represents a first-best sum of natural and social forces to reproduce in human life that harmony which already exists in Nature⁴⁴.

In TM social dynamics perspective, the rise and fall of civilisations is seen in terms of their ‘distance’ from the universal Equilibrium. It is easy to indulge in excesses; but to maintain a delicate equilibrium in human affairs stretches human ingenuity to the maximum, and brings out the best in man in terms of forbearance and self-control. Nations, which cannot act judiciously, are relegated to the backwaters of history. The eternal law of Equilibrium takes no exceptions in the TM:

But We shall set up just balance-scales on Resurrection Day, and no human being shall be wronged in the least: for though there be [in him but] the weight of a mustard-seed [of good or evil], We shall bring it forth; and none can take count as We do! (21:47).

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقَسِطَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾
﴿الأنبياء: ٤٧﴾

1.4.3 Freewill

One most original TM contribution in the social perspective seems to be the principle of a ‘free’ receiver. Only God is absolutely free, but, within the limits of His scheme, the receiver is also relatively free. Being relative in no way diminishes the quality of freedom. As Schuon has profoundly pointed out, ‘God alone has absolute freedom, but human freedom, despite its relativity – in the sense that it is relatively absolute – is nothing other than freedom any more than a feeble light is something other than light’.⁴⁵

Given the faculty of reason and choice, man has the freedom either to become God-like by realising his sublime character, or, using his Freewill,

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to deny TS. This freedom to accept or reject whatever is on Earth followed from man's acceptance, even before creation, of a burden, which no one else could endure:

Verily, We did offer the trust [of reason and volition] to the heavens, and the earth, and the mountains: but they refused to bear it because they were afraid of it. Yet man took it up - for, verily, he has always been prone to be most wicked, most foolish. (33:72)

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا
وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿الأحزاب: ٧٢﴾

True, God encompasses all man's actions throughout his stay on Earth, but man's freedom is also God-given.

By accepting to act as the receiver of the Sender-given discretion, the receiver in the TM perspective is assigned to the most distinguished position in the Universe. The emphasis on the central importance of the individual receiver, not only in the society but also in the Universe, is one of TM hallmarks. Iqbal (2000) lucidly brings out this TM aspect. His deductions are based on three propositions about place of the individual receiver in the Universe: (a) 'that man is the chosen of God', (b) 'that man, with all his faults, is meant to be the representative of God on earth', and (c) 'that man is the trustee of a free personality which he accepted at his peril'.⁴⁶

The freedom of human will is based on the doctrine that man will be judged by the use he has made of his reason.⁴⁷ His sublime character, combined with Freewill, sanctifies in the clearest possible terms the principle of human freedom, which is innate in human nature. The God-given freedom of man not only cannot be taken away from him, but must also be safeguarded through the creation of institutional safeguards that prevent its desecration by unnatural authoritarianism. Thus, no charter of human rights is required to confer on man his God-given freedom.⁴⁸ The receiver is born free. Similarly, any such attempt to relieve man of the burdens of slavery becomes ennobled in the eyes of TS, simply because it constitutes a fulfilment of the TM purpose. It also follows that to deprive man of his natural freedom is to degrade him below his God-given stature, producing disequilibrium in society. Human freedom also applies to the 'individual receiver' and 'collective receiver' emphasising a correct balance.

The roots of human freedom, TM asserts, cannot be traced to an uncertainty about who knows best, but flow naturally and serenely from the Sender's perspective of certainty:

And God *fully encompasses*, whereas you do not *fully encompass*. (2:216, revised)

وَاللَّهُ يَعْظُمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿البقرة: ٢١٦﴾

Leaving the receiver in a trial-error state in matters exceeding the limits of relative human encompassment does not sound wise. The receiver depends on TM for matters imperceptible. These are faith items with wisdom exceeding limits of reason. As contradiction and/or difference is the norm in this respect the imperceptible realm is left for guidance from the Sender⁴⁹. Our response to TM, thus, constitutes our role. The trust of reason/volition reflects in the individual and collective responsibility of the receiver.

1.4.4 Responsibility

Given the faculties of reason and volition, man stands accountable to TS to realise his sublime character. The free receiver entrusted to maintain Equilibrium⁵⁰ during his stay on Earth is responsible for his actions:

He who has created death as well as life, so that He might put you to a test [and thus show] which of you is best in conduct, and [make you realize that] He alone is almighty, truly forgiving. (67:2)

اللَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَفُورُ ﴿الملك: ٢﴾

The Sender having all dominion and the power to will holds the receiver responsible for his actions. The Responsibility Principle is logically related to Freewill. It sets limits to what the receiver is free to do by making him responsible for all that he does⁵¹.

The cult of unethical, unbridled individualism is not allowed in TM perspective. Even pure logic should convince us that unlimited freedom is an absurdity: unlimited freedom implies unlimited responsibility. This is a contradiction because both these features cannot attain at the same time. Freedom must be counter-balanced by responsibility if only to satisfy the dictates of Nature's Equilibrium. The receiver, having opted for the power to choose between good and evil, seems to endure its logical consequences:

And every human being's destiny have We tied to his neck; and on the Day of Resurrection We shall bring forth for him a record which he will find wide open. (17:13)

وَكُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَائِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنشُورًا ﴿الإسراء: ١٣﴾

[On the Day of Judgment,] every human being will be held in pledge for whatever [evil] he has wrought. (74:38)

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ﴿المدثر: ٣٨﴾

Once TS shows the way, the responsibility for going astray is wholly the receiver's and he will have to suffer for his wayward behaviour:

SAY: "O mankind! The truth from your Sustainer has now come unto you. Whoever, therefore, chooses to follow the right path, follows it but for his own good;

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكِيلٍ

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and whoever chooses to go astray, goes but astray to his own hurt. And I am not responsible for your conduct." (10:108)

﴿يونس: ١٠٨﴾

Because of the quality of Equilibrium, man is held responsible for his actions. None can escape consequences of his misdeeds:

And whatever [wrong] any human being commits rests upon himself alone; and no bearer of burdens shall be made to bear another's burden. (6:164)

﴿الأنعام: ١٦٤﴾

Not only that. Man is also held responsible for the evil that goes on around him. Accordingly, the receiver has been forewarned:

And beware of that temptation to evil which does not befall only those among you who are bent on denying the truth, to the exclusion of others; and know that God is severe in retribution. (8:25)

﴿الأنفال: ٢٥﴾

Except for the sick, children and women, nobody can escape the Sender's retribution on the excuse that they were too weak to stop evil. If one cannot do anything about what goes wrong in a particular society, then he is commanded to migrate from that society or he, too, will be taken in⁵².

The Doctrine of Responsibility seems to constitute a dynamic principle in relation to human behaviour. Responsibility constitutes the second element of the moral system in the Qur'ān⁵³, the others being (1) Obligation, (3) Sanction, (4) Intention, and (5) Effort. The last derives from the root جهد j-h-d, which underlies two essential terms: اجتهاد *Ijtihād*, 'specialist intellectual effort', and جهاد *Jihād*, 'individual and collective social effort'.

The primary dynamic force of society in the Qur'ānic perspective states Iqbal is *Ijtihād* – or 'the principle of movement', in the Islamic social system.⁵⁴ This force is the *responsibility* of the individual to maintain the quality of *equilibrium* in the society.⁵⁵ *Ijtihād* is only one means to restore equilibrium: *on the Intellectual plane, Jihād*, does this on the *social plane*, the latter being the more basic.

The receiver has to evolve to reach perfection; but evolution is a negation of the *status quo*, and requires that none should be chained to his past or contained within the confines of his present. The TM rejects appeals to mores to justify deviation from the right path. The Qur'ān condemns blind imitation of ancestral ways. A disgraceful past cannot be invoked to justify the evils of the present:

And when such [people] are told to follow that which God has bestowed from on high, they

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا

answer, “Nay, we shall follow that which we found our forefathers believing in and doing!” Why - [would you follow your forefathers] even if Satan had invited them unto the suffering of the blazing flame? (31:21)

بَلْ تَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أُولَئِكَ كَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿لقمان: ٢١﴾

Simultaneously, once again reflecting TS’s commitment to social justice, man ‘today’ has been completely absolved of the responsibility of what happened ‘yesterday’:

Now those people have passed away; unto them shall be accounted what they have earned, and unto you, what you have earned; and you will not be, judged on the strength of what they did. (2:134)

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٣٤﴾

Man should be forward-looking rather than backward-looking. Going a step further, the responsibility for not ushering in a better future rests entirely on his shoulders:

Verily, God does not change men's condition unless they change their inner selves. (13:11).

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ﴿الرعد: ١١﴾

It should be clear, therefore, that fatalism, implied in predestination, is no part of TM. Instead, the TM replaces a static outlook with a healthy dynamism. Signs like:

SAY: "O God, Lord of all dominion! You grant dominion unto whom You will, and take away dominion from whom You will; and You exalt whom You will, and abase whom You will. In Your hand is all good. Verily, You have the power to will anything. (3:26)

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتَنزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿آل عمران: ٢٦﴾

do not absolve receivers of what they do. This Sign is instead a statement of complete freedom of the Absolute; but Divine freedom must not be confused with arbitrariness, Divine Will does not imply arbitrariness because arbitrariness is an imperfection. Insofar as noble human qualities are indicated in the Divine Will, God will not do, because He does not will to do, what He does not like for man. We might be ignorant of God's purposes, because Nature conceals more than it reveals – or reveals only as much as the receiver can take, but this fact also cannot imply any statements which are incompatible with the Divine Nature. That is why *al-Cadl* is the *dominant* characteristic of Divine Nature. ‘Once this point has been compassed, all confusion surrounding the validity of the Doctrine of Responsibility should be dispelled’.⁵⁶

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A free receiver is not one who is insensitive to his environment but one who vibrates with life and is also life-giving, enlivening the environment by his presence:

Verily, God does not change men's condition *إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا*
unless they change their inner selves. (13:11).
مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ﴿الرعد: ١١﴾

'Each man on his own' is not how TM looks at human freedom. Hence, there cannot be any contradiction, within TM perspective, between individual freedom and collective freedom: the 'distance' between the two is bridged by the sense of social consciousness and responsibility. Those who are socially conscious have been exalted TS over all others who are not so motivated:

And that there might grow out of you a *وَلَتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ*
community [of people] who invite unto all that *وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ*
is good, and enjoin the doing of what is right *الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ* ﴿آل

عمران: ١٠٤﴾

(3:104)

On the other hand, those who do otherwise are hypocrites:

The hypocrites, both men and women are all of *الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُم مِّن*
a kind: they enjoin the doing of what is wrong *بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ*
and forbid the doing of what is right. (9:67)
الْمَعْرُوفِ ﴿التوبة: ٦٧﴾

1.5 Summary

The TM Perspective on man, transcending the mere growth of plants and sense of animals, shows why the conative receiver is unable to follow his nose the way animals consume their creatureliness with equanimity. The rational receiver in TM demands an answer for his distinction with an articulate thought/speech. The receiver's inability to also transcend his consciousness necessitates his need to access transcendent information. Man bound by his dependency and non-conative return to TS has no resort but to respond to TM either diligently or negligently. This is determined by conative function of communication.

The distinctive character of information and ethics in TM rests largely on its perspective of the minded receiver in relation to TS, his own self, the Universe and society. Through the essential multidimensionality of an integrated personality, TM points to a responsible receiver who is free to realise his sublime character. The minded receiver, TM reiterates, should be guided by a conscious purpose, exercising to the full his powers of discretion in a balanced way.

To understand conation in the Qur'ān this article elaborates on the ethical grounds of TM. It established TM *conative utterances* on the four ethical principles in the TT. The receiver-related principles 'free will' and 'responsibility'; the Sender-related principles are 'Unity' and 'Equilibrium'. The former qualify the receiver. The latter oblige him. The free and responsible conative receiver enters in a covenant to realise equilibrium on earth guided by TI from the Unique TS.

Through his distinctive qualities the CR 'aligns' with his environment, the Universe and society. Consequently, within the panoramic TM perspective, man can neither go adrift through aimlessness nor be alienated from his surroundings. Simultaneously, his selfish actions are tempered because TM requires him to be sensitive to his environment, for the betterment of which he bears full responsibility. Furthermore, the receiver is not allowed to be tradition-bound: he has no responsibility for the past in which he had no part to play. Thus the receiver, in TM perspective, is forward-looking and dynamic, a quality deriving from his deep consciousness of the decisive nature of his actions, responsibility and accountability for TS.

Notes:

¹ I. Kalin, 'Derrida's Last Postcard', [online] <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/kalin/index.html>

² (Q. 4:82)

³ (Q. 4:105)

⁴ S.F. Alomary, *ilm* and *m^acrifa* in the Qur'ān, forthcoming.

It is essential in this respect to show the distinction between *ilm*, information, in one sense, and *m^acrifa*, knowledge, as used in the TM. The former stands in one sense for encompassment of the referent, which is unique of the TS. It also refers in another sense to information as a process, which includes the informant, the message informed and the receiver of information. In the 2nd sense it is common to CR and TS. The term *m^acrifa* is used in the TM to refer to cognition. It is only used in its nominal form indicating its process nature. The opposite of *m^acrifa* is *nukran*, denial, whereas, the opposite of *ilm* is *jahl*, ignorance. Hence, rendering science, an organized form of knowledge into *ilm*, creates confusion.

⁵ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (New York, Macmillan, 1953).

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⁶ C. S. Peirce, *Principles of Philosophy*, Collected Papers, Vol. 1, eds. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1931).

⁷ L. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society the Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, Ed. M. Cole (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987).

⁸ M. Tomasello, *The Cultural Origin of Human Cognition*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999) p. 207.

⁹ C. E. M. Joad, *Guide to modern Thought* (London: Pan, 1948) p. 91. See Also E. Schrodinger, *Nature and the Greeks and Science and Humanism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996).

¹⁰ M. Asad's translation (The Message of the Qur'an) is used in this paper unless indicated otherwise. The first numeral refers to the Sura, the second to the Sign.

¹¹ S. F. Alomary, *Conative Utterances: A Qur'anic Perspective* (Salford University: PhD Thesis, 2011: 85).

¹² M. R. Al-Nabulsi, *Mūqawīmāt al-Taklīf* [online] http://www.nabulsi.com/blue/ar/sss_cat.php?id=55&sid=618&ssid=619&sssid=620

¹³ Abū Ḥāmīd al-Ghazālī, *al-Qiṣṭās al-Mustaqīm* (Riyāḍ Muṣṭafā al-^cAbd Allāh, ed.), Damascus: Dār al-Ḥikma 1406/1986.

¹⁴ R. Gwynne, *Logic, Rhetoric, and Legal Reasoning in the Qur'an: God's Argument* (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004) p. x.

¹⁵ See *Conative Utterances*, chapter 6, for a discussion of exponents of conative functions in the Qur'ān.

¹⁶ The dichotomy of minding is inherent in the principle of opposition in semiotic/linguistic communication (See Lyons 1960: 275).

¹⁷ L. V. Mises, *Human Action*. (Burlingame: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2008).

¹⁸ Abu ^cali al Husain ibn ^cabd Allāh ibn Sīnā, known in the West as Avicenna (980-1037A.D.).

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 55.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibn-Sīnā, 'Risālah Fi Tafsīr Surat Al-a^clā' Ali Asghar Hekmat (Ed.) (*Tehran University Journal*, 1954) pp. 55-64.

²² See Q. 2:29; 6:102; 10:34; 25:2; 35:3; 36:81; 43:9.

²³ S. H. Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages* (Cambridge: MA.: Harvard University Press, 1964) p. 35.

²⁴ Abdul Haq, *Islamic Quarterly*, 32 (1988), p. 56.

- ²⁵ Ibid., 57.
- ²⁶ E. Becker, *Denial of Death*, (New York: 1994) p. 87.
- ²⁷ Abdul Haq, *Islamic Quarterly*, 32 (1988), p. 58.
- ²⁸ Alomary, *Conative Utterances*, 2011, p. 87.
- ²⁹ K. Kull, 'On Semiosis, Umwelt, and Semiosphere', *Semiotica*, 1998, 120 (3/4) pp. 299-310.
- ³⁰ D. Eleyan, *Project Review Solution-Directed Model Using System Dynamics Modelling*, PhD thesis, (Manchester: University of Manchester, 2006) p. 77
- ³¹ R. Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Indiana: Gateway, 1953), p. 23.
- ³² (Q. 4:82)
- ³³ (Q. 2:23)
- ³⁴ See Q. 75:10; 75:11; 75:12; 55:33; 81:26. 88:25; 88:26; 102:1-8.
- ³⁵ My choice of the term (*madīn*) is based on (Q. 56:86)
- ³⁶ F. Schuon, *Islam and the Perennial Philosophy* (London: World of Islam Festival Publishing Co. Ltd, 1976) p. 127.
- ³⁷ S. N. H. Naqvi, *Ethics and Economics: An Islamic Synthesis* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1981) p. 49.
- ³⁸ Schuon, *Islam and the Perennial Philosophy*, p. 23.
- ³⁹ Naqvi, *Ethics and Economics*, p. 49.
- ⁴⁰ Schuon, *Islam and the Perennial Philosophy*, p. 96.
- ⁴¹ Naqvi, *Ethics and Economics*, p. 50.
- ⁴² (Q. 5:87)
- ⁴³ Ibid: p. 51.
- ⁴⁴ (Q. 57:25)
- ⁴⁵ F. Schuon, *Understanding Islam* (Indiana: World Wisdom Books, 1994) P. 2.
- ⁴⁶ M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought In Islam* (Lahore: Muḥammad Ashraf, 2000) p. 95.
- ⁴⁷ S. H. Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam* (Lahore: Kazi Publications, 2007).
- ⁴⁸ Naqvi, *Ethics and Economics*, p. 53.
- omit
- ⁴⁹ (Q. 2:38)
- ⁵⁰ (Q. 55:7)
- ⁵¹ (Q. 4:85)
- ⁵² (Q. 4:97)
- ⁵³ M. A. Draz , *Dūstūr al-Akhlāq Fī al-Qur'ān*, Abdul Ṣabūr Shahīn (trans.), (Beirut: Mū'sasati al-Rīsālā, 1973), p. 136.
- ⁵⁴ Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 95.
- ⁵⁵ Naqvi, *Ethics and Economics*, p. 55.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid: p. 56.