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**“The Qur’anic concept of Justice (*al- ‘Adl*) from a Nursian
perspective”**

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Philosophy of
Doctorate at School of Government and International Affairs

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ABSTRACT

Justice can be accepted as a form of fairness or impartial distribution of rights as the consequence of a disagreement. However, this shallow classical definition is not enough to describe the real function of justice in every part of our lives. This is because, justice, as a concept, encompasses numerous other scientific disciplines within itself, such as philosophy, religion, ethics, law, physics and politics. Hence, in order to understand the concept of justice in a clear manner, every effect of justice on these abovementioned disciplines should be considered.

This thesis presents a critical analysis of the writings of Said Nursi (1876-1960) of Turkey, a 20th century Muslim scholar, theologian and exegete of the Qur'ān. This research aims to explore the concept and ontology of *al-'adl* (justice) in his *Risale-i Nur* by using the Qur'ānic worldview on the concept of justice.

According to Nursi's outlook, the concept of *al-'adl* (justice) operates in different contexts in interconnected realms. For example, the concept of *al-adl* can be analysed by dividing it into three different meanings; (1) the relationship between God and the cosmos in general; (2) the relationship between God and man in particular; and (3) the relationships between man and his fellow men.

Hence, the leading research question of this thesis also seriously considers how and in what context, Nursi's understanding of *al-'adl* (justice) is in line with the Qur'ānic *Weltanschauung* (worldview).

In this respect, the work of Toshihiko Izutsu (1914-1994) has been employed as a major methodological tools in making a comparative analysis between Nursi's understanding and the Qur'ān. Within this framework, this research will investigate the semantic field of *al-a'adl* (justice) by analysing the semantically and lexically connected and opposite concepts to justice in the Qur'ān. Hence, this research sheds new light on the three principal meanings of *al-'adl* (justice), which strongly correlates with the Nursian understanding of *al-'adl* (justice). These three principal meanings of *al-adl* (justice) can be highlighted as follows:

First, *al-mīzān* (balance and order) and *al-mikyāl* (just measure) are concepts which are semantically connected to *al-'adl* (justice). This alludes to balance and order in

the creation of both nature and animate beings according to the Qur'ānic perception. This justice is seen in the relationship between God and the cosmos in general.

Second, the term *qadara* (to measure) is semantically connected with *al-'adl* (justice) and refers to a very wide cluster of meanings, which cover either measures of sustenance given to all creations or order in creation of all universes in the Qur'ān. This meaning of justice functions in the realm of the relationship between God and man.

Third, *al-istiqāmah* (to be moderate) and *al-wasaṭ* (middle way) have a direct relation with the concept of *al-'adl* (justice) in the Qur'ān and the overlapping connection between these three concepts refers to the mean state of human beings in their affairs with others. This meaning indicates the third realm which is the relationship between man and his fellow man.

This study does not argue that there is social justice present in Nursi's writings. Rather it claims that Nursi mentions foundations or means for social justice in society and certain qualities that man possesses have social implications.

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Transliteration

Said Nursi wrote his books in Ottoman Turkish and Arabic. Ottoman Turkish is used here to mean the Turkish language as appeared in written records during the Ottoman Empire (ca. 1300 to 1919). This Turkish was in use in Turkey from 1919 until the adoption of the Roman alphabet (officially introduced in 1928). Ottoman Turkish covers the Arabic alphabet and some Persian letters such as گ (g), ژ (j), چ (ç), and پ (p).

Some limitations appeared when scripts of the Turkish version of *the Risale-i Nur* were Romanised in accordance with modern Turkish usage. For example, سوق is Romanised as *sevk* (sending) in Modern Turkish. Nursi uses this word to mean to send or market in his writings. Particularly, the orthography of the Ottoman Turkish original reveals a conflict with modern Turkish.

Therefore, throughout this thesis, key terms which were used in this thesis, are transliterated taking consideration of original ottoman or Arabic print of Nursi's books. Transliterated Persian and Arabic words comply with rules of Library of Congress Romanisation regulations for non-Roman scripts, which is found in these two tables: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsa/romanization/arabic.pdf>, and <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsa/romanization/persian.pdf>

To this end, the Arabic-to-English list of transliteration employed in this thesis follows these two dictionaries: (1) A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic by Hans Wehr;¹ and *al-Munjid fī al-Lughah wa al-i'lām*

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|---|---------|---|--------------------------|
| ا | a | د | d | ض | ḍ | ك | k |
| ب | b | ذ | dh | ط | ṭ | ل | l |
| ت | t | ر | r | ظ | ẓ | م | m |
| ث | th | ز | z | ع | ' (ayn) | ن | n |
| ج | j | س | s | غ | gh | ه | ah; at (construct state) |
| ح | ḥ | ش | sh | ف | F | و | w |
| خ | kh | ص | ṣ | ق | Q | ي | y |

¹ H Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979).

Declaration

I hereby declare that no portion of the work that appears in this study has been used in support of an application of another degree in qualification to this or any other university or institutions of learning.

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Glossary

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| ' <i>awam</i> ' | public or ordinary people |
| ' <i>ilm-i haqiqat</i> | true knowledge |
| ' <i>ilm-i hikmat</i> | philosophy |
| ' <i>ulama</i> | Islamic scholars |
| ' <i>umma</i> ' | nation or community |
| <i>adalet (turkish)</i> | justice |
| <i>adalet-i bashari</i> | human justice |
| <i>adalet-i izafiya</i> | relative justice |
| <i>adalet-i mahza</i> | Pure justice |
| <i>adalet-i qadariya</i> | Divine Justice |
| <i>Adhan</i> | Call to Prayer (Ṣalāh) |
| <i>ahillah</i> | new moon |
| <i>ahl al-ithbāt</i> | the people of affirmation |
| <i>ahl al-sunnah</i> | Sunni school of thought |
| <i>Al- 'Alīm</i> | The Knower |
| <i>Al-aḍḍad</i> | antonyms |
| <i>al-Ādil</i> | All-Just |
| <i>al-aḥkam</i> | judgments |
| <i>al-alfāz al-mushtarakah</i> | homonymous polysemic words |
| <i>al-Ash 'arī</i> | theological school of Islam founded by Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari (874–936, Iraq) |
| <i>al-asmā al-ḥusnā</i> | Names of God |
| <i>Al-Badī'</i> | The Imcomparable |
| <i>al-Baqarah</i> | Chapter 2: The Cow |
| <i>Al-Baṣīr</i> | The All-Seeing |
| <i>al-baṣirah</i> | discernment |
| <i>al-Fātiḥa</i> | the opening, first sūrah of the Qur'an |
| <i>al-fida 'or fidyatun</i> | compensation |
| <i>al-ḥājah</i> | need |
| <i>al-Ḥakīm</i> | All-Wise |
| <i>al-ḥaqq</i> | truth |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>al-hāssah</i> | senses |
| <i>al-ḥazzu</i> | certain share |
| <i>al-ḥuqqu</i> | the socket into which the head of the thigh bone fits |
| <i>al-ṭjāz</i> | the brevity and conciseness |
| <i>al-ikhlās</i> | sincerity |
| <i>al-imām al-mubīn</i> | the Clear Record |
| <i>al-inṣāf</i> | fairness, equity |
| <i>al-irādah</i> | volition |
| <i>al-istiqāmah</i> | to be moderate |
| <i>al-istiṭāʿ</i> | capacity or ability |
| <i>al-jawr</i> | injustice, tyranny |
| <i>al-khawf</i> | fear of God |
| <i>al-kitāb al-mubīn</i> | the Clear Book |
| <i>al-mālu</i> | capital |
| <i>al-manṭiq</i> | Logic |
| <i>al-maqām</i> | place or context |
| <i>al-maqṣad</i> | aim |
| <i>al-Mathnawī al-Nuriya</i> | One of Nursi's book, literally means 'Seedbed of the Light' |
| <i>al-Māturidī</i> | Sunni Hanafī jurist and theologian (853-944, Samarkand, Uzbekistan) |
| <i>al-mawjūd al-wājib</i> | necessary existence |
| <i>al-mayl</i> | inclination |
| <i>al-mikyāl</i> | just measure, dry measure for grain |
| <i>al-mīzān</i> | balance and order |
| <i>al-Muḥyī</i> | Giver of Life |
| <i>al-mujīd</i> | Creator |
| <i>al-mukhāṭab</i> | addressee |
| <i>al-muqsiṭ</i> | person who act justly |
| <i>al-musāwah</i> | likeness, parity |
| <i>al-mutakallim</i> | speaker or subject |
| <i>al-Muzayyin</i> | beautifier |
| <i>al-nuqṣ</i> | imperfection |

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>al-Qādir</i> | the Omnipotent |
| <i>al-Qahhār</i> | The Subduer |
| <i>al-qawāma</i> | curatorship |
| <i>al-qīṣṭ</i> | justice or fairness |
| <i>al-qīṣṭās</i> | scales of true |
| <i>al-qīymah</i> | the value and worth |
| <i>al-qudrah al-ḥādisah</i> | the originated power |
| <i>al-quwwa al-‘aqliyya</i> | the power of intellect |
| <i>al-quwwa al-ghaḍabiyya</i> | the power of animal passion or repulsion |
| <i>al-quwwa al-shahawiyya</i> <i>al-bahīmiyya</i> | the power of animal appetites |
| <i>al-Rahmān</i> | all- Compassionate |
| <i>al-Razzāq</i> | Provider |
| <i>al-Ṣāni’-i ‘Adl</i> | Just Maker |
| <i>al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm</i> | the Straight Path |
| <i>al-tawḥīd</i> | monotheism |
| <i>al-thābit</i> | steady |
| <i>al-thābit al-mawjūd</i> | Steady Existence |
| <i>al-wasaṭ</i> | middle way |
| <i>al-wujūh wa ‘al-naẓā’ir</i> | lexicographical genre of <i>tafsīr</i> |
| <i>al-‘adl or al-‘adālah</i> | justice |
| <i>al-‘itidāl</i> | well balanced |
| <i>al-‘uhūd al-ilāhiyyah</i> | the divine covenant |
| <i>amri nisbī</i> | relative matter |
| <i>amri ‘itibārī</i> | theoretical matter |
| <i>aqwam</i> | more correct, more appropriate |
| <i>As-Sami’</i> | The Hearer of All |
| <i>aṣlah</i> | salutary |
| <i>awāmir-i takwīnī</i> | the Divine Command of creation |
| <i>awlā</i> | more suitable or deserving or appropriate |
| <i>ayat</i> | verse |
| <i>azal</i> | past-eternity |

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>azlam</i> | more unjust |
| <i>a ʿṭ, ʿaṭāyā pl.</i> | granting relief |
| <i>ba'sā</i> | distress |
| <i>badihī</i> | evident |
| <i>Bad'iuzzamān or (Bediuzzaman in Turkish)</i> | the wonderful beauty of the age, Said Nursi's nickname |
| <i>Barla Lahikasi</i> | Barla Letters, Correspondences of Nursi with his students |
| <i>birr</i> | reverence, piety or kindness |
| <i>bukhl</i> | avarice |
| <i>Büyük Millet Meclisi</i> | The Grand National Assembly, legislative body of Turkish Republic. |
| <i>ḍarrā</i> | adversity |
| <i>Dārul Hikmatil Islāmiyya</i> | The Academy of Higher Islamic Studies |
| <i>Dershane(turkish)</i> | the Risale-i Nur study circle houses |
| <i>dh-r-ʿ</i> | to measure |
| <i>dhanb</i> | offence or sin |
| <i>du ʿā</i> | supplication |
| <i>Emirdag Lahikasi</i> | Emirdag Letters |
| <i>f-ḥ-sh</i> | to be excessive |
| <i>f-ṭ-r</i> | to split or to break apart |
| <i>f-w-t</i> | to escape, elude, slip away |
| <i>faḥshā</i> | immoderate, excessive, vile deed, crime |
| <i>fasād</i> | corruption, decay, decomposition |
| <i>fāsiq</i> | godless, sinful, a person not meeting the legal requirements of righteousness |
| <i>fāsiqūn</i> | active participle of fisq |
| <i>fatwā</i> | a ruling on a point of Islamic law given by a recognized authority. |
| fatwā | Pre Islamic, Time of Ignorance |
| <i>fā'il</i> | doer, active participle |
| <i>fisq</i> | sinfulness, to stray from the right course |
| <i>fīṭnatun</i> | intelligence |
| <i>fīṭrah</i> | Disposition, creation, nature |

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>fujūr</i> | profligacy |
| <i>funūn al-madaniyya'</i> | modern sciences or natural sciences |
| <i>fuṭūr</i> | crack, fissure, rupture |
| <i>ghabāwah</i> | the vice of stupidity |
| <i>ghayb</i> | the unseen or unknown deminsion |
| <i>grift tajalli (persian)</i> | intricate manifestation |
| <i>hadā</i> | guide |
| <i>ḥadīth</i> | Prophetic tradition |
| <i>ḥalāl</i> | lawful |
| <i>ḥarf jarr</i> | preposition |
| <i>ḥasanah or ḥasanāt pl</i> | goodness |
| <i>ḥashr</i> | resurrection |
| <i>ḥāṣil-i bilmaṣdar</i> | the outcome of verbal noun |
| <i>hawā</i> | capriciousness |
| <i>ḥikmah or (hikmet in turkish)</i> | wisdom |
| <i>ḥudūthī</i> | createdness |
| <i>humā</i> | they, pronoun used for two people in arabic langauge |
| <i>ifrāṭ</i> | excess |
| <i>iḥsān</i> | beneficence, performance of good deeds |
| <i>ijāzat</i> | diploma |
| <i>ikhtirā'ī</i> | giving existence out of nothing |
| <i>ikhtiyār</i> | free choice |
| <i>ilhām</i> | inspiration |
| <i>Imām</i> | Islamic spiritual leader or head of the state |
| <i>īmān</i> | belief or faith |
| <i>imkānī</i> | contingency |
| <i>innī</i> | an argument from cause to effect |
| <i>insān-i akbar</i> | big human being |
| <i>intizām</i> | balance and order |
| <i>iqsāṭ</i> | to establish justice |
| <i>Ishārāt al- 'ijāz fī mīzān al-</i> | Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur'anic |

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| <i>ījāz</i> | Conciseness |
| <i>isrāf</i> | extravagance |
| <i>istakbara</i> | to be big with pride |
| <i>istikhdām</i> | employment of God's compassion |
| <i>istiṭā'a</i> | capacity or ability |
| <i>Ittiḥad</i> | Union |
| <i>Ittiḥād-I Muḥammadī Jamīyati</i> | Union of Muhammadan Society |
| <i>Jabarīya</i> | A school of thought which deny free will in man, means 'The Necessitarians' |
| <i>jabr</i> | divine compulsion |
| <i>jarbazah</i> | the vice of wickedness |
| <i>jihād</i> | striving in God's cause and for humanity's good; doing one's utmost to achieve something; struggle |
| <i>jinn</i> | jinn, invisible beings, either harmful or helpful, that interfere with the lives of mortals |
| <i>jūd</i> | generosity |
| <i>juzz-i irade</i> | human free will |
| <i>k-y-l</i> | to measure |
| <i>kafara</i> | to be ungrateful, or to deny existence of God |
| <i>kāfir</i> | Unbeliever |
| <i>kail</i> | measure |
| <i>kalām</i> | Islamic Theology, literally means 'speech' |
| <i>kasb</i> | acquisition |
| <i>Kastamonu Lahikası</i> | Kastamonu appendix, Collection of Nursi's letters to his students during his stay in Kastamonu, Turkey |
| <i>kh-s-r</i> | to incur a loss, to go astray |
| <i>khalaqa</i> | to create |
| <i>Khāliq</i> | Creator |
| <i>khalq al-af'āl</i> | creation of actions |
| <i>Khawārij</i> | those who defected from the group, referring to the Islamic groups that rebelled against the third and fourth caliphs |
| <i>khayr</i> | good in moral sense |

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|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>khumūd</i> | the vice of annihilation of desire |
| <i>khusrān</i> | loser, decline, profligacy |
| <i>kitāb</i> | Book |
| <i>kitāb-i kabīr</i> | great book |
| <i>Kitāb-i Kabīr-i Kāināt</i> | The Great Book of Universe |
| <i>kufr</i> | unbelief |
| <i>lāzim</i> | transitive verb |
| <i>Lemalar</i> | The Flashes |
| <i>limmī</i> | an argument from cause to effect |
| <i>Lūṭ</i> | known as Lot in the Old Testament, is a prophet of God in the Quran. |
| <i>ma'rifah</i> | defined noun |
| <i>madras, madaris pl</i> | a college for Islamic instruction, school, college, from darasa to study |
| <i>Madrasat uz-Zahrā'</i> | Name of Nursi' project university, literally means 'The School of Brilliance' |
| <i>makhraj</i> | one of the ranks in Islamic sciences tradition |
| <i>Maktubat</i> | The Letters |
| <i>manevi cihad (turkish)</i> | spiritual jihād, please see " <i>jihād</i> " |
| <i>manzil bayna manzilatayn</i> | intermediate position |
| <i>maqḍūr</i> | destiny, preordained |
| <i>maṣḍar</i> | nomen verbi |
| <i>mawḏūn</i> | balanced, well proportioned, rhythmically balanced |
| <i>mayalān</i> | inclination |
| <i>ma'āṣī (pl)</i> | evil acts, sins |
| <i>ma'lūm</i> | the known thing |
| <i>ma'rūf</i> | commendable, good |
| <i>miq'dār</i> | amount, quantity |
| <i>mudarris</i> | madrasah lecturer |
| <i>Muḥakkimūn</i> | Arbitrators |
| <i>Muhsin</i> | benevolent |
| <i>mūmin</i> | Believer |

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| <i>munkar</i> | Blameworthy |
| <i>muqaddarāt</i> | things which are destined |
| <i>muqtadir</i> | capable |
| <i>murīd</i> | a willing being |
| <i>mushṭāq</i> | derivative |
| <i>muta ‘addī</i> | intransitive verb |
| <i>muwāzanah</i> | balance |
| <i>muwāzanah</i> | muwāzanah |
| <i>muḥ’lim</i> | darkness |
| Mu‘tazilites, (Arab., ‘itazala, ‘separate from’). | An early theological school in Islam, which espoused the use of reason in finding a middle way between unbelief and naïve fideism. |
| <i>nabīy</i> | Prophet |
| <i>nakirah</i> | undefined noun |
| <i>nazarī</i> | theoretical |
| <i>Nazzām</i> | the Orderer |
| <i>nizām</i> | balance |
| <i>nubuwwah</i> | prophethood |
| <i>nūr-i wijdān</i> | the light of conscience |
| <i>Nuṭuq</i> | Speech |
| <i>q-d-r</i> | to determine, to decree, ordain, decide |
| <i>qaḍā</i> | divine decree |
| <i>qadar</i> | Divine Determining |
| <i>qadara</i> | to measure |
| <i>Qadarīya</i> | Islamic school of thought who believe that Human being is creator of his own action and deeds. |
| <i>qāsīt</i> | a being able to act consciously |
| <i>qāsiṭ</i> | a person who deviate from right path |
| <i>qātil</i> | murderer |
| <i>qatl</i> | murder |
| <i>qurū</i> | monthly periods |
| <i>Rahīm</i> | Munificent |

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| <i>rasūl</i> | messenger |
| <i>rūḥ</i> | the soul |
| <i>ṣalāh</i> | prayer |
| <i>Ṣāni'</i> | Maker |
| <i>ṣayd</i> | a game, hunting or shooting |
| <i>sayyi'ah</i> | evil |
| <i>sa'ah</i> | hour |
| <i>shaja'ah</i> | courage |
| <i>shuhūd-i qalb</i> | the spiritual inspiration of the heart |
| <i>ṣidq</i> | sincerity |
| <i>Sözler</i> | The Words |
| <i>Şualar</i> | The Rays |
| <i>tafāwūt</i> | disparity, contrast, dishormany |
| <i>tahawwur</i> | the vice of rashness |
| <i>tafrīṭ</i> | negligence, deficiency |
| <i>tafsīr</i> | commentary of the Qur'an |
| <i>tafwīḍ</i> | delegation, delegation |
| <i>Ṭāha</i> | of the sūrah of the Qur'ān |
| <i>tajziya</i> | reward or punishment |
| <i>Ṭalaba-i 'Ulūm Jam'iyati</i> | Society for Students of the Religious Sciences |
| <i>tanzīh</i> | safeguarding from evil and bad things |
| <i>tanzīl</i> | sending fown of Divine words |
| <i>tanzīm</i> | ordering |
| <i>taqdīr</i> | discretion |
| <i>taqwā</i> | pious fear of God |
| <i>Tarihçe Hayat</i> | Bediuzzaman Said Nursi |
| <i>taskhir</i> | the divine utilisation of God's mercy |
| <i>tawāfuqāt</i> | coincidings |
| <i>tawzīn</i> | balancing |
| <i>tawzīn</i> | balancing |
| <i>ta'āwun</i> | mutual assistance |
| <i>tevfik</i> | compliance |

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| <i>tevfik-i hareket</i> | to act in compliance with |
| <i>the vice of cowardice al-jabānah</i> | the vice of cowardice |
| <i>ubudiyet</i> | worship or servanthood |
| <i>wa yuqīmūna</i> | steadfast |
| <i>Wadūd</i> | All-Loving |
| <i>wahy</i> | revelation |
| <i>waqā</i> | to preserve |
| <i>wazn</i> | measurement |
| <i>wazn, sīgha or binya</i> | morphological templete |
| <i>wus'ṭā pl.</i> | middle way, middle |
| <i>yanquḍūna 'ahd al-Allāhi</i> | breaking Allah's covenant |
| <i>yaum</i> | day |
| <i>zakāt</i> | almsgiving |
| <i>ḡalama</i> | to put something in the wrong place, to act improperly; to cause someone to suffer a loss; |
| <i>ḡālīm</i> | oppressor or tyrant |
| <i>'adīl</i> | peer |
| <i>'ālim</i> | knower |
| <i>'Aqīdah</i> | Islamic theology |
| <i>'ibādah</i> | worship |
| <i>'iffā</i> | the virtue of temperance |
| <i>'illah</i> | reason |
| <i>'ilm</i> | knowledge |
| <i>'ilm al-dalālah</i> | Science of proof, special discipline in Islamic sciences. |
| <i>'ināyatī</i> | divine providence |
| <i>'udūl</i> | deviation or departure from truth |

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To my beloved mother...

Introduction

The notion of justice has been studied for centuries by many scholars from different backgrounds. Legal theoreticians explore justice with different variations and points of view. Throughout the history, as a concept it has encompassed numerous other scientific disciplines, such as philosophical, legal, and theological reflection and debate. Due to complexity of accounts on justice, it is difficult to examine all theories of justice in details. So, while recognising that much more could be done, for the purpose of this thesis, only main accounts on justice will be considered.

Justice can be broadly defined as the measure of right and response to wrong. In this sense, it means to fundamental measure and maintenance of integrity. Justice ensures the integrity and rights of the individual within society and it also provides “the corresponding responsibilities or duties of society and individuals, as well as the essential rights of the individual.”²

For Plato, the term justice refers to a virtue and bound which creates rational order in society. It brings men together to perform their appropriate roles without obstructing to proper functioning of other individuals in society. He also regards justice as quality that makes man good and social. According to him, justice is a harmonious strength of man in society.³ Therefore, every citizen must perform his duty in his appointed place and carry out his duty in compliance with rational order as his nature is best adapted to be just. Plato holds that people were naturally unequal in society. For him, therefore, justice was most important virtue to be delivered by the best men who are trustworthy and reliable, and do not abuse their powers. It seems that he

² Porter, Rachel. "Justice." In *Encyclopedia of Social Problems*, by Vincent N. Parrillo. Sage Publications, 2008. <http://ezphost.dur.ac.uk/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/sagesocprob/justice/0?institutionId=1856>

³ Giovanni R. F. Ferrari, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 141–43; please see also: Wayne Pomerleau, ‘Western Theories of Justice’, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, accessed 16 October 2017, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/justwest/#SH1b>.

conceptualised an ideal but class-oriented society. This may mean that justice has to be provided under the rule of men within society.⁴

According to Aristotle, justice is to treat equals equally and unequal unequally. For him, justice is a rational mean state of human faculty between two bad extremes.⁵ In other words, justice is a proportional equality or intermediate position in man's soul.⁶ On the other hand, Aristotle's understanding of justice was centred in equality and just distribution of wealth within the community. The term justice is used by Aristotle in two broad senses, namely, a) justice in distribution and b) justice in rectification. Distributive justice, in a narrow sense, refers to proper distribution of good things, i.e. wealth, power, reward and respect between people. According to Aristotle, justice in distribution is a proportionate equality. It means that individuals have to receive good in proportion to their merits.⁷ Justice in rectification concerns punishments, compensation for injuries and unfair exchange.⁸ In his book titled *Justice*, Ryan argues that Aristotle's interpretation of 'Rectificatory' or corrective justice differs from current understanding of retributive justice. Aristotle's corrective justice mainly refers to set things straight or to put things in order. It means rectification is not a modern concept of retribution. Aristotle holds that justice should not contain the elements of retaliation. It means, response for evil should not be done by evil. For example, the criminal who harms another should not be harmed in the same way. It means, something more should be done to him to take out any gain from his crime by way of punishment.⁹

It seems that St Augustine and Thomas Aquinas followed Plato and Aristotle in their understanding of justice. For example, Augustine describes justice as the cardinal virtue of man. It requires man to treat all people with their due and in rightful manner.

⁴ Plato, *The Republic*, trans. A. D Lindsay (London: Dent, 1908), 119–21; please see also: Asyraf Hj Ab Rahman, 'The Concept of Social Justice as Found in Sayyid Qutb's *Fī Zilāl Al-Qur'ān*' 2000, 105.

⁵ "justice." In *Political Philosophy A-Z*, by Jon Pike. Edinburgh University Press, 2007. <http://ezphost.dur.ac.uk/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/edinburghpaz/justice/0?institutionId=1856>

⁶ Please see for detailed discussion of justice as mean state in man's faculty, p.195.

⁷ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), bk. V.

⁸ Tom Campbell, *Justice* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 18.

⁹ Alan Ryan, *Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 9.

On the other hand, Aquinas was of the opinion that justice refers to a rational mean between opposite sorts of injustice including proportional distributions and mutual transactions.¹⁰

According to Raphael, modern political philosophy begins with Hobbes as he has distinctive perspective on the concept of justice. Hobbes identified justice as the third law of nature at the beginning of chapter XV of *Leviathan*.¹¹ Furthermore, in the final part of chapter XIII of *Leviathan*, he concludes:

Justice and injustice are none of the faculties neither of the body nor mind. If they were, they might be in a man that were alone in the world, as well as his senses and passions. They are qualities that relate to men in society, not in solitude.¹²

Thus, Hobbes considers justice as an artificial virtue which is required for creation of civil society. For him, justice also operates as voluntary covenants of the social contract among people within society.¹³

In the same vein, David Hume in his book *A Treatise on Human Nature* denies the view that justice is something natural and part of the nature of things. Hume also argues that justice is an artificial virtue and human invention. Because, justice is a matter of observing rules or conventions.¹⁴ Furthermore, he maintains that moral assessment determines certain character which appears in action. For example, one can easily dislike cruel character manifested in cruel action. Similarly, we disapprove unjust personality displayed in unjust action. It means that our reactions are natural and simple. We naturally regard some aspect of human nature approvable or attractive. Then, he goes on to say, justice is different. For example, we may approve actions of a just judge even if it is hard to accept them. But we may still dislike his character. It means, our approval is modified by the notion of justice. Because, we

¹⁰ D. D Raphael, *Concepts of Justice* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), 57.

¹¹ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes ; Edited with an Introduction by C.B. Macpherson.*, ed. C. B Macpherson (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1985), 202.

¹² Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan: Or The Matter, Form, & Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiastical and Civil* (London: Printed for Andrew Crooke, 1651), 79.

¹³ Pomerleau, 'Western Theories of Justice'.

¹⁴ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 415–16; see also: Jonathan Harrison, 'Hume's Theory of Justice', Oxford Scholarship Online, 29 January 1980, <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198246190.001.0001/acprof-9780198246190>.

believe that rules bring rights for us and protect property for general welfare of individuals and society. Justice is connected to property in Hume's view. For Hume, if there is no property, there is no justice. He holds that justice works for public utility by protecting property.¹⁵

Taken together, it seems that justice was regarded as the essential and primary virtue to regulate interpersonal relations. According to the western philosophical accounts on justice, a stable political society can only be established by those people who exercise justice as most fundamental virtue in their life.¹⁶ Therefore, it may not be wrong to say that majority of western philosophers examined the concept of justice on secular ground.

It is arguable that Nicholas Wolterstorff is one of the first modern philosopher and a Christian who maintains a 'theistic grounding' of justice and human rights.¹⁷ Wolterstorff examines the notion of justice as right from philosophical and theological perspective in his book called 'Justice: Rights and Wrongs.' His book is divided into three parts: 1) The Archaeology of Rights, 2) Fusion of Narrative with Theory: The Goods to Which We have Rights, and 3) Theory: Having a Right to a Good.¹⁸ In Part 1, he identifies two different ways of thinking about justice in Western intellectual history. These are: 1) justice as right order is an understanding that justice appears in rightly ordered society. It means justice is manifested in society. If individuals act unjustly, they act against what is right in society; and 2) justice as inherent rights. According to this idea of justice, human beings acquire these essential rights by their disposition and nature.¹⁹ According to Wolterstorff, as Reed argues, the conception of justice as inherent rights is not something which was born in the twentieth century. But it is rooted in Hebrew scriptures and New Testament.²⁰ He further substantiates his stance on justice as inherent rights with proof from the Old

¹⁵ Ryan, *Justice*, 10.

¹⁶ Pomerleau, 'Western Theories of Justice'.

¹⁷ Eric Patterson, 'Review of "Justice: Rights and Wrongs" by Nicholas Wolterstorff', *Journal of Markets & Morality* 11, no. 2 (2012): 308.

¹⁸ Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008).

¹⁹ Patterson, 'Review of "Justice"', 309.

²⁰ Esther D Reed, 'Justice: Rights and Wrongs - By Nicholas Wolterstorff', *Conversations in Religion & Theology* 7, no. 1 (2009): 64.

and New Testaments. For him, natural human rights as inherent rights were given to human beings by God.

The main difference between these two understanding of justice is that advocates of right order believe that rights comes into existence as result of social agreement. Whereas, scholars who defends inherent rights hold that “some rights are inherent in the worth of human beings”. In other words, they regard human beings as creatures of worth, and consider rights as inherent in that worth.²¹

In the final part of his book, Wolterstorff questions if secular grounding of human rights is possible, ultimately, he seeks a theistic grounding on human rights. He argues that secular grounding of human rights is always inadequate. Therefore, he suggests that a theistic foundation of justice is pivotal.²²

At this stage, Nursi seems to be in line with Wolterstorff. Because, Nursi was also in search of alternative grounding of justice. He also believes that secular justice or justice of world is not enough. In his book *Words*, he writes:

The oppressor retains his power, and the oppressed, his humiliation, as they both depart and migrate from this realm. Their affairs are, then, left to the same Supreme Tribunal of which we speak....

Here in this land, not a thousandth part of the requirements of such wisdom and justice is fulfilled; for example, empty-headed people such as yourself usually leave this realm unpunished. So again we say, matters are postponed for the consideration of a Supreme Tribunal.²³

From above quotation, it can be assumed that Nursi holds that justice is not realized fully in this world, it means justice is being postponed to hereafter. In other words, secular grounding of justice is always insufficient and a theistic grounding of justice is essential.

In his analysis of the ethical system presented in Nursi’s writings, Markham argues that contrary to secular understanding of ethics, a religious foundation is central in Nursi’s ethical system. According to Nursi, Markham notes, “the ultimate source for

²¹ Jeffery Nicholas, ‘Review: Justice: Rights and Wrongs, Nicholas Wolterstorff’, *Solidarity: The Journal of Catholic Social Thought and Secular Ethics* 2, no. 1 (2012): 2, <http://researchonline.nd.edu.au/solidarity/vol2/iss1/7>.

²² Wolterstorff, *Justice*, 342–259.

²³ Said Nursi, *The Words*, trans. Vahide Şükran (Istanbul: Sozler, 2005), 61.

all ethical reflection is the Qur'an."²⁴ Thus, Nursi considers justice (*al-'adālah*)²⁵ as one of the four principal objectives (*al-maqāsid al-arba'a*) and essential teachings of the Qur'an; the other three being *tawhīd* (monotheism), *al-nubuwwah* (prophethood), and *al-hashr* (the resurrection in afterlife). Therefore, current thesis will focus on the theological underpinning of justice from Nursian perspective.

The overall structure of this introduction is organised as follows: aims, objectives and research questions; notes on the sources, methodology; and overview of the research.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES, AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research aims to explore the concept and ontology of *al-'adl* (justice) in *the Risale-i Nur* of Said Nursi by using the Qur'ānic worldview on justice. To this end, this thesis will examine the meanings of *al-'adl* (justice) as presented in the Qur'ān.²⁶ This research will investigate the semantic field of *al-'adl* (justice) by analysing the semantically and lexically connected and opposite concepts to justice in the Qur'ān. In this respect, the three principal meanings of *al-'adl* can be highlighted as follows:

First, *al-mīzān* (balance and order) and *al-mikyāl* (just measure) as concepts which are semantically connected to *al-'adl*, can be accepted as balance and order in the creation of both nature and animate beings in the Qur'ānic perception. This meaning of *al-'adl* constitutes the base for Nursi's design argument, in other words, his argument for the hereafter from justice and his argument for the existence of God from the names of God.

Second, the term *qadara* (to measure) is semantically connected with *al-'adl* (justice) and refers to very wide cluster of meanings, which cover either measures of sustenance given to all creations or order in creation of all universes in the Qur'ān.²⁷

²⁴ Please see: Ian Markham and İbrahim Özdemir, *Globalization, Ethics, and Islam: The Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2017), chap. 4.

²⁵ The term *al-'adl* (justice) or *al-'adālah* (justice) used by Nursi is different from modern/contemporary usage and the meaning that has been attached to it. Because, his understanding of justice seems to be in parallel with the Qur'ānic worldview on justice. Therefore, it will be injustice to translate Nursi's usage of *al-'adl* as justice or equality. Throughout this thesis, the original Arabic form of *al-'adl* is used to connote the concept of justice in Nursi's understanding.

²⁶ Nursi uses a lot of Quranic/Arabic terminology in his writings. Most of these terms cannot be translated into English in one word. Throughout this study, the original Arabic terms are used in italics with the closest English translation in bracket.

²⁷ See: Chapter 1: 1.4.4

This overlapped relation between the concept *qadar* (the divine determining) and *al-‘adl* forms a starting point for the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in relation to *qadar* (Divine determining) in the view of Nursi.

Third, this thesis examines some terms, such as *al-istiqāmah* (to be moderate) and *al-wasat* (middle way) which have a direct relation with the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the Qur’ān. The interconnected relations between the above terms and the Qur’ānic outlook serve as a foundation for Nursi’s doctrine of the mean.

Hence, this research critically examines the concept *al-‘adl* (justice) by laying a bridge between Nursi’s understanding and the Quranic perspective.

Consequently, this study has the following aims and objectives:

- i) To investigate the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) as portrayed in the Qur’ān.
- ii) To find the semantic field of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the Qur’ānic worldview by employing Izutsu’s method of semantics.
- iii) To examine the diachronic analysis of Nursi’s narrative of justice to explore the thematic evolution of the notion of justice in his writings by comparing the Old Said and the New Said.
- iv) To elaborate the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the creational sense as a balance and an order in the universe from Nursi’s perspective and to provide the role of holistic examination of *al-asmā al-ḥusnā* (Names of God) in Nursi’s design argument.
- v) To evaluate the definitional problem of the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the *Risale-i Nur*.
- vi) To examine the concept of justice (*al-‘adl*) in relation to the problem of *qadar* (predestination) from Nursi’s perspective.
- vii) To discuss the doctrine of mean, or state of *al-‘adl*, in man and its manifestation in society as a foundation for social justice from Nursi’s perspective.

In order to carry out these aims and objectives, the key questions that will be investigated in this study are as follows:

- i) How is the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) conceptualized in the Qur’ān?
- ii) What are the related and opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān? How are they semantically interconnected with *al-‘adl*?
- iii) What are the distinctive features between the writings of the Old Said and the New Said? Why does Nursi categorise his life and writings into two periods as the Old and the New Said?
- iv) How does Nursi use the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) as a tool to formulate his design argument for the existence of God? How do the manifestations of Divine Names of God interact with each other?
- v) What is the definition of justice according to Nursi?
- vi) How can divine determining be perceived in Nursi’s account and how can it be compatible with the notion of human free will?
- vii) Why does God hold human beings responsible for their actions even though they cannot create their actions?
- viii) What is the doctrine of the mean for Nursi’s understanding and how can it be realised? How can prayer (ṣalāh) bring about a foundation for order and balance (‘adl) in man and how can it have a social implication on society? How does worship (‘ibādah) become the basis for generating personal attainment and perfection in man’s personal life?
- ix) What is the Qur’ānic definition of *fisq* (sinfulness) and how does Nursi articulate the concept of *fisq* and how does *fisq* become the antithesis of the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice)?
- x) How does the institution of *zakāt* (almsgiving) lay the groundwork for attaining social justice in the society?

NOTES ON SOURCES

This research is based on a combination of three main categories of literature, which are Classical Islamic Literature, Writings of Said Nursi and Western Philosophical Literature.

In Chapter 1, the theoretical basis of the work, the Qur’ān and the Traditions (*ḥadīth*) serve as a major source for the study. Qur’ānic commentaries, such as Rāzī’s *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Zamakhsharī’s *al-Kashshāf: ‘an ḥaqāiq ghawāmid al-tanzīl wa-‘uyūn al-*

aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl, and al-Bayḍawī's *al-Anwār al-Tanzīl and al-Asrār al-Ta'wīl* were adopted. In addition to this, early Muslim lexicographers' works such as Ibn Manẓur's *Lisān al-'Arab*, Ibn Jawzī's *Nuzhat al-'Ayun wa al-nawāzīr fī 'ilm al-wujūh wa al-naẓāir*, Jawharī's *al-Ṣiḥāḥ: Tāj al-lughah wa-ṣiḥāḥ al-'Arabīyah*, and Iṣfahānī's *al-Mufradāt fī gharīb al-Qur'ān* were widely used to study the lexical meaning of justice and connected concepts in the Qur'ān. Throughout this study, the English translation of the Qur'ān by Yusuf Ali (d. 1953) was used.

In Chapters 3, 4 and 5, from among his over 120 books, *The Words, The Letter, The Flashes, Ishārāt al-'ijāz fī mīzān al-ijāz* [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur'anic Conciseness] and *al-Mathnawī al-Nūriya* [Epitomes of Light] are applied as the main source for this study. A cumulative body of the existing studies on Nursi's work is also examined. Particularly, where there has been no extensive research on Nursi's understanding of justice, this research takes into consideration Colin Turner's article "Bediuzzaman and the Concept of Adl: Towards a Nursian Ontology of Divine Justice" and his book "*The Qur'an Revealed: a Critical Analysis of Said Nursi's Epistles of Light*" as pioneering works that introduce Nursi's conception of justice for the first time in academia.

In order to put Nursi's conception of *al-'adl* into discourse with the classical Islamic literature, al-Ash'arī's "*Kitāb maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn wa-ikhtilāf al-muṣallīn*", al-Shahrastānī's "*al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*", and al-Māturīdī's "*al-Tawḥīd*" are also used. In addition, among Western intellectuals, William Paley's "*Natural theology; selections*" and Graham Robert Oppy's "Arguing about gods" are consulted.

METHODOLOGY

This thesis will be verified primarily by the following methods.

First, this thesis uses a textual analysis to examine Nursi's understanding of justice. As the primary sources, the dissertation analyses Nursi's own work

Second, this research utilizes a contextual analysis to properly locate Nursi's conception of justice in the literature. By using this method, it sets Nursi's account of the conception of justice with the discourse of both Islamic scholars and western philosophers.

Third, I also conducted interviews face-to-face and via emails with some of contemporary scholars and experts on Nursi's writings such as Abdullah Aymaz²⁸, Kerim Balci²⁹ and Ibrahim Ozdemir.³⁰ I draw on these interviews frequently throughout the dissertation.

Finally, the semantic method which Izutsu applies to the Qur'ān is employed as a methodological lens through which synchronic and lexical interrelations between terms and concepts are unveiled as they appear in the Qur'ān. This methodology is used thoroughly in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, Diachronic and Synchronic analysis of Izutsu's semantic method was applied to examine if there is evaluative change in themes of justice in Nursi's writings. This method is not used directly in Chapter 3, 4 and 5. However, Qur'anic understanding of justice, which was developed by using Izutsian semantic method, were used as a foundation for understanding of Nursian conception of justice in Chapter 3, 4 and 5. For example, certain terms which were analysed as a semantic field of *al-'adl* such as *al-qadr* (destiny) and *al-mīzān* (balance and order) and *al-istiḳāmah* (to be moderate) has been used as a foundation for these chapters.

In the following pages, Izutsu's methodology for semantic analysis will be explored.

Semantics of the Qur'ān: Izutsu's method

According to Ullman, there are two major branches of linguistics which are concerned with words; (a) etymology; and (b) semantics. Etymology studies the origins of a word and is an established discipline whereas semantics is comparatively new and studies the meaning of the word.³¹

²⁸ Abdullah Aymaz (Born in 1949) is a journalist and writer. As writer, he published more than 50 books under the pen names of Huseyin Bayram, Ismail Yediler and Safvet Senih. Currently, his articles are still published in Zaman Europe. He has a number books on Said Nursi's writings. He mainly writes his own commentary to Nursi's books.

²⁹ Kerim Balci is writer and columnist. He also writes about Nursi and his writings.

³⁰ Ibrahim Özdemir (born January 1, 1960), author of *The Ethical Dimension of Human Attitude Towards Nature* (1997) and co-editor of *Globalization, Ethics and Islam* (2005), is an environmentalist and professor of philosophy and ecology and religion at Ankara University, Turkey.

³¹ Stephen Ullmann, *Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 1.

Izutsu claims that there are different views and methods of analysing the Qur'ān such as theological, philosophical, sociological, grammatical, exegetical and semantic. However, he much focuses a great deal on the semantics of the Qur'ān.

In his major works such as *God and Man in the Koran, Ethico-religious Concepts in the Quran* and *the Concept of Belief in Islamic Theology: a Semantic Analysis of imān and islām*, Izutsu employs semantic analysis in the study of Qur'ānic *Weltanschauung*.³² However, in his review of Izutsu's works, Patlar notes that the term *Weltanschauung* indicates Izutsu's understanding of semantics, for it is semantics as *sprachliche Weltanschauungslehre*, as developed by Johann Leo Weisgerber.³³ In addition to this, Izutsu himself claims that he was greatly inspired by the works of Weisgerber.³⁴ However, it could be said that this type of semantic analysis originated in the works of Ferdinand de Saussure whose lectures on linguistics were published at the University of Geneva in 1916 under the name of *Cours de linguistique generale*.³⁵ Therefore, it could also be said that both Leo Weisgerber and Izutsu were strongly influenced by the works of Saussure in developing the method of semantic analysis.³⁶ In this book, there are many original and stimulating concepts which could have provided inspiration for Izutsu's method of Qur'ānic semantics.³⁷ For example, Saussure argued that there are two basic and equally legitimate approaches to language: (a) one descriptive or synchronic which relates to the static side of language and records it as it exists at any given moment; (b) the other historical or diachronic that has to do with the evolution of various elements of the concerned language. These two approaches which were widely used throughout Izutsu's semantic analysis of the Qur'ān, are complementary and should not be confused. However, it seems that his approach was prone to diachronic linguistics.

³² In German *Weltanschauung* stands for worldview

³³ Please see: Harry B. Partin, 'Semantics of the Qur'ān: A Consideration of Izutsu's Studies', *History of Religions* 9 (1970): 358.

³⁴ See: Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān* (Montreal ; Ithaca, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 7.

³⁵ See: Ullmann, *Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning*, 7, please see also: Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (London: P. Owen, 1960).

³⁶ See: Christopher Hutton, *Linguistics and the Third Reich Mother-Tongue Fascism, Race, and the Science of Language* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), 106, <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=33318>.

³⁷ Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*.

According to Izutsu, semantics is an analytic study of key-words of a language which aims to understand the worldview of the people who employ that language, not only as a tool of speaking and thinking but to conceptualize and interpret the world around them. Thus, semantics, he goes on to say, is:

a kind of Weltanschauungslehre, a study of the nature and structure of the worldview of a nation at this or that significant period of its history, conducted by means of a methodological analysis of the major cultural concepts the nation has produced for itself and crystallized into the key-words of its language.³⁸

However, he argues that the most striking features of his work on the concepts of the Qur'ān are an analytic method which was applied to the Qur'ānic data to interpret its own concepts and speak for itself.³⁹ With regard to his methodology for Qur'anic semantics, he further clarifies his stance that the materials for his inquiry do not play a key role, but it is the method of linguistic analysis which attempts to analyse the semantic structure of key-words of the Qur'ān in the field of conduct and character that plays a major role in his study. Furthermore, according to Fazlur Rahman, Izutsu elucidates clearly that the study of the key-terms does not only refer to the mechanical analysis of these concepts in isolation or as in a static unit, but also refers to their living and contextual import as they are used in the Qur'ān.⁴⁰ For example, the concept of *Allah* was used in the pre-Qur'ānic period not only to refer to a deity among other deities but also as the highest god in the hierarchy of deities. The meaning of Allah underwent a fundamental contextual change in the Qur'ānic usage. Thus, the Qur'ān gives a new import and eliminates the deities in the meaning of Allah and makes the concept of Allah the centre of the circle of being.

Basic and relational meaning in forming a Qur'ānic Weltanschauung as a major methodological concept of semantics of the Qur'ān

³⁸ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an : Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung*, New ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Ayer Company Publishers, Inc, 1987), 11.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁰ review of *GOD AND MAN IN THE KORAN: SEMANTICS OF THE KORANIC WELTANSCHAUUNG* by Toshihiko Izutsu, by FAZLUR RAHMAN, *Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (1966): 322.

In his book *God and Man in the Qur'ān*, Izutsu attempts to draw a fine distinction between the basic and relational meanings of some Qur'ānic words and concepts such as *kitāb* (book), *yaum* (day) and *sa'ah* (hour). He maintains that basic meaning and relational meaning are considered as one of the methodological concepts of semantics to facilitate his analytical work on Qur'ānic words.⁴¹ According to him, Qur'ānic concepts do not stand alone and in isolation, but come under an organised system or systems. Such words often undergo a semantic transformation under certain semantic fields of particular Qur'ānic concepts. Thus, the basic meaning of a word discloses its relational meaning under a cluster of words. However, Izutsu goes on to argue that the basic meaning is quite obvious and apparent and something inherent in the word itself. For example, *kitāb* (book) refers to the same meaning whether it comes in the Qur'ān or outside of the Qur'ān. This static basic meaning remains attached to the word wherever it is used. Therefore, Izutsu identifies this aspect of the word as 'basic meaning'.⁴² On the other hand, he discusses the relational meaning of *al-kitāb* which is something connotative. For instance, in the Qur'ānic context the second aspect of the meaning of *al-kitāb* emerges once it is introduced into a new system and is juxtaposed with certain clusters of Qur'ānic words such as *Allāh*, *wahy* (revelation), *tanzīl* (sending down of Divine words), *nabīy* (Prophet), *ahl al-kitāb* (People of the Scripture) which means peoples who were given a Book of Revelation, like the Christians and the Jews. Thus, the word *al-kitāb* in the Qur'ānic context acquires a lot of new semantic elements. Therefore, it can be assumed that the word *al-kitāb* has to be understood in connection with these terms and this juxtaposition attaches a very special semantic colouring to the word *al-kitāb* as it would never have acquired this meaning if it was used outside of this system or the Qur'ānic *Gestalt*. Furthermore, Izutsu claims that relational meaning is an essential part of meaning and is more important than the basic meaning itself as long as it is used in the Qur'ānic context.⁴³ In addition to this, Izutsu applies this methodological approach to words such as *yaum* (day), *sa'ah* (hour), *kafara* (to be ungrateful) and *īmān* (faith) as supportive arguments to his stance.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an : Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung* (Kuala Lumpur: Ayer Company Publishers, Inc, 1987), 19

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ See *ibid.*, 20.

⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, 20-24.

It is interesting to note here that these two methodological approaches - namely basic and relational - might be based on the topic of syntagmatic and associative relations in linguistics. Thus, as Saussure points out, everything is founded on relations in diachronic linguistics.⁴⁵ In his book *Course in General Linguistics*, Saussure identifies two kinds of relations, namely 'syntagmatic' and 'associative' which evoke basic and relational meanings of the word.⁴⁶ Therefore, it can be said that these two methodological approaches are a synchronic point of view.

Although Izutsu's findings on the basic and relational meanings of words are broadly consistent with the teachings of Saussure, the most striking result may be explained by the fact that Izutsu conducts analysis on basic and relational meanings of key terms in the Qur'ān to expose particular and significant aspects of the culture and the experiences of the people who lived in that culture. Therefore, he draws attention to what he calls the 'semantic *Weltschauung*' of a culture.⁴⁷ According to Izutsu, semantical analysis of the meaning of the Qur'ānic key-terms has to be examined considering the nature of the fundamental Qur'ānic vision of the universe and from the standpoint of the cultural history of the Arabs. Thus, he argues:

Semantical analysis is neither a simple analysis of the formal structure of a word nor a study of the original meaning attached to the word-form, i.e., etymology. In our conception, [it] is something that intends to go far beyond that. It purports to be cultural science, if we are to classify it.⁴⁸

In addition to this, Izutsu identifies three important technical terms to analyse Qur'ānic *Weltschauung*: (a) key terms; (b) semantic field; and (c) focus word. He states that, 'key terms' of the Qur'ān are those words that play a decisive role in forming the basic conceptual structure of the Qur'ānic world-view such as *Allāh*, *islām*, *īmān* (faith), *kāfir* (unbeliever), *nabīy* (prophet) and *rasūl* (messenger). So far as the semantic field is concerned, it seems to be important in this kind of methodological approach to establish the connections of words to each other in multiple relationships and, thus, discover the formation of highly organized

⁴⁵ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (London: P. Owen, 1960), 122.

⁴⁶ For more detailed info on syntagmatic and associative relations in a language-state, see: *ibid.*, 122-37.

⁴⁷ Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an : Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung*, 25.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 24.

interdependent elements and largely overlapping areas. Therefore, he was right to call these relations a ‘semantic field’.⁴⁹ According to Izutsu, a focus word refers to a particular important keyword which shows a relatively independent and distinctive sphere within the larger whole of the Qur’ānic vocabulary.⁵⁰ However, it seems to be difficult, as Izutsu also admits, to determine key-words and focus on words out of the bulk of the Qur’ānic vocabulary for one who conducts research on the semantics of the Qur’ān.⁵¹ Thus, there is the possibility of elements of arbitrariness which influences one’s choices.

Moral discourse in the Qur’ān and semantic changes in evaluation

In his book *Ethico-Religious Concept in the Qur’ān*, Izutsu attempts to make a distinction between three layers of moral discourse, or three different categories of ethical concepts in the Qur’ān: (a) those that describe the ethical nature of God such as Merciful, Benevolent, Forgiving and Just; (b) those that are concerned with the basic ethical relationship of man to God, which he argues, can be classified as an ethico-religious concept which urges the human being to take a certain attitudes towards God and to act in a certain way; and (c) those related to the basic ethical attitude of man to his fellow brethren living in the same community, which may often constitute a set of regulations that are shaped in the form of commands and prohibitions and sometimes occur in more general forms in the Qur’ān.⁵² However, Izutsu also highlights the fact that these three different categories of ethical Qur’ānic concepts are interdependent and he further clarifies that the Qur’ānic world-view is theocentric and faith-based because:

[The] image of God pervades the whole of it, and nothing escapes His knowledge and providence. Semantically this means that, in general, no major concept in the Qur’an exists quite independently of the concept of God and that in the sphere of human ethics each one of its key concepts is but a pale reflection – or a very imperfect imitation – of the divine nature itself, or refers to a particular response elicited by divine actions.⁵³

⁴⁹ Ibid., 20.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 29.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² See: *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān*, 17; please see also: N.S. Eggen, "Conceptions of Trust in the Qur'an," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 13, no. 2 (2011): 56.

⁵³ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān*, 18.

Furthermore, Izutsu groups words into two interdependent types: (a) primary; and (b) secondary. In addition to this, to explain how semantic change occurs in meaning, he also argues that Qur'ānic words can be two kinds: (a) descriptive; and (b) evaluative.⁵⁴ According to him, primary level words are mainly descriptive and essentially employed to mean more or less serious ethical implications such as 'generous', whereas the main function of the secondary-level words is classificatory and they are used to categorise various descriptive properties. For instance, humility and generosity can be classified under moral values. In other words, if a man is known as 'good', Izutsu maintains that he should have certain characteristics, such as generosity or modesty which identifies him as 'humble'. Therefore, Izutsu believes that humility can be subsumed under the class of praiseworthy qualities.⁵⁵ Thus, Izutsu claims that secondary ethical terms can be called 'ethical metalanguage'. For example, Izutsu argues that descriptive words are charged with an ethical or evaluative force.⁵⁶ In his book *Semantics: an introduction to the science of meaning*, Ullman claims that some words may hold an element of evaluation attached to the main meaning. In that point, he gives as an example the dictionary meaning of "hovel" which is a *dirty* or *miserable* dwelling place. Furthermore, he goes on to say that there are words which are mainly charged with expressing evaluation or emotive comment, and in such words the emotive element is more than an overtone. For example, adjectives like good, brave, horrible and stupid.⁵⁷ Comparing the writings of Ullman and Izutsu on this topic, similarities can be seen in their methods.

Additionally, in his book *Ethico-Religious Concept in the Qur'ān*, Izutsu attempts to defend his views by comparing the usage of *kufṛ* (unbelief) and *dhanb* (offence or sin) in the Qur'ānic context. He argues that *kufṛ* essentially refers to the attitude of ungratefulness towards favours and benefits and it is a genuinely descriptive word.⁵⁸ Concurrently, it can be seen that word *kufṛ* is charged with an evaluative quality which makes it more than a description. Thus, this evaluative aura or halo, which constitutes the core semantic meaning of this word, makes *kufṛ* an authentic ethical

⁵⁴ Ibid., 20.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Stephen Ullmann, *Semantics : An Introduction to the Science of Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 132-33.

⁵⁸ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*, 22.

term on the primary level in the Qur'ān. Izutsu further clarifies his point by giving the example of the usage of *dhanb* which belongs to the level of metalanguage. According to him, *dhanb* (sin) refers to the same things as *kufr* in most verses of the Qur'ān and both may mean the same state of affairs depending on the context. At the same time, they may speak of the same concept in two characteristically different ways depending on the context.⁵⁹ For instance, *kufr* primarily suggests factual information about the case of ungratefulness or disbelief and secondarily may refer to bad, whereas *dhanb* initially suggests negative and blameworthy characteristics and secondarily it may refer to *kufr* (disbelief). Therefore, in relation to the semantic nature of primary ethical terms, Izutsu proposes a distinction between two different layers: descriptive and evaluative. Although these two layers of meaning are interconnected in a semantic whole, Izutsu proposes the drawing of a dividing line between them in theory.⁶⁰

He then goes on to exemplify this point with a comparison between the usages of humility and self-surrender in the context of the pre-Qur'ānic and Qur'ānic periods. According to him, humility and self-surrender were perceived as disgraceful, weak and referring to an ignoble character, whereas haughtiness and refusal to obey were considered as marks of noble nature in the perception of the pre-Islamic Arabs. With the advent of Islam, the abovementioned qualities underwent evaluative semantic changes. For example, humility and self-surrender were reoriented from a disgraceful, and weak and ignoble character to the highest virtues, and haughtiness and refusal to obey went from being a mark of a noble nature to that of irreligiousness in the context of the Qur'ānic worldview. Thus, it can be said that these terms changed their values with the advent of Islam. Although, as Izutsu concludes, those words keep their descriptive layer of meaning wherever they are used, their evaluative force has been modified from negative to positive or from positive to negative.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ See: *ibid.*; please compare semantic change from negative to positive in Izutsu with Pejorative and Ameliorative Developments in ; Ullmann, 231-35.

It can, therefore, be assumed, according to Izutsu, that secondary terms in the Qur'ān do not constitute a whole system of moral ideas, whereas primary level value words form the Qur'ānic moral ideas.⁶²

Seven cases which explore the relational meaning and descriptive layer of meanings of the terms in the Qur'ān as presented in Izutsu

Izutsu himself claims that his method can be defined as a sort of contextual interpretation.⁶³ It could be said that Izutsu was inspired by J. Marouzeau in finding technical rules for such contextual interpretation as he further explains:

It's tremendous importance will leap to the eye when we amplify it [procedure of contextual interpretation] by illustrations. To bring together, compare, and put in relation all the terms that resemble, oppose, and correspond with each other -there can be indeed no better maxim for us to adopt in our attempt to analyze the Quranic data.⁶⁴

In *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*, Izutsu suggests seven cases for his method of semantic analysis of the Qur'ān. They are:

1. '*Contextual definition*'. This is a term used by Izutsu for this case, which he considers to be one of the simplest exemplifications, where Qur'ānic concepts are semantically relevant in the passage.⁶⁵ Therefore, this type of case appears when the specific meaning of the word is explained explicitly, in its context, by means of verbal description. It can be clearly seen in many verses of the Qur'ān such as Q. 2:177, 2:177 and 8:1. As an example, Izutsu provides verbal definition of *birr* to support his stance as in the Qur'ān (2:177):

It is not righteousness [*birr*] that ye turn your faces Towards east or West; but it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for

⁶² Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*, 23.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 37.

Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfil the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth [*alladhīna ṣadaqū*], the Allah-fearing [*al muttaqūna*]

In the above verse, the Qur'ān describes *birr* (piety or righteousness) as not referring to practising religious rituals as ceremonial acts and formalism, but with the meaning of being a truly righteous person who has deep faith in the articles of belief and commitment to social virtues in social life. Interestingly, the word *birr* is precisely set in the semantic field of *ṣidq* (sincerity) and *taqwā* (pious fear of God). This case is used very frequently in Chapter 1 of this thesis.⁶⁶ However, it could be argued that Qur'ānic concepts in this kind of case may not be necessarily elucidated by means of verbal description. For example, the precise meaning of *ahillah* (new moons) is explained by noun phrases as in Q. 2:189: "They ask thee concerning the New Moons (*ahillah*). Say: They are but signs to mark fixed periods of time in (the affairs of) men, and for Pilgrimage".

2. Synonymity of concepts and words in the Qur'ān. Izutsu sees the particular value of synonyms as a method to investigate the semantic analysis of terms in the Qur'an. He further goes on to explain that in this case a word, X, can be replaced with another word, Y, in the same verse or in the precisely the same kind of verbal context, thereby the substitution might be helpful in examining the semantic category of both words.⁶⁷ For instance, words such as *ba'sā* (distress), *darrā* (adversity) and *sayyi'ah* (evil) in Q. 7:94,95 show this point clearly:

Whenever We sent a prophet to a town, We took up its people in suffering [*ba'sā*] and adversity [*darrā*], in order that they might learn humility. Then We changed their suffering into prosperity, until they grew and multiplied, and began to say: "Our fathers (too) were touched by suffering [*darrā*] and affluence [*sarrā*]".

⁶⁶ For example, this case is applied for terms *al-'adl* (justice) and *ihsān*, see: p.1.5.5 Al-Ihsān

⁶⁷ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān* (Montreal ; Ithaca, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 37.

From a comparison of above verses, 94 and 95, it might be perceived that the words *ba'sā* and *ḍarrā* in the former verse can be exchanged in the latter with *sayyi'ah* without any essential change of meaning. With regard to the relational meaning of *al-ḥaqq* (truth) and *al-qīst* (justice), this case was applied in Chapter 1 One. (See: p59.)

The semantic structure of Qur'ānic terms can be explained by contrast. An example of this case has been elaborated by Izutsu in which the word *khayr* can be translated as the nearest equivalent of the English word 'good' in a moral sense. But, there are many Arabic words that connote goodness such as *ḥasanah*. The difference between *khayr* and *ḥasanah* can be seen if the former is generally used in opposition to *sharr* and the latter is opposed to *sayyi'ah*. Furthermore, if the precise meaning of any one of the four terms is determined, then the meaning of the remaining three might be discovered. On the other hand, sometimes it can be seen that there are two different words which stand in opposition to the third term in the Qur'ān. Thus, as Izutsu points out, *kāfir* can be perceived as the antithesis of *mu'min*.⁶⁸ In addition to this, *fāsiq* can also stand in opposition to *mu'min*. This is because *fāsiq* may refer to the same meaning as *kāfir*. Having cited from al-Bayḍawī, Izutsu further supports his opinion, since *fāsiq* might be regarded considerably as *kāfir*, because, *fāsiq*, as al-Bayḍawī described, is an obstinate type of *kāfir* (*mutamarrid fī al-kufr*).⁶⁹

The semantic structure of an obscure word, X, can be explained in terms of its negative form, not X. According to Izutsu, this case can be considered as a special sub class of the previous case.⁷⁰ For instance, the Qur'ān considers the verb *istakbara* as one of the most important terms of negative evaluation. Thus, it can be said that, this verb roughly stands for 'to be big with pride', 'to act haughtily and scornfully' and it is used to describe characteristic features of the *kāfir*. This can be illustrated by the verse of Q. 32:15 as the Qur'ān eulogises the believers: "Only those who believe in Our Signs, who, when they are recited to them, fall down in prostration, and celebrate the praises of their Lord, nor are they (ever) puffed up with pride [*lā yastakbirūn*]"

⁶⁸ Ibid., 39.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 39-40.

In the above verse, the verb *istakbara* occurs in its negative form and it describes the believers. In other words, this verb refers to the conduct of one who behaves ‘haughtily’. Thus, it can be assumed that this verb reminds the reader what line of conduct has to be adopted by those who are not haughty. Furthermore, it can be said that the verb *istakbara* comes within the semantic field of *kāfir*. Therefore, *mu‘min* which is antithesis of *kāfir*, can become comprehensible by the negative of *istakbara*.

Izutsu writes that one can find sets of words or word companions which are semantically interconnected in every language. According to him, semantic field may be defined as any set of patterned semantic relations between certain words of a language.⁷¹ As an example, the peculiar relationship between ‘teaching’ and ‘education’ can be put forward. Furthermore, Izutsu claims that a word rarely exists in isolation from others or can maintain its existence alone. On the contrary, every word displays a marked tendency to team up with certain other related words in the context of occurrence. Thus, with regard to Qur’ānic key-concepts, Izutsu attempts to find connections of words to each other in a multiple relationship and, further, he explores the formation of highly organized interdependent elements in the Qur’ān. This interconnected relation between words has been examined in the previous sections (see p.12). An example of this case can be clearly seen in Q. 6:21: “Who doth more wrong [*aḏlamu*] than he who inventeth [*iftarā*] a lie [*kadhiban*] against Allah or rejecteth His signs [*kadhhaba bi ayātihī*]? But verily the wrong-doers never shall prosper”. In this verse, the grammatical object of the verb *iftarā* (‘to invent’ or ‘forge’) is a noun, *kadhib* (lie). These two words form a well-nigh inseparable group. Furthermore, the word *ẓālim* (oppressor) can be combined with this group. Thus, it can be seen that these three words *iftarā-kadhib-ẓālim* construct a peculiar group or combination; in other words, they are semantically interconnected in the Qur’ān.

Izutsu attempts to draw attention to the fact that the existence of semantic relations between two or more words can be deduced by the usage of the rhetorical device of parallelism in the Qur’ān. He cites a number of passages in which parallelism reveals a particular aspect of the semantic field between

⁷¹ Ibid., 40.

some Qur'ānic concepts.⁷² For example, the Qur'ān mentions *kāfir* and *zālim* side by side in two consecutive verses of Q. 29:47,49: “none reject Our verses except the disbelievers [*kāfirūn*]” and “none but the unjust [*zālimūn*] reject Our Signs”. In the above verses, the parallel construction of *kāfir* and *zālim* unfolds semantic relations, as both terms refer to an act of refusing to believe in divine signs. Furthermore, as Izutsu points out, the word *fāsiq* can be added to the group of *kāfir* and *zālim* as it appears in *Surah al-māidah*:

If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) Unbelievers [*kāfirūn*] The Qur'ān (5:44)

And if any fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (No better than) wrong-doers [*zālimūn*] The Qur'ān (5:46)

If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) those who rebel [*fāsiqūn*] The Qur'ān (5:47)

In the above verses, the parallel structure of the words *kāfir*, *zālim* and *fāsiq*, when arranged side by side, discloses a semantic relation to one another with regard to not making judgment according to what God has revealed. Therefore, it can be assumed that these words are semantically interconnected concepts.

Izutsu claims that Qur'ānic key concepts are generally used in the context of deep religious content, in other words, key terms in the Qur'ān are basically God-Centred. However, he further argues that sometimes those words can be used to refer to purely secular meanings in a non-religious context in the Qur'ān. Izutsu supports his point with an example from *surah al-Shu'arā* in Q. 26:18-19:

(Pharaoh) said: "Did we not cherish thee as a child among us, and didst thou not stay in our midst many years of thy life? And thou didst a deed of thine which (thou knowest) thou didst, and thou art an ungrateful (wretch) [*al-kāfirīn*]!"

⁷² Ibid., 40-41.

With regards to the word *kāfir* in the above verse, Izutsu suggests that the Pharaoh attributes *kāfir* (ungrateful) to Moses in a non-religious context of meaning.⁷³ Thus, Izutsu claims that there are some key ethical terms in the Qur'ān which can be used in a purely non-religious context.⁷⁴

Critique on Izutsu's work

It is useful to point out that some scholars have negative views of Izutsu's work, on the semantics of the Qur'ān, in the literature. For example, Partin argues that Izutsu's semantic studies do not pay detailed attention to history in relation to semantic transformation.⁷⁵ This point corroborates the ideas of Montgomery Watt, who states that Izutsu's analyses are primarily logical and not sufficiently historical.⁷⁶

It is worth noting here that in this part particular importance has been given to those critical points which are closely related to the methodological aspects of Izutsu's semantic studies. Therefore, some of the scholars' points of view have not been discussed in detail. For example, Fazlur Rahman notes a few problematic points in Izutsu's approach to perceptions of Bedouins and the Makkans of the Prophet's time. According to Fazlur Rahman, Izutsu does not consider the social environment in Makka, therefore, he does not distinguish between the characteristic features of Bedouins and civilized people in Makka in the Prophet's time.⁷⁷ As it is discussed earlier,⁷⁸ it might not be wrong to say that Izutsu's methodological approach to Qur'ānic key-words seems to be primarily synchronic rather than diachronic. Therefore, it can be said that much of the criticism of Izutsu's studies relates to them not being sufficiently historical.

⁷³ Ibid., 41.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Harry B. Partin, "Semantics of the Qur'ān: A Consideration of Izutsu's Studies," *History of Religions* 9, no. 4 (1970): 360.

⁷⁶ W. MONTGOMERY WATT, "Reviews," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 12, no. 1 (1967): 156.

⁷⁷ Please see for detailed Fazlurrahman's critiques on Izutsu's work in Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an : Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung*, vii-xii.

⁷⁸ See p. 3

To sum up, it can be assumed that one of the problems with the methodology of Izutsu in relation to semantic studies of Qur'ānic key terms is arbitrariness.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

This study is structured according to the key questions of this investigation as explained in the previous section. In the following, a brief overview of each chapter will be provided.

After this introduction, Chapter 1 examines the notion of justice (*al-‘adl*) as portrayed in the Qur'ān. The Izutsian approach regarding the semantics of the Qur'ān has been applied to expose the relational meanings of *al-‘adl* in the Qur'ānic context. Thus, the central core of this chapter sets out to determine the semantic field of *al-‘adl* in the Qur'ānic worldview.

Chapter 2, “Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi” attempts to access the diachronic analysis of Nursi’s writings on *‘adl* (justice) and impact of the notion of justice in Nursi’s life. In this respect, Chapter 2 looks at Nursi’s family and regional background, early education, life career as an imam, teacher and leader, and lifestyle. In this analysis, the chapter examines the evolution and development of themes of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the course of his life.

Chapter 3 investigates the notion of *‘adl* (justice) in the writings of Saīd Nursi, and analyses his approach to see whether it is compatible with Qur'ānic *‘adl*. It identifies *al-‘adl* (justice) as balance and order in a creational sense in the universe according to Nursi. This chapter aims to set Nursi’s account of the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) and *al-asmā al-ḥusnā* (Names of God) into discourse with William Paley’s design argument and Bertrand Russell’s Analysis of ‘The Argument for the Remediating of Justice’.

Chapter 4 aims to assess the concept of justice (*al-‘adl*) in relation to the problem of *qadar* (predestination) according to Nursi. Initially, this chapter gives general background information about Muslims’ perspectives on this topic. Moreover, it explores the classical Islamic scholarship on divine determining and human accountability by dividing it into three main groups: (1) upholders of free will; (2) upholders of *qadar* (predestination); and (c) scholars who believe in the issue of

compatibility of Divine power and human free will. Then, this chapter attempts to determine Nursi's position on the reconciliation of human free will with predestination.

Chapter 5 determines the doctrine of the mean, or *state of al-'adl*, in man and its manifestation in society as a foundation for social justice from Nursi's perspective. This chapter examines the doctrine of the mean in connection with the Qur'ānic concepts, such as *wasat* (middle way), *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (the Straight Path) and *fiṣq* (debauchery and immorality). Then, it offers practical guidelines in order to explain how to attain excellent character and moderation in personal life by means of worship (*'ibādah*) and prayer (*ṣalāh*). As a result, this chapter also explore how worship in general, and prayer in particular, are the two main causes for order and balance both in man's personal life and in society.

Finally, the concluding chapter provides a brief summary and reflects the key points of this research. Additionally, it explains the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for further studies.

Chapter 1

THE CONCEPT OF AL-'ADL (JUSTICE) IN THE QUR'ĀN

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explore the meaning of justice (*al-'adl*) as portrayed in the Qur'ān. The methodology used will be the Izutsian approach to the semantics of the Qur'ān to show the relational meanings of *al-'adl* in the Qur'ānic context. Toshihiko Izutsu's method of interpreting the key Qur'ānic concepts was explained in the Introduction. Thus, the current chapter will try to examine the semantic field of *al-'adl* in the Qur'ānic worldview. To this end, a number of related and opposite concepts to *al-'adl* will be assessed within the semantic field of *al-'adl*.

In his book *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*, Izutsu attempts to draw a distinction between three layers of moral discourse or three different categories of ethical concepts in the Qur'ān: (a) Those that describe the ethical nature of God such as Merciful, Benevolent, Forgiving and Just; (b) those that concern the basic ethical relationship between man and God, which, according to Izutsu, can be classified as ethico-religious concepts which urge the human-being to take a certain attitudes towards God and to act in a certain way; and (c) those that involve the basic ethical attitude of man toward his fellow brethren living in the same community. This discourse may often constitute a set of regulations that take the form of commands and prohibitions, and sometimes occurs in more general forms in the Qur'ān.⁷⁹ However, Izutsu also highlights the fact that these three different categories of ethical Qur'ānic concepts are interdependent and he further clarifies that the Qur'ānic worldview is theocentric and faith-based because:

[The] image of God pervades the whole of it, and nothing escapes His knowledge and providence. Semantically this means that, in general, no major concept in the Qur'an exists quite independently of the concept of God and that in the sphere of human ethics each one of its key concepts is but a

⁷⁹ See: Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān* (Montreal ; Ithaca, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 17, please see also: N.S. Eggen, 'Conceptions of Trust in the Qur'an', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 13/2 (2011), 56-85, 56.

pale reflection – or a very imperfect imitation – of the divine nature itself, or refers to a particular response elicited by divine actions.⁸⁰

The aim of this chapter is to explore the Qur’ānic assertion of the meaning of *‘adl* in relation to other semantically interconnected concepts in the Qur’ān. This chapter will attempt to answer the following questions: How is the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) conceptualized in the Qur’ān? What are the related and opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān? How are they semantically interconnected with *al-‘adl*? In this respect, the ethico-religious concept of *al-‘adl* will be examined as presented in the Qur’ān. This will be followed by an examination of concepts connected to *al-‘adl*, such as *qisṭ* (justice and fairness), *ḥaqq* (truth), *iḥsān* (beneficence), *istiḳāmah* (to be moderate), *wasat* (middle way), *mīzān* (balance or order), *kail* (measure) and *qadar* (to measure), within the semantic field of *al-‘adl*. Additionally, the opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* such as *ẓulm* (injustice), *‘udūl* (deviation), *jawr* (injustice), *fasād* (corruption), *khusrān* (loss or decline), *fahshā* (immoderate), *fuṭūr* (crack) and *tafāwut* (disharmony) will be further evaluated within this semantic field.

In order to establish its own position, this chapter will be divided into three main sections: (a) the concept of *al-‘adl* as portrayed in the Qur’ān; (b) concepts connected to *al-‘adl*; and (c) concepts which are semantically opposite concepts to *al-‘adl*.

In the introduction of this research, the synchronic linguistic method was also examined. This work will also employ synchronic linguistics to find key concepts of the Qur’ān, which are interconnected with the focus word of *al-‘adl* (justice). Thus, it will also examine overlapping relations between *al-‘adl* and *al-qadar* (preordainment) and *al-istiḳāmah* (to be upright) and *al-wasat* (middle) within the Qur’ānic context. It is worth emphasizing again here that this study will focus on the approach by which Qur’ān interprets some certain key concepts with another concept. In this regard, the connected and opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* are examined within the semantic field of *al-‘adl*. With regard to the interpretation of the above-mentioned concepts, some major works in the *tafsīr* (commentary) literature and in particular, *al-wujūh wa ‘al-nazā’ir* (lexicographical genre of *tafsīr*) literature will be referred to. Additionally, this chapter will try to evaluate the usage of the root *‘a-d-l* in Jahilī poetry. As the main concern of this paper is the conceptualizations of *al-‘adl* as presented in the

⁸⁰ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān*, 18.

Qur’ān, the *ḥadīth* (prophetic tradition) literature will not be examined. However, individual *ḥadīths* will be employed as exegetical tools.

1.2 LEXICAL MEANING OF AL-‘ADL (JUSTICE) AS PORTRAYED IN THE QUR’ĀN

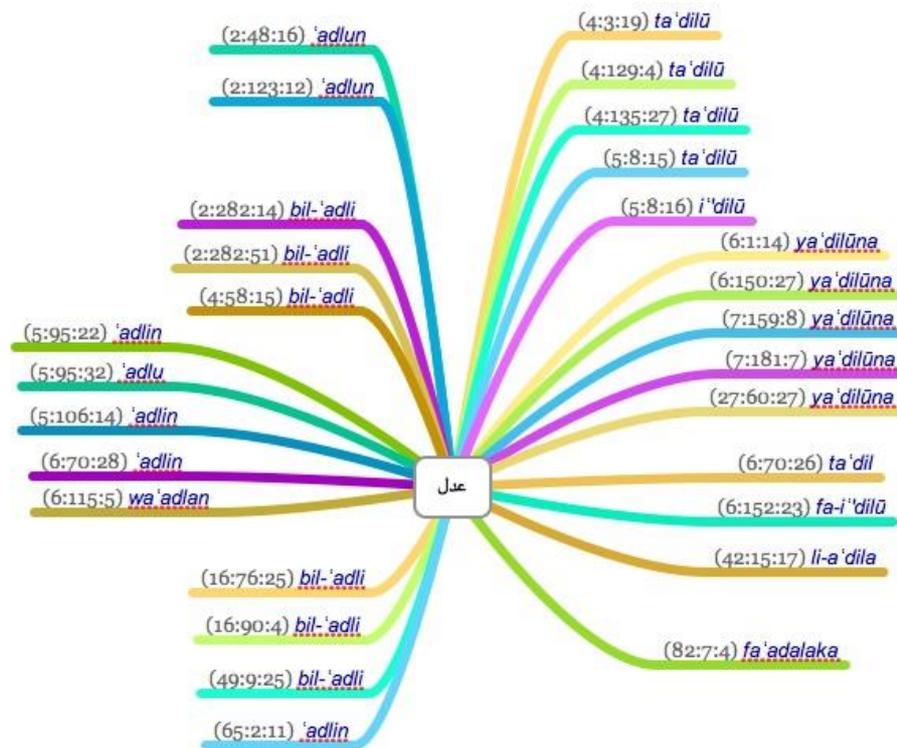


Figure 1 Derivatives of *al-‘Adl* in the Qur’ān

The root ‘*a-d-l* appears in its several forms of which the majority are found in *Madanī* Verses;⁸¹ in total, it occurs twenty eight times in twenty-four verses in the Qur’ān. The

⁸¹ The verse may be defined as the smallest formally and semantically independent Qur’ānic speech units, marked by final rhyme. Thus, a single verse of the Qur’ān is named as an ayah (meaning ‘sign’ or ‘miracle’), and a chapter is called a sūrah (‘something enclosed or surrounded by a fence or wall’). There are 114 sūrahs of varying lengths in the Qur’ān. Ninety-two sūrah were revealed in the period between 610 AD and 622 AD corresponding to Makkah phase, while the Prophet Muhammad still lived in Makkah, therefore they are called as ‘Makkan or Makkī Surah’, and 22 much longer chapters were revealed in Madinah between 622 AD and 632 AD, therefore, they are named as ‘Madanī Sūrah’. On the other hand, there are some Makkī verses in Madanī sūrah and vice versa. Please see detailed info in "The Qur'an," in *Need to Know? Islam* (Collins, 2008). and ; Jane Dammen McAuliffe, ed. *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, 6 vols., vol. 5 (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2003), 419; and Mohamadou Nassourou, "A Knowledge-Based Hybrid Statistical Classifier for

root 'a-d-l becomes visible in verbal forms in the past tense (only one time), in the present tense alone or with the imperative conjunction "an" (*an al-maṣḍariyah*), and as the nomen verbi (*maṣḍar*) and the imperative mood.

The root 'a-d-l is used as transitive verb (*lāzim*) and intransitive verb (*muta'addī*) form gives various meanings depending on the *ḥarf jarr* (preposition) by which it is preceded. A number of researchers have indicated its meaning in the different forms in the literature.

For example, according to Badawi, the root 'a-d-l refers to 'one side of camel litter, to be equal to, justice, to be straight, to be upright, to be temperate, the happy medium, to be of impeccable character.⁸² On the other hand, Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311) explains it by focusing on the lexical meaning of *al-'a-d-l*, which is the thing that is 'straighten in the *nufūs* (the souls)'; in other words, 'that which is upright' (*mā qāma fī al-nufūs innahū mustaqīmūn*). It is the anti-thesis of *jawr* (transgression). Moreover, Ibn Manẓūr suggests that the verbal form of 'a-d-l refers to acting justly such as "He

Reconstructing the Chronology of the Quran," Universität Würzburg Philosophische Fakultät I (Histor., philolog., Kultur- und geograph. Wissensch.). Institut für deutsche Philologie, <http://opus.bibliothek.uni-wuerzburg.de/volltexte/2011/5471/>. Makkī Sūrahs differs from Madanī Sūrahs in a number of important ways. Turner points out substantial thematic and stylistic differences between Makkī and Madanī Sūrahs. For example, issues concerned with the so-called 'fundamentals of religion' - Divine Unity, Prophethood and The Last Day - are elaborated more than the 'pillars of Islam' or rites and rituals in the Makkī Sūrahs. Thus, Turner claims that if a chapter focuses on God's oneness, on the stories of the prophets, on the danger of associating partners to Allah, or any kind of moral corruption, it is more likely to be a Makkī Sūrah than Madanī. Moreover, chapters and verses revealed in Makka are likely to be shorter than Madanī Sūrahs and verses. In addition to this, Makkī verses are often poetic and highly figurative. Please see: Colin Turner, *Islam : The Basics* (London: Routledge, 2006), 49-50. This view is supported by Nursi, who states that there are differences between Makkī and Madanī Sūrahs and verses with regard to eloquence, miraculousness, and detail and brevity. According to Nursi, the Qur'ān primarily addresses idolators of the Quraysh and untaught tribesman (*ummī*) in Mecca. Therefore, a powerful and elevated rhetorical style, a miraculous, convincing, persuasive conciseness, and repetition were required. Thus, Makkī Sūrahs deal mostly with the pillars of belief and degrees in the affirmation of Divine unity, first creation and the Resurrection, with a most powerful, elevated and miraculous conciseness. In Madina, on the other hand, addressees and opponents of the Qur'ān mainly consist of the People of the Book such as Jews and Christians who affirmed God's existence. Hence, Madanī Sūrahs and verses focuses on the explanation of particular matters in the Shari'a and its injunctions, which were the cause of dispute, and the origins and causes of secondary matters and general laws. Thus, it seems that Madanī Sūrahs are explanatory in nature, clear, and simple in style. Please see: Said Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-I Nur Külliyyati: Sözciler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Istanbul: Nesil Yayinlari, 1994), 974.

⁸² Elsaid M. Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 605.

acted equitable towards him in the judgment. So, he is the Just. (‘*adala ‘alayhi fī al-qaḍiyyah, fahuwa ādilun*’). Additionally, the root ‘*a-d-l* might imply to deviate or decline, particularly, from the right path as in the Qur’ān (27:60): “*they are a people who swerve from justice (ya ‘dilūn)*”.⁸³ However, Lane mentions ‘*al-‘adl*’ may also signify rating a thing as equal to a thing of another kind so as to make it like the latter. For instance, the verb *ya ‘dilūn* in the Qur’ān 6: 150 is used to equate others with their Lord: “*they hold others as equal (ya ‘dilūn) with their Guardian-Lord*”.⁸⁴

Dāmaghānī (d.1109) in his book on the semantics of the Qur’ān provides five aspects of meaning for the root *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān: (i) ransom and compensation (*al-fida*) as mentioned in the Qur’ān 2:48: “nor shall compensation [*‘adlun*] be taken from her, nor shall anyone be helped (from outside)”; (ii) impartiality, fairness and equity (*al-inṣāf*) as it is used in the Qur’ān 4:3: “If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly [*ta ‘dilū*] with the orphans”; (iii) the equivalent, the value and worth (*al-qiyamah*) as in the Qur’ān 5:95: “by way of atonement, the feeding of the indigent; or its equivalent [*‘adlu*] in fasts”; (iv) to consider or set up as equal to (*al-shirk*) as it is stated in the Qur’ān 6:1: “Yet those who reject Faith hold (others) as equal [*ya ‘dilūn*], with their Guardian-Lord”; and (v) testimony of singularity of Allah and monotheism (*al-tawḥīd*). In addition to this, both Dāmaghānī and Ibn Jawzī (1114-1200) argue that *al-‘adl* implies *tawḥīd* (monotheism) in the Qur’ān (16:90) : “Allah commands justice [*al-‘adl*], the doing of good”.⁸⁵

According to the lexicographer Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, the root of ‘*adlun* and ‘*idlun* are similar, but the former is used with regard to what is perceived by discernment (*al-baṣīrah*), such as judgments (*al-aḥkam*). This can be illustrated by the phrase of the Qur’ān (5:95): “*the equivalent (‘adlu) of that in fasting*”, and the other is *al-‘idlu*

⁸³ Muḥammad ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzūr, "Lisān Al-‘Arab [the Arab Tongue] [Website]," Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmiyah, <http://baheth.info/all.jsp?term=%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%B7>.

⁸⁴ Edward William Lane and Stanley Lane-Poole, *An Arabic-English Lexicon, Derived from the Best and the Most Copious Eastern Sources*, vol. 2011 (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1863), 1973.

⁸⁵ Please see: al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad Dāmaghānī, *Qāmūs Al-Qur’ān, Aw Iṣlāh Al-Wujūh Wa Al-Nazāir Fī Al-Qur’ān*, ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sayyid al-Ahl, 3 ed. (Bayrūt: Dar al-‘Ilm lil-Malayin, 1977), 317-18; and see also Abū al-Faraj ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Alī Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntakhab Qurrat ‘uyūn Al-NawāZīr Fī Al-Wujūh Wa-Al-Nazā’ir Fī Al-Qur’ān Al-Karīm*, ed. Muḥammad al-Sayyid Ṣaḥfāwī and Fu’ād ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Aḥmad (al-Iskandarīyah: Munsha‘at al-Ma‘ārif, 1979), 439-41.

which is employed in relation to what is perceived by senses (*al-hāssah*) such as things weighed, and things numbered and things measured.⁸⁶

In light of the above-mentioned information, lexical meanings of al-‘adl can be listed as follows: (i) to straighten, or to sit straight, to amend or modify; (ii) to deviate or depart from, to be unfair to or be unjust, (if the second radical of the trilateral verb comes as ‘i’ as is seen in this form of ‘*adila y’adalu ‘adalan*’⁸⁷ to turn to; (iii) to balance, to equilibrate or to compare (with), to weigh; and (iv) to be equal or match; and finally, to dispose a right, to deal with justice or to establish justice (if the second radical of the trilateral verb comes as ‘u’).⁸⁸ Thus, it may be argued that the literal denotation of root of ‘*adl*’ is a synthesis of social and moral principles standing for equity, fairness, temperance and straightforwardness.⁸⁹

It is worth noting that the Qur’ān does not provide a clear-cut definition of ‘*adl*’. However, it gives constant reminders to establish a just basis for actions and to maintain justice and equity. It could be said that the Qur’ān has its own original and wise method of answering questions and defining certain concepts.⁹⁰ For example, verses 2:189 and 8:1 answer the questions about new moons and things which are taken as spoils of war; however, in this instance it should not be taken as the literal meaning of the moon and the spoils of war. The Qur’ān explains the essence of them as “they are but signs to mark fixed periods of time in (the affairs of) men, and for Pilgrimage” and “(such) spoils are at the disposal of Allah and the Messenger”. Hence, the Qur’ān elucidates things not according to what someone wishes to know, but what one has to know in reality. In other words, since the Qur’ān knows the true meanings of answers in reality, it draws a clear picture for everything with this idiosyncratic method in order to be able to facilitate our understandings. Taken together, it can be assumed that the Qur’ān postulates that the Arabs of Jāhilī period were familiar with the notion of *al-‘adl*. This might be a reason why the Qur’ān does

⁸⁶ al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Al-Mufradāt Fī Gharīb Al-Qur’ān*, ed. Muḥammad Sayyid Kaylānī (Bayrūt: Dār al-ma‘rifah, 1961), 325.

⁸⁷ For detailed information about the forms of Trilateral Verbs in Arabic language; see; C. P Caspari, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, ed. William Wright (London: Williams and Norgate, 1896), 29.

⁸⁸ Butrus Bustani, *Muḥit Al-Muḥit* (Bayrut 1867-1870).

⁸⁹ Ramazani Majid Khadduri, K, *The Islamic Conception of Justice* (Johns Hopkins Univ Press, 2002), 56.

⁹⁰ Abdullah Aymaz, Personal Interview, 01 2010.

not give the definition of *al-‘adl* explicitly. Thus, it is worth examining the usage of the root *al-‘adl* in Jāhilī poetry and extracting its meaning. The following section will concentrate on this.

1.3 AL-‘ADL IN JĀHILĪ POETRY

One significant aspect of the development of moral ideas of ancient Arabia is that the Qur’ān brought new morality totally based on the absolute will of God, whereas the main ethical values of Arabs in the pre-Qurānic period were based on tribal tradition or, in Izutsu’s words, ‘the custom of our forefathers’.

It would have been a gross injustice to the pre- Qur’ānic Arabs, to claim that they made no distinction between right and wrong. For example, according to Izutsu, there were also rich values of morality such as such as generosity, courage, loyalty, veracity and patience among the pagan Arabs.⁹¹ Moreover, the root of *al-‘adl* is used in pre-Islamic poetry. Therefore, it can be claimed that the concept of *al-‘adl* was also applied by pre-Islamic Arabs. What is surprising is that the concepts of *al-‘adl*, which appear in Jāhilī poetry, have very similar meanings within the Qur’ān. For example, in the following verse of poetry, the root of ‘adl refers to modification or amendment of something:

Ṣaḥabtu bihā al-qawma ḥattā amtakastu bil-‘arḍi a’ diluhā an tamīlan⁹²

(I have been a companion of this people till death comes.

I have straightened my friendship.)

Another aspect of *al-‘adl* may refer to compensation and equality in Jāhilī poetry. For instance, in *Lisān al-‘arab*, Ibn Manẓūr mentions the following verse reported from Muḥalhal:

‘Ala anna laysa ‘adlan min Kulaybin. Izā burizat mukhbaat ul-khudūr⁹³

(There is no compensation from Kulayb. When protected girl in secure place has appeared.)

⁹¹ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān*, 74.

⁹² As quoted from *Lisān al-‘arab* in Uḍayy Khalīl Abu ‘Uḍayy, *Al-Tatawwur Al-Dalālī Bayna Luḡhat Al-Shi‘r Al-Jāhilī Wa-Luḡhat Al-Qur’ān Al-Karīm : Dirāsah Dalālīyah Muqāranaḥ* (al-Zarqa, al-Urdun: Maktabat al-Munār, 1985), 389.

⁹³ Please see root of ‘a-d-l in Ibn Manẓūr; See also: Abu ‘Uḍayy, 379.

Another example for this meaning can be seen in the following verse from ‘Alam:

Matā mā talqanī va ma’iya ṣilaḥī Tilāqi al-mawti laysa lahū ‘adīlun⁹⁴

(When you meet me with my weapon. You will find death, which you cannot challenge (Non-identical))

The meaning attached to the root ‘a-d-l implies to weighing affairs with scales of right and true. A‘sha’s verse from his *Dīwan al-kabīr* shows this meaning clearly:

Wa an yastaḍāfū ilā ḥukmihī yaḍāfū ilā ‘ādilin qad wazana.

(When they bring something to his judgment. They bring to Just who make balance)

However, in Jāhilī poetry the root ‘a-d-l can also refer to declining or swerving from the right path, as mentioned in *Lisān al-‘arab*:

Falamma ṣaramta wakāna amrī Qawīman lā yamīlu bihi al-‘udūl.⁹⁵

(When I determine my work, there is no deviation for my affairs.)

Taken together, in Jahilī poetry, it can be seen that the concept of al-‘adl was used to refer to similar meanings as those used in the Qur’ān. For example, meanings of al-‘adl such as compensation and equality or amendment of something with identical one and to weighing affairs with scales of right and to swerving from the right path are also used in the the Qur’ān. However, al-‘adl as ‘to seek righteousness in judgment’ became widespread among Muslims.⁹⁶

1.4 INNER STRUCTURE OF THE CONCEPT OF AL-‘ADL

In this part, the meaning of adl will be examined under ‘five categories by considering the contextual structure of the Qur’ān as follows:

1.4.1 ‘A-d-l as ransom and compensation (al-Baqarah 2:48, 123; al-An‘ām 6:70.)

Then guard yourselves against a day when one soul shall not avail another nor shall intercession be accepted for her, nor shall compensation [‘adlun] be taken from her, nor shall anyone be helped (from outside).⁹⁷

⁹⁴ As quoted from *Lisān al-‘arab* in , 379.

⁹⁵ As quoted from *Lisān al-‘arab* in *ibid*.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*.

⁹⁷ The Qur’an (2:48)

Nor shall compensation [‘adlun] be accepted from her nor shall intercession profit her nor shall anyone be helped (from outside).⁹⁸

It will find for itself no protector or intercessor except God: if it offered every ransom, (or reparation) [wa in ta’dil kulla ‘adlin], none will be accepted: such is (the end of) those who deliver themselves to ruin by their own acts: they will have for drink (only) boiling water, and for punishment, one most grievous: for they persisted in rejecting God.⁹⁹

In these verses, it is clear that ‘adala or ‘adl is used to connote ransom, recompense and compensation. It gives detailed information for each of the meanings and teaches an important Islamic principle, i.e personal responsibilities in society. The principle mentioned in these verses is not meant for the Children of Israel exclusively, but also for Muslims. The verb at the end of the verse is a third person masculine singular passive imperfect verb and it is used to connote the action which is to take place in the hereafter (“walā yu’khadhu min’hā ‘adlun”). Most of the commentators of the Qur’ān agree that ‘adl was used to denote compensation. For example, Zamakhsharī interprets ‘adlun as compensation (*fidyatun*). According to Zamakhsharī, this meaning is supported by the *ḥadīth* in which Prophet Muḥammad said: “nor shall exchange [*ṣarfun*] be accepted, nor shall compensation [‘adlun] be accepted”.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Rāzī also understands ‘adlun in the Qur’ān 2:48 as compensation (*fidyatun*). He further explains that the origins of ‘adl refer to making equal. Commenting on the word ‘adlun, Rāzī makes a very interesting comment. He discusses the meaning of ‘adl in the Qur’ān 2:48 by citing verses 6:1, 5:36, 3:91 and 6:70.¹⁰¹ Thus, it seems that ‘adlun (verbal noun of ‘adala) and *fidyatun* (ransom) are semantically interconnected in the Qur’ān. Unlike, Abū ‘Ubayda, as Abdurrahman Elmali quoted in his *tafsīr*,¹⁰² interprets ‘adl as “if he repents, no repentance will be accepted, since repentance is accepted only in the world” with the word *iqsāṭ* which also means to establish justice.

⁹⁸ The Qur’ān (2:123)

⁹⁹ The Qur’an (6:70)

¹⁰⁰ Maḥmūd ibn ‘Umar Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf : ‘an Ḥaqāiq Ghawāmid Al-Tanzīl Wa-‘Uyūn Al-Aqāwīl Fī Wujūh Al-Ta’wīl*, ed. Ahmad ibn Muhammad Ibn al-Munayyir, et al., 4 vols., vol. 1 (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1986), 136.

¹⁰¹ Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Rāzī *Al-Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*, 32 vols., vol. 3 (Bayrūt: Dār ul-İhyā al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1999), 490.

¹⁰² Abdurrahman Elmali, "Kur’an-I Kerim’de AdâLet (Adl) Kavramı," *Harran Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, no. 3 (1997).

1.4.2 ‘Adl as to act with equity and to observe justice and fairness.

(*al-An‘ām* 6:115, 152; *al-Naḥl* 16:76, 90; *al-‘A‘rāf* 7:159, 181; *al-Shu‘arā* 42:15; *al-Infīṭār* 82:7; *al-Baqarah* 2:282; *al-Nisā* 4:58, 3, 129; *al-Hujurāt* 49:9)

These meanings have been given for the sake of categorizing and generalizing the context. In these narratives, *‘adala* is used to connote acting with equity and to order people to observe justice, fairness and equity in interpersonal and social relations. In these narratives, the word *‘adl* is used six times as a verbal noun and remaining seven it is used as verb.

In these verses, the Qur’ān employs the concept of *al-‘adl* meaning “acting as a witness in a public sense. It touches on two major issues: marriage problems and financial transactions. When talking of financial transactions, the Qur’ān asserts:

O ye who believe! When ye deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing. Let a scribe write down faithfully [bil ‘adl] as between the parties: let not the scribe refuse to write: as God Has taught him, so let him write. Let him who incurs the liability dictate, but let him fear His Lord God, and not diminish aught of what he owes. If the party liable is mentally deficient, or weak, or unable himself to dictate, let his guardian dictate faithfully [bil ‘adl], and get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her.¹⁰³

The injunction in this verse is that agreements are written down by a person who is trusted and faithful in his education and personality, and *‘adala* is used to connote *faithful, justice, fairness and truthfulness*. The context of the verse is concerned with social affairs and debts.

Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; And when ye judge between man and man, and ye judge with justice [bil ‘adl]: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you. For Allah is He Who heareth and seeth all things.¹⁰⁴

This verse speaks of duties of rulers and exhorts them to observe the justice when judging between people. In fact, two issues are mentioned: returning trusts to their rightful owners and commanding justice. The root *adl* is used as a verbal noun with a verb and it alludes to equity and fairness. It may be worth noting that Zamakhsharī,

¹⁰³ The Qur’an (2:282)

¹⁰⁴ The Qur’ān (4:58)

commenting on the passage in question, elaborates on this verse within the context of being just and righteous in judgment. In addition to this, he notes that it addresses governors.¹⁰⁵

If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, Marry women of your choice, Two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them) [allā ta'dilū], then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess, that will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice.¹⁰⁶

Above, being kind to relatives and 'adl is used as an imperfect verb and connotes treating women justly and as equals in terms of alimony. The Qur'ān gives more specific instructions on how to deal with women in other verses in the same chapter (surah) and suggests that being fair and just between women is impracticable:

Ye are never able to be fair and just [an ta'dilū] as between women, even if it is your ardent desire)¹⁰⁷

The word of thy Lord doth find its fulfilment in truth and in justice ['adlan]: None can change His words: for He is the one who heareth and knoweth all.¹⁰⁸

The root 'adl appears in this ayat as an adjective of the 'word of your Lord' (*kalimatu rabbik*), which was interpreted as the Qur'ān or religion of God and refers to rightness and justice. This verse indicates that justice and righteousness constitute God's attribute.

Whenever ye speak, speak justly [fa'dilū], even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfil the covenant of God: thus doth He command you, that ye may remember.¹⁰⁹

In the above verse, the root 'adl appears as an imperative verb, and the ordainment in this verse is to speak truly when giving evidence, even if it is against your own relatives. It also contains an admonishment for dealing fairly in commercial transactions.

Of the people of Moses there is a section who guide and do justice in the light of truth [ya'dilūna].¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Zamakhsharī, 1, 524.

¹⁰⁶ The Qur'an (4:3)

¹⁰⁷ The Qur'an (4:129)

¹⁰⁸ The Qur'an (6:115)

¹⁰⁹ The Qur'ān (6:152)

Of those We have created are people who direct (others) with truth. And dispense justice
[ya’dilūna] therewith.¹¹¹

Both verses epitomize ‘*adl* in terms of the truth (*al-ḥaqq*), signifying a standard: to do justice and to treat people equally. These verses also provide examples of people who dispense justice being found not only among the Muslims, but also among the non-Muslim communities.

God sets forth (another) Parable of two men: one of them dumb, with no power of any sort; a wearisome burden is he to his master; whichever way he directs him, he brings no good: is such a man equal with one who commands Justice [bil ‘adl], and is on a Straight Way?”¹¹²

The Qur’ān gives the example of the believer and the disbeliever, or the idol and True God in this verse. The root ‘*a-d-l* appears as a genitive masculine noun with prefixed preposition (*bil- ‘adli*) and it implies, as Ṣuyūtī commented,¹¹³ the helpful preacher and spokesman who orders to be just and avoid injustice.

God commands justice [bil ‘adl], the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition.¹¹⁴

It is implied in this context that ‘*adl* is juxtaposed with *iḥsān* (beneficence), which means doing good to others. According to Ṣuyūtī, ‘*adl* in this verse refers to the unity of God (*tawḥīd*) or fairness and equity.¹¹⁵ In this context, ‘*adl* may refer to a similar meaning to beneficence (*iḥsān*).

It is noteworthy that ‘*adl* in the following passage is in contrast to following lust and capriciousness:

Now then, for that (reason), call (them to the Faith), and stand steadfast as thou art commanded, nor follow thou their vain desires; but say: "I believe in the Book which God has sent down; and I am commanded to judge justly between you [li a’dala baynakum].”¹¹⁶

The root ‘*a-d-l* appears as a first person singular imperfect verb in the subjunctive mood and connotes being just between you in decision-making. It is interesting to

¹¹⁰ The Qur’ān (7:159)

¹¹¹ The Qur’ān (7:181)

¹¹² The Qur’ān (16: 76)

¹¹³ Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti and Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli, *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn* (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2008), 356.

¹¹⁴ The Qur’ān (16:90)

¹¹⁵ al-Suyuti and al-Mahalli, *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*, 359.

¹¹⁶ The Qur’ān (42:15)

note here that Suyuṭī understands *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān 16:90 as *al-tawḥīd* (unity of God).¹¹⁷ It is highly important to state in this connection that Prophet Muhammad was ordered not to follow the vain desires of the polytheists, which would make him believe in their deities. In contrast to this, he was commanded to unify God’s existence (*li-‘adila* with the prefixed particle of purpose *lām*). Thus, from this view *‘adl* in this verse refers to the unity of God.

If two parties among the believers fall into a fight, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah; But if it complies, then make peace between them with justice [bil ‘adl], and be fair.¹¹⁸

In the above verse, *adl* implies fairness and includes making peace between people and judging justly and fairly.

Him Who created thee. Fashioned thee in due proportion, and gave thee a just bias [fa’ dalaka].¹¹⁹

The above verse concerns equilibrium and balance in the creation of the human being, as there is perfect order and balance in the parts of his body and internal and external design. In this verse, as Turner remarks, the *‘adl* denotes the giving of proportion and balance and putting of things in their rightful place.¹²⁰ More than any verse in Qur’ān this passage discloses the approach to this research. This view is also supported by Zamakhsharī, followed by Bayḍawī and Rāzī, who interprets *‘adala* as the creation of the human body in proportioned measures and without any discrepancies.¹²¹ For the sake of this research, this verse will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 4.

¹¹⁷ al-Suyuti and al-Mahalli, *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*, 359.

¹¹⁸ The Qur’ān (49:9)

¹¹⁹ The Qur’ān (82:7)

¹²⁰ Colin Turner, "Bediuzzaman and the Concept of Al-‘adl: Towards a Nursian Ontology of Divine Justice," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 38, no. 4 (2010).

¹²¹ Please see: Dücane Cündioğlu, *Kur'an'ı Anlama'nin Anlami : Hermeneutik Bir Deneyim [Meaning of Understanding of the Quran]* (Istanbul: Kapi, 2011), 717; see also: Jane Dammen McAuliffe, ed. *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, 6 vols., vol. 4 (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2003), 77; see also: Aḥmad Muḥammad Muta‘awwiq, *Al-Alfāz Al-Mushtarakah Al-Ma‘ānī Fī Al-Lughat Al-‘Arabiyya: Ṭabi‘atuhā, Ahamīyatuhā, Maṣādiruhā [Homonymous Polysemic Words in Arabic Language: Its Nature, Importance and Sources]*, vol. 2011 (2012), 292.

1.4.3 ‘Adl as “to swerve from the right path”

It is worthwhile mentioning here that some roots of Arabic words are seemingly paradoxical such as *al-‘adl* and *al-qist*. Both ‘*a-d-l* and ‘*q-s-ṭ* might refer to either being just or, in complete contradistinction, deviating from the right path. It might be helpful to consider *al-alfāz al-mushtarakah* (homonymous polysemic words), the genres of *al-wujūh wa al-naẓāir* (sing. *wajh* ‘face’ or ‘aspect’ and sing. *naẓīr*, likeness) for the clarity of apparent paradox. In the literature, polysemy tends to be used to refer to the plurality of meanings that words can have in all natural languages.¹²² The existence of homonymous polysomic¹²³ words (*al-alfāz al-mushtarakah*) can be considered as one of the intrinsic attributes of the Arabic language. In fact, those words are not paradoxical in nature, but as Eggen and Cundioglu point out, those elements in the language might indicate the richness of the language in question.¹²⁴ Arabic words in the Qur’ān also have this essential trait and, therefore, many words in the Qur’ān have been classified as polysemious in *tafsīr* literature such as ‘*umma*’ (nation), *qurū* (monthly periods) and *ṣayd* (game or hunting).

In addition to *wujūh* and *naẓāir* words, *al-alfāz al-aḍḍād* (auto antonyms) also is examined within a specific form of homonymous polysomic words. *Al-aḍḍād* may be broadly defined as the words that can refer to different senses. Thus, as Muta‘awwiq notes, *al-alfāz al-al-mushtarakah* includes *al-aḍḍād*.¹²⁵

In general, therefore, it seems that the roots ‘*a-d-l* and ‘*q-s-ṭ* can be assumed as polysomic words. Thus, both words can mean either to be just or, in complete contradistinction, to deviate from the right path.

¹²² Please see 'Herbert Berg, Polysemy in the Qur'an' in McAuliffe, *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, 155.

¹²³ Homonymous words have two or more non-related senses, whereas polysemic words have two or more related senses.

¹²⁴ N.S. Eggen, "Conceptions of Trust in the Qur'an," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 13, no. 2 (2011): 62; please see also Cündioglu, 32.

¹²⁵ Aḥmad Muḥammad Muta‘awwiq, *Al-Alfāz Al-Mushtarakah Al-Ma‘ānī Fī Al-Lughat Al-‘arabiyya: Ṭabī‘atuhā, Aḥamīyatuhā, Maṣādiruhā [Homonymous Polysemic Words in Arabic Language: Its Nature, Importance and Sources]*, 2012, http://uqu.edu.sa/majalat/shariaramag/mag21/mg_012.htm.

Evidence of this can be clearly seen in the Qur'ān 4:135. For instance, the root 'a-d-l which means to deviate from the right path, is seen three times. With regard to the witness, the Qur'an admonishes and presents the imperative of justice:

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice [an ta'dilū], verily God is well-acquainted with all that ye do.¹²⁶

In this verse, 'adl refers to deviating from the right course. The Qur'ān commands not to be driven by hatred for some people into abandoning justice, for justice is ordained for everyone, in all situations. In the above-mentioned passage, following lust and waywardness or capriciousness (*hawā*) that can lead believers astray is correlated with swerving from the right course and may have a tenuous link with verse 42:15 of the Qur'ān.

It is clear contextually that the second person masculine plural imperfect verb to be just (*li-a'dila*) is seen to approximate to *taqwā* from the root of *waqā* which literally means to preserve, protect or shelter. Much has been written concerning its religious meaning, and a variety of opinions have been offered by commentators. One interesting point is that it means to observe what is ordered by God and to abstain from what is forbidden. To be just is admittedly an essential ingredient of *taqwā*. In the following passage, two verbal forms of 'adl are used. The first is the second person masculine plural imperfect verb, which means to swerve to wrong and depart from justice; the second is the second person masculine plural imperative verb, meaning to be just.

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice [allā ta'dilū]. Be just [I'dilū]: that is next to Piety: and fear Allah For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ The Qur'ān (4:135)

¹²⁷ The Qur'ān (5:8)

1.4.4 'Adl as to equalize and to attribute partner to God

Three verses will be quoted, in which 'adl connotes equating and ascribing equals to God. Each link of these three verses may prove the unity of God by giving logical expressions. In this respect, Nursi also establishes his reasoning on proving the unity of God in these verses and he uses 'adl to provide evidence for it.

Praise be God, Who created the heavens and the earth, and made the darkness and the light. Yet those who reject Faith hold (others) as equal, with [ya'dilūn] their Guardian-Lord.¹²⁸

Or, Who has created the heavens and the earth, and Who sends you down rain from the sky? Yea, with it We cause to grow well-planted orchards full of beauty of delight: it is not in your power to cause the growth of the trees in them. (Can there be another) god besides God? Nay, they are a people who swerve from justice [ya'dilūn].¹²⁹

These verses were revealed about Lūṭ and his people who attributed partner to God and swerved from justice. Arberry translates this verse as "to assign to Him equals" as Ṣuyūṭī commented. When admonishing unjust testimony, the Qur'an states:

Say: "Bring forward your witnesses to prove that God did forbid so and so." If they bring such witnesses, be not thou amongst them: Nor follow thou the vain desires of such as treat our signs as falsehoods, and such as believe not in the hereafter: for they hold others as equal [ya'dilūn] with their Guardian-Lord.¹³⁰

Finally, 'adl as an adjective to imply the expert and scholar or trusted person. With regard to the penalty of killing game in the Sacred Area or in the state of *ihram*, or concerning witnessing a final will, the Qur'an sets conditions:

O ye who believe! Kill not game while in the sacred precincts or in pilgrim garb. If any of you doth so intentionally, the compensation is an offering, brought to the Kaba, of a domestic animal equivalent to the one he killed, as adjudged by two just men [dhawā 'adlin] among you; or by the way of atonement, the feeding of the indigent; or its equivalent ['adlu] in fasts: that he may taste of the penalty of his deed.¹³¹

O ye who believe! When death approaches any of you, (take) witnesses among yourselves when making bequests - two just men [dhawā 'adlin] of

¹²⁸ The Qur'ān (6:1)

¹²⁹ The Qur'ān (27:60)

¹³⁰ The Qur'ān (6:150)

¹³¹ The Qur'ān (5:95)

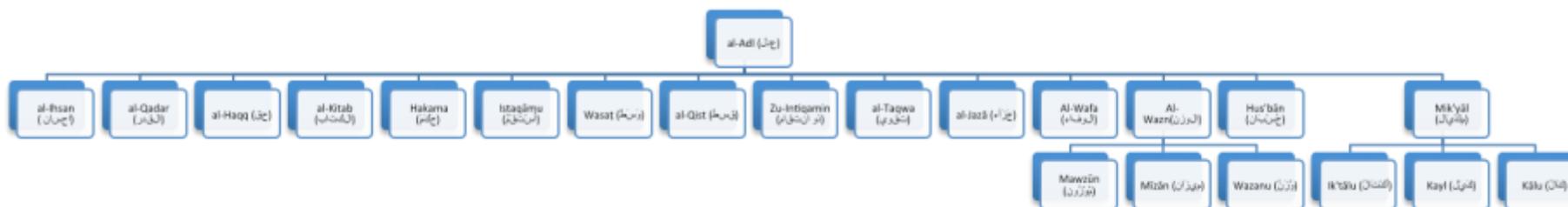
your own (brotherhood) or others from outside if ye are journeying through the earth, and the chance of death befalls you (thus)¹³²

In this verse *‘adl* appears as an adjective and refers to *fiṭnatun* which means intelligence, insight and acumen, as Şuyūtī commented. According to Yazir, *‘dhawā ‘adlin’* denotes scholar and trusted person in his post or manner.¹³³

¹³² The Qur’ān (5:105)

¹³³ E.H Yazir, *Hak Dini Kur'an Dili* (Istanbul: Şura Yayınları, 1993).

Table 1: The Semantic field of al- 'adl: Connected Concepts



1.5 RELATIONAL MEANING OF AL-‘ADL: CONNECTED CONCEPTS TO ‘ADL

In the previous section, we discussed the basic meaning of the root *‘a-d-l* in classical Arabic and in the *Qur’ānic* context. At this stage, it is worth highlighting the relational meaning of *al-‘adl* in the *Qur’ānic* worldview. As we discussed in our methodology chapter¹³⁴, the concepts in the *Qur’ān* do not stand alone and independently of each other; they are connected to each another in a most intricate way. In other words, it appears that these concepts do not come in isolation but are always organized into a system or systems. Thus, word-meanings become affected by their neighbors.¹³⁵

As discussed in the methodology chapter, to examine certain type of semantic field, one has to choose a ‘focus word’ among related concepts in the *Qur’ān*. The focus word can be broadly referred to as a particularly important key word which is relatively independent within the larger whole of the vocabulary. Thus, the concept of *al-‘adl* is chosen as a ‘focus word’. Other concepts might be classified as key-words. It would be fair to admit, as Izutsu points out, that the possibility of an element of arbitrariness comes into our choice.¹³⁶

Before discussing the cluster of concepts surrounding words semantically related to *al-‘adl*, it seems important to analyze the semantic range of notions of justice, fairness and order in the *Qur’ānic* worldview. As will be shown, the *Qur’ān* employs different concepts to reveal the relational meaning of *al-‘adl*. For the sake of the main focus of this chapter, the following key words will be dealt with: (1) *Qisṭ* or *qasaṭa* (adj-nom. *Qāsīṭ*); (2) *al-ḥaqq*; (3) *mīzān*, (3) *k-y-l*; (4) *q-d-r*; (5) *al-iḥsān*; (6) *al-istiḳāmah*; and (7) *al-wasaṭ*.

The semantic field of *al-‘adl* has been illustrated in Table 1. The literal meaning of each key concept will be given then the relational meaning with regards to *al-‘adl* in the *Qur’ān*.

¹³⁴ Please see: p17.

¹³⁵ Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an : Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung*, New ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Ayer Company Publishers, Inc, 1987), 11.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

1.5.1 Lexical meanings of Qist



Figure 2 Derivates of *al-Qist* in the Qur'ān

The trilateral root *q-s-ṭ* comes twenty-four times in the Qur'ān, in five derived forms: (a) three times as the form IV verb *tuq'siṭu*, as it is used once as an imperative verb (49:9) and twice as an imperfect verb; (b) twice as the noun *aqsaṭ*; (c) 15 times as the noun *qisṭ*; (d) twice as the active participle *qāsītūn*; and (f) three times as the form IV active participle *muq'siṭīn*. It should be considered that there are strong correlations between the meaning of the quadrilateral root *q-s-ṭ-s*, which appears twice in the Qur'ān, as the noun *qisṭās* and *q-s-ṭ*, in other words, both of these verbs can be seen with the same meaning in the Qur'ān. Therefore, it is worth evaluating the root *q-s-ṭ* in this section.

In the following pages, literal meanings of *q-s-ṭ* will be analysed by giving preference to the moods of *q-s-ṭ* in the Qur'ān.

To action allotment with justice and equity; this meaning can be seen in some verses of the Qur'ān, such as “It is He Who beginneth the process of creation, and repeateth

it, that He may reward with justice those who believe and work righteousness”¹³⁷ or “So establish weight with justice”¹³⁸. In addition, the meaning of *qist* in the ayah “And O my people! give just measure and weight” refers to the abovementioned connotation.¹³⁹

Al-Qist is also used as an epithet, like its synonym *a-d-l* and implies equitable or just balance. This connotation can be inferred from *ayat* of the *Qur'ān* in which Allah says “And We set a just balance (*al-mawāzīn al-qis'ṭa*) for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul is wronged in aught”¹⁴⁰ and “Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight (*bil-qis'ṭāsi l-mus'taqīmi*)”¹⁴¹.

Interestingly, the active participle *al-qāsītūna* derived from the root *q-s-t* can also have the meaning of ‘declining, or deviating, from the right course; acting unjustly, wrongfully or tyrannically’ and it is mentioned twice in the *Qur'ān* in this sense.¹⁴² As discussed previously¹⁴³, the word *al-qist* can be considered from *al-alfāz al-mushtarakah* (polysemic words). Therefore, this word also seems paradoxical in nature as it can either mean to be just or, in complete contrast, to deviate from the right path. In relation to this connotation of *al-qasit*, it is worth supporting this meaning with the *ḥadīth* in which Abu Ayyub al-Ansari said “Prophet of Allah has ordered Ali to fight against disloyal, deviators (*al-Qāsītīn*) and apostates”¹⁴⁴. It is obvious that *al-qāsītūn* in this *ḥadīth* refers to declining or deviating from the right path with the implication of tyrannizing over society.

Al-qist alludes to means of substance, or the portion thereof, which is the share of every created being. With regards to this meaning, it is worth mentioning the *ḥadīth*

¹³⁷ *Qur'ān* (10:4)

¹³⁸ *Qur'ān* (55:9)

¹³⁹ *Qur'ān* (11:85), See also; al-Iṣfahānī; see also; Mahmud ibn Umar Zamakhshari, *Asas Al-Balaghah [the Foundation of Rhetoric]*, ed. Mazyad Isma'il Na'im and Shawqi Ma'arri (Bayrut: Maktabat Lubnan, 1998); see also: Ibn Manzūr; see also: Lane and Lane-Poole, 2011; see also: Muhammad ibn Ya'qub Firuzabadi, "Al-Qamus Al-Muhit [the Surrounding Ocean] [Website]," <http://baheth.info/index.jsp?page=/web/includes/start.jsp>.

¹⁴⁰ The *Qur'ān* (21:47)

¹⁴¹ The *Qur'ān* (17:35)

¹⁴² The *Qur'ān* (72:14-15)

¹⁴³ There is the same apparent paradox as with the root '*a-d-l*. Please see p.12

¹⁴⁴ Please see: Muhammad ibn Abd Allah Hakim al-Nisaburi, *Al-Mustadrak 'Al- Al-Sahihayn*, ed. Mustaf. Abd al-Qadir Ata, 4 vols. (Bayrut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2002)., Book of information about companions:4729.

in which Prophet Muhammad says of Allah that “He drops the portion and makes much (*yakhfidul al-qisṭa wa yarfa'auhu*)”¹⁴⁵ and this has been explained as God making the portion of the means of substance, which is the share of any created being little, and makes it much

The verb *aqsata* refers to delivering something or conveying something as in the following verse:

Allah does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you on account of (your) religion, and have not driven you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and dispense (convey) justice (*watuq'sitū*); surely Allah loves the doers of justice¹⁴⁶

Having interpreted this verse in his *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, al-Suyuti states that *tuqsitu* bears the meaning of *afda* which means to deliver and to convey something.

Al-muqsiṭ is the active participle derived from verb *aqsata* meaning to act equitably or justly and it is mentioned in the Qur'ān: “Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly (*al-muq'siṭīna*)”¹⁴⁷.

Al-qist indicates a unit with which corn is measured and it is equal to half a *saa* (cubic dry measure).

Al-qasat is a dryness found in someone's head, foot or knee.

As was seen in the discussion of the literal meaning of *qist*, which appears in different forms and sometimes contrasting implications, the opinions of Arabic lexicologists fall into two broad categories: (a) According to Isfahani, *alqistu* (if it comes with “i”) is a prescribed share with justice that is *nasafa-t* which connotes to divide equitably and be just, whereas *al-qastu* (if it comes with “a”) denotes to take another's share unfairly and to deviate from the right path. He supports both meanings by citing verses from the Qur'an. For the former, he supports his opinions with a verse which states that resurrection will surely come and is promised. There is a strong emphasis that God began the process of creation and repeats it in order to reward with justice to

¹⁴⁵ Please see No-256 'The Book of Faith' in Muhammad Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Bayrut: Dar Al-Fikr (1981).

¹⁴⁶ The Qur'ān (49:9)

¹⁴⁷ Qur'ān (49:9)

those who believe and work righteousness.¹⁴⁸ For the latter, he substantiates his view by mentioning the word *al-qāsiṭūna* (unjust people) quoting from *al-surat al-jin*. (Qur’an 72: 14, 15)¹⁴⁹. (b) According to al-Tabarsi, the lexical meaning of *al-qist* implies inclination (*al-mayl*). He asserts that if this inclination is towards Allah, then it becomes justice and fairness as stated in the Qur’an: “Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly (*al-muq’siṭīna*)”. If this inclination shows tendency towards void and false things, it becomes injustice and tyranny (*al-jawr*) as in “But as for the unjust (*al-qasitun*), they will be, for Hell, firewood.”¹⁵⁰

1.5.2 Al-Qiṣṭ as a synonym of al-‘Adl

The semantic field of *al-‘adl* (justice) can be clearly seen in Figure 1 above. The negative concepts of *al-‘adl* have been eliminated intentionally from the diagram in order to simplify it for the reader.

The concepts of *al-‘adl* and *al-qist* in concurrence with *al-mizan* can be accepted as cornerstones in the formation of Qur’anic justice. It may be easy to understand the link between *al-‘adl* and *al-qist* without examining their relational meanings and conceptual analysis in the Qur’an, if they are taken as synonyms of each other in the sense of justice. It can be seen that the majority of scholars have agreed on the synonymity of *al-‘adl* and *al-qist* in the literature, although there are some who have conducted extensive research to find the subtle nuances which distinguish the two terms in contextual analysis. For example, Turner emphasizes that although *al-qist* does not give the same nuances of meaning as *al-‘adl* with regard to concepts of “balance, equilibrium and equanimity”, as an alternative, *al-qist* comes to mean justice and fairness on a societal level rather than on a creational level.¹⁵¹ His findings would have been much more interesting if he had supported his ideas with some verses from the Qur’an. For example, in some verses, it is impossible to interpret the verb *adala* as *al-qist*, for instance, in *al-Surat al-Infītar*, we read:

¹⁴⁸ The Qur’ān (10:04

¹⁴⁹ See: al-Isfahānī, 404.

¹⁵⁰ al-Fadl ibn al-Hasan Tabarsi, "Majma` Al-Bayan Li`Ulum Al-Quran [Collection of Statement for Quranic Sciences] [Online Text]," Dar al-Taqrīb Bayna al-Madhahib al-Islamiyah, <http://www.holyquran.net/tafseer/majma/index.html>.

¹⁵¹ C Turner, "Bediuzzaman and the Concept Of adl: Towards a Nursian Ontology of Divine Justice," *Asian Journal of Social Science* (2010): 560.

O man! What has seduced thee from thy Lord Most Beneficent? Who created thee, then fashioned, then proportioned (fa adalaka) thee? In whatever Form He wills, does He put thee together.

In above verses, *al-‘adl* was used in connection with creation of man and refers to, as Turner says, “setting aright or fashioning harmoniously”¹⁵². On the other hand, *al-qist* would not imply the same meaning if it was used instead of *al-‘adl* in this verse with regards to this context. Therefore, this verse can be given as an example to understand the different nuances of meaning between *al-qist* and *al-‘adl*.

Additionally, in *al-Surat an-Nisa* in which Allah says that: “O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives,”¹⁵³ Ali Bulac examines the meaning of *al-qist* in this verse in terms of social situation, in particular financial transactions, and he asserts that this verse enjoins the believers to maintain high moral conduct in their commercial and social dealings such as in giving witness and testimony.¹⁵⁴ He further juxtaposes the phrase “be persistently standing firm in justice” with the words from surat al-Nisā “And those who are in their testimonies upright” in *al-Surat al-Ma’arij*.¹⁵⁵

Interestingly, the findings of Abu ‘Udah on the differences between *al-‘adl* and *al-qist* in his book of *al-Tatawwur al-dalali bayna lughat al-shi`r al-jahili wa-lughat al-Qur’an al-karim: dirasah dalaliyah muqaranah*, are more comprehensive than those of Turner and Bulac. Abu Udah analyzed the different meanings of the two terms in the verses of the Qur’an and concluded that *al-qist* is more specific than *al-‘adl*.¹⁵⁶ He underlines that *al-qist* is mentioned in the verses of the Qur’an which deal with financial affairs and matters of orphans with regard to measure (*al-kayl*) and scales (*al-mizan*). According to him, *al-qist* is described as meaning justice and fairness in social and economical life. Moreover, he explains that observing fairness and justice in treaties and agreements among the people, and in matters of debts is implied by *al-qist* in the *Qur’an*. For instance, he uses the the following verses in order to support his ideas:

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ *Quran*. (4:135)

¹⁵⁴ Ali Bulaç, "Adalet Uzerine [on Justice]," *Kopru*, no. 92 (2005).

¹⁵⁵ The *Qur’ān* (4:135 and 70:33)

¹⁵⁶ Abu `Udah.

If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice.¹⁵⁷

Disdain not to reduce to writing (your contract) for a future period, whether it be small or big: it is juster in the sight of Allah, More suitable as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves but if it be a transaction which ye carry out on the spot among yourselves, there is no blame on you if ye reduce it not to writing.¹⁵⁸

Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.¹⁵⁹

And give full measure and weight in justice.¹⁶⁰

And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance.¹⁶¹

Furthermore, Abu 'Udah gives an explanation that the term *al-'adl* is more comprehensive than *al-qist*, it connotes observing truthfulness in judgment and opinions.¹⁶² In addition to this, he points out that, *al-'adl* is used as a quality of truthfulness of opinion and an attribute for a just judge, thus, *al-'adl* includes *al-qist* in its meaning.¹⁶³ However, Abu 'Udah's interpretation of *al-'adl* and *al-qist* in verse 9 of *al-Surat-al-Hujurat*, in which he claims that the two terms are not synonyms, contradicts his previous opinions.¹⁶⁴

According to *Abu-Hilāl al-'Askari*, *al-qist* implies fairness and justice which is apparent and explicit, therefore weighing scales were associated with *al-qist* thus

¹⁵⁷ *Quran*. 4:3

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* (2:282)

¹⁵⁹ *ibid.* (60:8)

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* (6:152)

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.* (55:9)

¹⁶² Uдах Khalil Abu 'Udah, *Al-Tatawwur Al-Dalali Bayna Lughat Al-Shi'r Al-Jahili Wa-Lughat Al-Qurān Al-Karim : Dirasah Dalaliyah Muqaranah* (al-Zarqa, al-Urdun: Maktabat al-Munar, 1985), 378.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ It is interesting to note here that Abu 'Udah commenting on verse 9 in *al-Surat al-Hujurat* in which we read "And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until they return to the ordinance of Allah. And if they return, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly", he claims that the two terms are not synonyms as the order is to make settlement (*yuslihu*) with justice. According to him, the meaning of this verse is that truthfulness in judgment has to be observed between two groups. Therefore, it cannot be accepted that there is apparent evidence in the verse to prove that *al-'adl* and *al-qist* are synonyms. Please see: *ibid.*, 378.

reminding that there is justice in weighing, whereas *al-'adl* suggests fairness which is hidden or obscure.¹⁶⁵

It can be seen from the above-mentioned discussions that there are similarities between the interpretations expressed by Turner and those described by Bulac and 'Udah. It can also be understood that there is no consensus between the scholars in terms of the meanings of *al-qist* and *al-'adl*. Both terms are used to refer to justice by many scholars, although they have different implications. Hence, it could conceivably be noted from the above discussions that *al-'adl* can be accepted as more comprehensive in a sense than *al-qist*, whereas it can be seen as specific and concerned with social and economical life in the *Qur'anic* context. Furthermore, it can be perceived that *al-'adl* appears in the majority of verses in the *Qur'an* with regard to true judgment. For example, in *al-Surat al-Nahl*, we read "Indeed, Allah orders justice (*al-'adl*) and good conduct and giving to relatives", as it can be perceived that Allah orders justice and fairness in our judgment and decisions within the context of this verse.

The discussion would have been more useful if *al-'adl* and *al-qist* were analysed according to their grammatical point of reference¹⁶⁶ and context as well as emotive meanings, particularly with regard to Allah and the hereafter. Table 2¹⁶⁷ and Table 3¹⁶⁸ illustrate the derivatives, concerned area and contextual analysis of *al-'adl* and *al-qist*. For example, *al-'adl* is used thirteen times in relation to Muslims and believers, whereas *al-qist* appears twice in relation to Muslims in the *Qur'an*. On the other hand, Allah makes mention of *al-'adl* four times with regard to non-muslims, whereas *al-qist* comes three times with regard to the other groups such as people of *al-Shuaib* and people who enjoin justice among the people in the *Qur'an*. In addition to this, it can be seen that Allah speaks of *al-'adl* twice in respect of the *Qur'an* and fasting (*al-sawm*), whereas *al-qist* is found twice with regard to *jinnis* (jinn). Moreover, *al-'adl* comes only once with regard to Prophet Muhammad where he was commended to do

¹⁶⁵ al-Hasan Ibn-Abdallah Abu-Hilal al-`Askari and Husam-ad-Din al Qudsi, *Mu'jam Al-Furūq Al-Lughawiya [Glossary of Linguistic Differences]* (Bairut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiya, 1981).

¹⁶⁶ The grammatical point of reference can be broadly defined as *isnad* in the Arabic language. *Isnād* is used to indicate the grammatical parts of a sentence such as subject and predicator

¹⁶⁷ Please see p, 26.

¹⁶⁸ Please see p, 27.

justice between people. An interesting observation to emerge from the data comparison between Table 1 and Table 2 was that the name of Allah or hidden antecedent of the pronoun that refers to Allah is collocated eighteen times with *al-qist* with regard to the relation between man and Allah, whereas *al-'adl* is found to exist seven times with Allah in the *Qur'an*. Thus, relations between God-man and man-man may be visualized as in following figure.

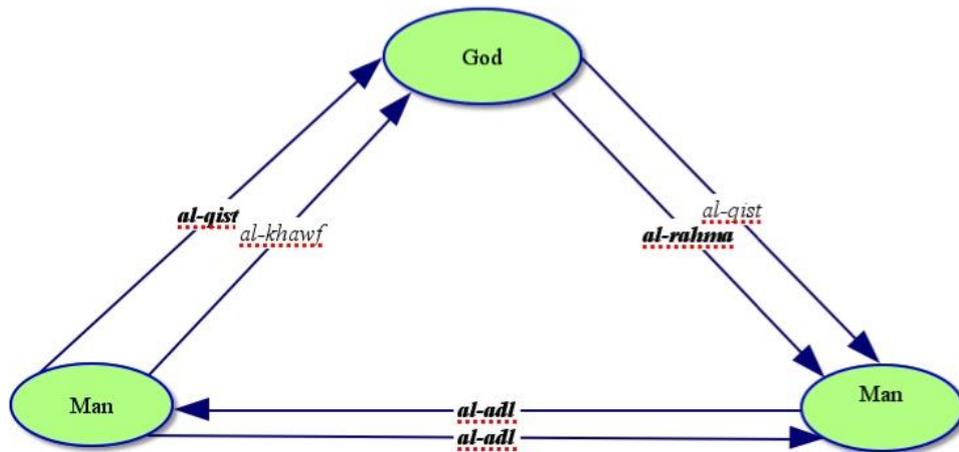


Figure 3: Relation between God and man with regard to *al-qist* and *al-'adl*

The Figure 3 above shows that the behaviour of Muslims towards Allah should be based on *al-qist* with fear of God (*al-khawf*) and sincerity (*al-ikhlas*). For instance, in *al-surah al-'Araf*, Allah addresses Prophet Muhammad with: “Say: "My Lord hath commanded justice (*al-qist*); and that ye set your whole selves (to Him) at every time and place of prayer, and call upon Him, making your devotion sincere (*mukh'liṣīna lahu*) as in His sight: such as He created you in the beginning, so shall ye return”¹⁶⁹. In the above verse, it can be perceived that *al-qist* comes side by side with the active participle *mukh'liṣīna* (being sincere) and implies fairness towards Allah with sincerity. In addition to this, the use of the prefixed preposition *lām* (*al-takhsis*), which connotes designation and specification in Arabic grammar, indicates that *al-qist* has to be towards Allah only. Moreover, in the following verses we read that:

¹⁶⁹ *Quran*. (7:29)

That is more just (aqṣatu) in the sight of Allah. ¹⁷⁰

Call them by [the names of] their fathers; it is more just (aqṣatu) in the sight of Allah. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful. ¹⁷¹

Allah (Himself) is Witness that there is no Allah save Him. And the angels and the men of learning (too are witness). Maintaining His creation in justice, there is no Allah save Him the Almighty, the Wise. ¹⁷²

O you who believe! be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness of Allah's sake. ¹⁷³

Thus it can be seen in the above verses that *al-qist* often appears with Allah within the context of relations between man and God in vertical form. That is to say from man to God. Furthermore, we see Allah ordering justice and stating:

Act justly (wa-aqṣitū). Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly (muq'siṭīna) ¹⁷⁴

And if you judge, judge between them with justice (bil-qis'ṭi). Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly (muq'siṭīna). ¹⁷⁵

Allah does not forbid you from - acting justly (watuq'siṭū) toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly (muq'siṭīna). ¹⁷⁶

In the above-mentioned verses, *al-qist* is used with Allah, but the most important point of this verse is that Allah likes *muqsitin* (active participle of the root *q-s-t*) people rather than *'adilin* (active participle of the root *a-d-l*).

Interestingly, that neither *al-'adl* nor *al-qist* has ever been used to refer to the attribute of Allah as Just in the *Qur'an*. Moreover, it can be seen that Prophet Muhammad reported some *hadiths* where he enumerates *al-muqsit* (active participle of *q-s-t*) ¹⁷⁷ as one of the ninety-nine Names of Allah, whereas *al-'adil* does not appear as an active

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. (2:282)

¹⁷¹ Ibid. (33:5)

¹⁷² Ibid. (3:18)

¹⁷³ Ibid. (4:135)

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. (49:9)

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. (5:42)

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. (60:8)

¹⁷⁷ Please see for the 'al-Muqsit', 2439 in "Book of Sacrifice", in Muhammad ibn Isa Tirmidhi, *Sunan Al-Tirmidhi* (al-Madinah: al-Maktabah al-Salafiyah, 1965); and see 3843 in 'Book of Supplication', in Muhammad ibn Yazid Ibn Majah, *Sunan Ibn Majah* (al-Qahirah: Dar al-Hadith, 1998).

participle of the root *a-d-l*, but is mentioned as *al-ʿadl* (in *maṣdar* form nominal verb)¹⁷⁸ in relation to the names of Allah only once. Additionally, in *Al-Jawshan Al-Kabīr*, we hear Prophet Muhammad praying to Allah as “O ye The Just of Justs (*Yā aʿadala al-ʿādilīn*)” and “O ye Just (*Yā ʿādil* active participle of the root *a-d-l*)”.¹⁷⁹

Taken together, these results suggest that *al-qist* can be considered an ethical term, used to focus on relations between Allah and man; on the other hand, *al-ʿadl* appears to be a legal term, which alludes to relations between man and his fellow man.

Table 2: Derivations of *al-ʿAdl* in the *Qurʿān*

| Verse | Derivation | Form | Concern | Context |
|-------|------------------|------|-------------|--|
| 4:3 | <i>taʿdilū</i> | Verb | muslims | Family relations |
| 4:129 | <i>taʿdilū</i> | Verb | muslims | Family relations |
| 4:135 | <i>taʿdilū</i> | verb | Believers | Testimony |
| 5:8 | <i>taʿdilū</i> | verb | Believers | Relations with non-muslim, Justice is always necessary |
| 5:8 | <i>iʿdilū</i> | Verb | Believers | Relations with non-muslim, justice is always necessary |
| 6:1 | <i>yaʿdilūna</i> | Verb | Polytheists | Creation of earth and skies |
| 6:70 | <i>taʿdil</i> | Verb | Non-Muslim | The prohibition of sitting with those who deny and mock Allah's verses |
| 6:150 | <i>yaʿdilūn</i> | Verb | Polytheists | Prohibition of unjust testimony |
| 6:152 | <i>fa-iʿdilū</i> | Verb | Muslims | Observing the rights of orphans and saying the truth in testimony |
| 7:159 | <i>yaʿdilūna</i> | Verb | People of | Description of attributes of a certain group who |

¹⁷⁸ Please see 'al-adl', 2439 in "Book of Sacrifice", in Tirmidhi.

¹⁷⁹ Please see part 22 and 88 for abovementioned names of Allah in, *Al-Jawshan Al-Kabir : A Prayer for All, a Supplication of Prophet Muhammad*, (Somerset, N.J.: The Light, 2006).

| | | | | |
|-------|--------------------|------|------------------|---|
| | | | Moses | observe justice among Jews |
| 7:181 | <i>ya 'dilūna</i> | Verb | Muslims | Description of the attributes of Muslim Community |
| 27:60 | <i>ya 'dilūna</i> | Verb | Polytheists | Creation of earth and skies and refuting polytheism |
| 42:15 | <i>li-a 'dila</i> | verb | Prophet Muhammad | Observing fairness and justice in judgment |
| 82:7 | <i>fa 'adalaka</i> | verb | Allah | Creating of mankind in a balanced and proportioned way or in the best possible way |
| 2:48 | <i>'adlun</i> | Noun | Allah | Warning the people that everybody is responsible for their actions in the hereafter |
| 2:123 | <i>'adlun</i> | Noun | Allah | Warning the people that everybody is responsible for their actions in the hereafter |
| 2:282 | <i>bil- 'adli</i> | Noun | Believers | Writing down text of contracts. Social affairs and debts. |
| 2:282 | <i>bil- 'adli</i> | Noun | Believers | Writing down text of contracts. Social affairs and debts. |
| 4:58 | <i>bil- 'adli</i> | Noun | Muslims | Commanding the Muslims to give deposits back and to judge between people with justice |
| 5:95 | <i>'adlin</i> | Noun | Muslims | The penalty of killing game in the Sacred Area or in the state of <i>ihram</i> . |
| 5:95 | <i>'adlu</i> | Noun | Fasting | The penalty of killing game in the Sacred Area or in the state of <i>ihram</i> . |
| 5:106 | <i>'adlin</i> | Noun | Muslims | Testimony of two just witnesses for the final will and testament |
| 6:70 | <i>'adlin</i> | Noun | Allah | The prohibition of sitting with those who deny |

| | | | | |
|-------|------------------|------|--------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | and mock Allah's verses |
| 6:115 | <i>wa 'adlan</i> | Noun | Qur'ān | Description of Word of Allah |
| 16:76 | <i>bil-'adli</i> | Noun | Allah | Comparison between Allah and Idols |
| 16:90 | <i>bil-'adli</i> | Noun | Allah | Observing justice and fairness |
| 49:9 | <i>bil-'adli</i> | Noun | Allah | Dispute settlement between two groups |

Table 3: Derivations of al-Qisṭ in the Qur'ān

| | | | | |
|-------|-------------------|------|--------------------------|---|
| 2:282 | <i>aqsatu</i> | Noun | Allah | Writing down text of contracts. Social affairs and debts. |
| 3:18 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | In this ayat, <i>qisṭ</i> refers to justice and equilibrium. |
| 3:21 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | People who enjoin equity | Description of non-muslims |
| 4:3 | <i>tuq'siṭū</i> | Verb | Muslims | Family relations |
| 4:127 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Muslim | The command to deal with equity and justice towards orphans in regards to inheritance and dowry |
| 4:135 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Testimony |
| 5:8 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Justice is always necessary. |
| 5:42 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Observing justice in judgment |
| 6:152 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Observing the rights of orphans and saying the truth in testimony |
| 7:29 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Allah's order to justice and keeping the sincerity in |

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------------|------------|----------------------------|--|
| | | | | relationships between Allah and human |
| 10:4 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Resurrection and retribution and reward, concerning the hereafter |
| 10:47 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Resurrection and retribution and reward, concerning the hereafter |
| 10:54 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Conditions of polytheists and non-believers in the hereafter and everything will be sorted out with fairness |
| 11:85 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | People of <i>al-Shuaib</i> | Observing justice in weighing scales |
| 21:47 | <i>l-qis'ṭa</i> | Noun | Allah | Setting up scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection |
| 17:35 | <i>bil-qis'ṭāsi</i> | Noun | Allah | Being honest and fair in weighing scales |
| 26:182 | <i>bil-qis'ṭāsi</i> | Noun | Allah | Being honest and fair in weighing scales |
| 33:5 | <i>aqsaṭu</i> | Noun | Allah | Rules of regulation for adoption and how to call the adoptee |
| 49:9 | <i>wa-aqsiṭū</i> | Verb | Allah | Dispute settlement between two groups |
| 55:9 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | Allah | Creation of universe in proportion and balance and observing fairness in scales |
| 57:25 | <i>bil-qis'ṭi</i> | Noun | People | Duties of the prophets and purpose of the book and scales |
| 60:8 | <i>watuq'siṭū</i> | Verb | Allah | Being kind and just towards the people who are unable to fight against you among non-believers |
| 72:14 | <i>l-qāsiṭūna</i> | Participle | Al-Jinn | Description of <i>al-Jinn</i> |

| | | | | |
|-------|-------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 72:15 | <i>l-qāsiṭūna</i> | Parti ciple | Al-Jinn | Description of <i>al-Jinn</i> |
|-------|-------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|

1.5.3 Al-ḥaqq, al-qist and al-‘adl and their overlapping relationships

1.5.3.1 Lexical meaning of *al-ḥaqq*

The trilateral root *ḥ-q-q* occurs 287 times in the *Qur’an*, in seven derived forms: (a) 20 times as the form I verb *ḥaqqā*; (b) four times as the form IV verb *yuhīqqā*; (c) twice as the form X verb *is’taḥaqqā* ; (d) 10 times as the nominal *aḥaqq* ; (f) 247 times as the nominal *ḥaqq*; (g) once as the noun *ḥaqqīq*; and (h) three times as the active participle *ḥāqqat* .

The basic meaning of *al-ḥuqqu*, which is derived from the root *ḥ-q-q*, is the socket into which the head of the thigh bone fits.¹⁸⁰ The lexical meaning of the verb *ḥ-q-q* is, according to Badawi and Lane, to reach maturity (of camels); centre; truth, to be sure; to verify, to give someone their dues, to deserve; calamity, affliction; to prove a point, an argument, to become just, suitable, right, applicable, fitting and deserved.¹⁸¹ Additionally, al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī notes that *ḥ-q-q* means to become suitable to the requirements of wisdom, justice, right or rightness, truth, reality of fact, or to the exigencies of the case.¹⁸²

Furthermore, in his book on the semantics of the *Qur’an*, Dāmaghānī provides eleven aspects of meaning for the term *al-ḥaqq*: (1) Allah Himself. In support of this sense, as he states that we read Allah’s description of the attributes of *mu’minūn* (‘believers’) as “Save those who believe and do good works, and exhort one another to *al-ḥaqq* (‘Allah and His unity’) and exhort one another to endurance”.¹⁸³ Thus, it can be seen that the word *al-ḥaqq* in the above verse could be understood in the meaning of Allah Himself (2) al-*Qur’an*. Allah mentions this meaning in many verses such as in *sūrat Yūnus* Allah addresses Prophet Muhammad: “If thou wert in doubt as to what We have revealed unto thee, then ask those who have been reading the Book from before thee: *al-ḥaqq* (*Qur’an*) hath indeed come to thee from thy Lord: so be in

¹⁸⁰ Ibn Manzūr; Please see also Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 224.

¹⁸¹ Lane and Lane-Poole, 2011; Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 224.

¹⁸² al-Iṣfahānī, 125.

¹⁸³ *Quran*. (103:3)

no wise of those in doubt.”¹⁸⁴ In the above verses, as Baghawī has commented, *al-ḥaqq* refers to the Qur’an in this very particular context.¹⁸⁵ It is worth noting here that Dāmaghānī’s comments on this term would be much clearer if the author had used ‘the revealed books from Allah’ instead of ‘the Qur’an’. Since, the word *al-ḥaqq* appears within the context of the revealed books from Allah in many verses of the Qur’an.¹⁸⁶ Thus, using the revealed books would broaden the meaning of the word; (3) *islām* as religion. *Dāmaghānī* exemplifies this meaning of *al-ḥaqq* by the following verse of Qur’an : “And say: “*al-ḥaqq* (Islam) has come”¹⁸⁷; (4) justice (*al-‘adl*). The use of *al-ḥaqq* in the sense of justice will be dealt later in detail; (5) monotheism (*al-tawḥīd*); (6) trueness and rightness (*al-ṣidq*) (7); more suitable or deserving or appropriate (*awlá*) (8) to be incumbent or be necessary; (9) capital (*al-mālu*); (10) certain share (*al-ḥaḥẓu*); and (11) need (*al-ḥājah*).¹⁸⁸

It seems worth noting here that *al-ḥaqq* is one of the main key words in the semantic field of *al-‘adl* in the Qur’an . *Al-ḥaqq* often appears in association with divine creative activity, an eschatological connotation, by linking it with different events such as “the Day of Judgment”, “Encounter with Allah”, “the final hour” and “a new creation” in the Qur’an.

1.5.3.2 *Al-ḥaqq* as *al-‘adl* between man and fellow man

The concept of *al-ḥaqq* can allude to the elements of the meaning of *al-‘adl*, as in *sūrat al-Nūr*, “On that Day Allah will pay them back (all) their just dues (*al-ḥaqq*), and they will realise that Allah is the (very) Truth (*al-ḥaqq*), that makes all things manifest”.¹⁸⁹ In the above verse, the concept of *al-ḥaqq* is mentioned twice. The former seems to allude to the meaning of justice or rather what ‘is due’, and the latter is mentioned to refer to ‘truth’ as an attribute of Allah.

This aspect of *al-ḥaqq* is also put forward in *sūrat al-‘A`rāf* , where we hear the people of *Shu‘aib* beseech Allah: “Our Lord! decide between us and our people with

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. (10:94)

¹⁸⁵ Please see commentary of Quran (10:94) , in al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas‘ūd Baghawī, *Ma‘Ālim Al-Tanzīl* (al-Shāriqah: al-Muntadā al-Islāmī, 2007).

¹⁸⁶ Please see following verse in *Quran*. (10:76)

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. (17:81)

¹⁸⁸ Dāmaghānī, 188-90.

¹⁸⁹ The Qur’ān (24:25)

justice (*al-ḥaqq*); and Thou art the best of deciders”.¹⁹⁰ In the preceding verse, the *Qur’ān* 7:87 Prophet Shuaib advises his people to be patient until Allah judges between them and his people are reminded that Allah is the best of Judges.¹⁹¹ In the ethico-religious discourse of *Qur’an*, *al-ḥaqq* may refer to *al-‘adl* when it is used in connection with rules of conduct regulating ethical relations among individuals within the society. The *mufassir* Ṭabari, paraphrases *al-ḥaqq* in his commentary on the *Qur’ān* 7:89, with ‘decision which is just and without oppression and injustice’.¹⁹²

On the other hand, in *Ethico-religious concepts in the Qur’ān*, Izutsu proposes value of synonyms as a method to investigate the semantic category of terms in the *Qur’an*.¹⁹³ Therefore, it is possible to argue that the word *al-‘adl* in verse 4:58 can be substituted for the word *al-ḥaqq* in verse 7:89 to illustrate the synonymity of two terms albeit they appears in a different context.

Furthermore, similar wording may be seen in other verses in relation to this aspect of the meaning of *al-ḥaqq*, for example in *sūrah al-Zumar* and *sūrat Yūnus* as follows:

And the Earth will shine with the Glory of its Lord: the Record (of Deeds) will be placed (open); the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward and a just decision (*bil-ḥaqq*) pronounced between them; and they will not be wronged (in the least).¹⁹⁴

Every soul that hath sinned, if it possessed all that is on earth, would fain give it in ransom: They would declare (their) repentance when they see the penalty: but the judgment between them will be with justice (*bil-qist*), and no wrong will be done unto them.¹⁹⁵

From the comparison of above verses it might be perceived that word *al-ḥaqq* in the former verse can be replaced in the latter with *al-qist* without any essential change of meaning. It is interesting to note that the word *al-ḥaqq* often appears, as in the above-mentioned verses, in conjunction with the eschatological dimension of resurrection and the hereafter with regard to relations between man and his fellow man.

¹⁹⁰ The *Qur’ān* (7:89)

¹⁹¹ The *Qur’ān* (7:87)

¹⁹² Please see the commentary of verse 7:89, in Nizām al-Dīn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Niṣābūrī Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ Al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr Al-Qur’ān* (Bayrut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1989).

¹⁹³ Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān* (Montreal ; Ithaca, NY: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002), 37.

¹⁹⁴ The *Qur’ān* (39:69)

¹⁹⁵ The *Qur’ān* (10:54)

Likewise, there is another example of similar phrasing in the verses in which Allah orders Prophet Muhammad and Prophet David to judge with equity and justice:

O David! We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth: so judge thou between men in truth (and justice ‘*bil-ḥaqq*’): Nor follow thou the lusts (of thy heart), for they will mislead thee from the Path of Allah: for those who wander astray from the Path of Allah, is a Penalty Grievous, for that they forget the Day of Account.¹⁹⁶

And if you judge, judge between them with justice (*bil-qist*). Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.¹⁹⁷

In the above-mentioned verses, it is possible to juxtapose *al-ḥaqq* with *al-qist* to construe the meaning of justice for both terms from the context.

Al-ḥaqq is further connected to act justly (*‘adala*) and to guide (*hadā*), and a description of righteous people is given by Allah:

And among the folk of Moses there have been people who would guide (*yahdūna*) [others] in the way of the truth (*bil ḥaqq*) and act justly (*ya‘dilūna*) in its light.¹⁹⁸

According to Muhammad Asad, the people of Moses are like those mentioned in the *Qur’ān* 113-115. The same relation between *al-ḥaqq* and *al-‘adl* is also put into a framework of ethico-religious and social discourses with identical wording as in the *Qur’ān* (7:181):

Now, among those whom We have created there are people who guide [others] in the way of the truth (*al-ḥaqq*) [or with justice] and act justly (*ya‘dilūna*) in its light”¹⁹⁹

With regard to “are people who guide [others] in the way of the truth (*al-ḥaqq*) and act justly (*ya‘dilūna*) in its light”, as quoted from Al-Qāsim in *Jāmi’ Al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr Al-Qur’ān*, Prophet Muhammad states that those people are his followers and he further clarifies with: “They take and give [something] and judge [on something only] with truth (*bil ḥaqq*)”²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁶ The *Qur’ān* (38:26)

¹⁹⁷ The *Qur’ān* (5:42)

¹⁹⁸ The *Qur’ān* (7:159)

¹⁹⁹ The *Qur’ān* (7:181)

²⁰⁰ Please see Ṭabarī’s comments on *Quran* 7:181 in Ṭabarī.

In addition to this, Al-Rāzī in his *tafsīr*, quoted by Al-Zujjāj, notes that sentence ‘*wa bihi ya ‘dilūna*’ alludes to the Judge who act justly with truth, and he further explains that Just Judge means whoever judges with truth and acts justly. Moreover, he juxtaposes this verse with the sentence ‘when you voice an opinion, be just (*fa ‘dilū*)’ from a verse in *sūrah al- ‘An ‘ām*.²⁰¹

Taken together, above discussions on the verses and their wording, particularly Qur’ān 7:159; 181, it can be said that *al-ḥaqq* might be more comprehensive than *al-qist* and *al- ‘adl*. Since, *al- ‘adl* and *al-qist* might not be ensured without *al-ḥaqq* in the Qur’an.

It is worth noting here that both terms are mentioned with regard to making decisions with justice concerning worldly affairs. Thus, it can be perceived that *al-ḥaqq* may refer both to the worldly and in the eschatological sense.

It is highly important to remark in this connection that the Qur’an employs the word *al-ḥaqq* as a defined noun (*ma ‘rifah*) when it is used to refer to the meaning of justice between man and his fellow man and as an attribute of Allah. Whereas *ḥaqqun* which is an undefined noun (*nakirah*) is used to allude to ‘prescribed portion’ and ‘obligation’ and ‘with due’ in the Qur’an.

1.5.3.3 *Ḥaqq* as an undefined noun and its meanings in relation to *al- ‘adl*

Taking account of morphological template (*wazn*, *sīgha* or *binya*) and the notions associated with it, other meanings of *Ḥaqq* can best be treated in four interconnected groupings:

(a) recognized share, claim, right, privilege and justification as in the Qur’ān (70:24, 51:19, 30:38, 17:29, 6:141, 5:116, 22:40, 4:155, 3:21;112;181). For example, Allah orders the believers to give their relatives their prescribed portion as mentioned in the verse: “And render to the kindred their due rights (*ḥaqqahu*), as (also) to those in want”,²⁰²

²⁰¹ Please see for the comments on Q. 7:159: in al-Rāzī 3.

²⁰² For detailed examples of this meaning, *Quran*. (17:26); please see also: Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 224-26.

(b) ‘obligation’ and ‘as a duty incumbent upon’ as in the *Qur’ān* (30:47, 10:103, 2:241;236;180). Elements of this meaning can be seen in the verse below: “It is incumbent (*ḥaqqan*) upon Us to save believers.”²⁰³ In addition to this, it seems that the same meaning can be perceived from another verse, with identical wording: “To help believers is ever incumbent (*ḥaqqan*) upon Us”²⁰⁴ In the reading of *al-Kashshāf* and *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl*, sentence of *ḥaqqan* in the *Qur’ān* (10:103) and the *Qur’ān* (30:47) is parenthetic clause with hidden verb (*al-fi’il al-muqaddar*).²⁰⁵ Therefore, as Baydāwī and Zamakhsharī claim, the word *ḥaqqan* may refer ‘to be incumbent upon Allah’. On the other hand, according to Al-Qādī ‘Abd al-Jabbār, ‘*ḥaqqan ‘alaynā*’ refers obligation with regard to Allah.²⁰⁶ However, as al-Rāzī claims, it is not right because of they have deserved (*al-istiḥqāq*) for it, but it is a right due to the promise and the judgment. Since human being does not have right to claims anything from Allah.²⁰⁷ Thus, it can be said that the the meaning of word *ḥaqq* is interconnected and overlapped with *al-‘adl*;

(c) ‘truly’ and ‘as it should be’ as in the *Qur’ān* (8:4;74, 4:151, 2:121, 3:102, 6:91, 39:67, 22:73;78). These aspects of the meaning of *ḥaqq* can be illustrated briefly by the following two verses: “it is they, they who are truly (*ḥaqqan*) believers” and “O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared (*ḥaqqā tuqātihi*)”. In the first verse, as Asad suggests, the word *ḥaqq* is used as an adjective which alludes the attribute of the believers (*al-mu’minūn*). Interestingly, the word *ḥaqq* is used with regard to deniers (*al-kāfirūn*) with identical wording in the *Qur’ān* (4:151). Moreover, Zamakhsharī paraphrases this *ḥaqqan* as “They are perfect in denial (*al-kufr*)”²⁰⁸. With regard to the interpretation of *ḥaqqan* in the *Qur’ān* (8:3), al-Rāzī agrees with Zamakhsharī. However, he also evaluates it from different points of view. According to him, *ḥaqqan* is added to the sentence ‘*lahum darajātun ‘inda rabbihim*’ which literally means: “they have deserved to secure position of great dignity in their

²⁰³ Quran. (10:103)

²⁰⁴ Ibid. (30:47)

²⁰⁵ Please see: Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar Baydāwī, *Tafsīr Al-Baydāwī Al-Musamm'a Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa-Asrār Al-Ta’wīl*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Bayrut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1999), 448; please see also: Zamakhsharī, 1.

²⁰⁶ As quoted from ‘Abd al-Jabbār in, al-Rāzī 3.also available online at <<http://www.altafsir.com/Tafasir.asp?tMadhNo=0&tTafsirNo=4&tSoraNo=10&tAyahNo=103&tDisplay=yes&UserProfile=0&LanguageId=1>> accessed on 29 october, 2011

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Zamakhsharī, 1.

Sustainer's sight"²⁰⁹. In the second verse, it can be seen that the word *ḥaqqan* means 'as it should be' and 'due to Him';

(d) 'true'. This meaning of *ḥaqq* often appears in conjunction with 'Promise of Allah' in the verses where eschatological reward and punishment are discussed such as in the *sūrat al-Nisā* of the *Qur'ān*:

Yet those who attain to faith and do righteous deeds We shall bring into gardens through which running waters flow, therein to abide beyond the count of time: this is, in truth (*ḥaqqan*), God's promise - and whose word could be truer than God's?²¹⁰

Moreover, an interconnected and overlapping relation between the concept of *ḥaqqan*, punishment, and *al-qist* (justice) has been stated in *sūrat Yūnūs*:

Unto Him you all must return: this is, in truth (*ḥaqqan*), God's promise - for, behold, He creates [man] in the first instance, and then brings him forth anew to the end that He may reward with equity (*al-qist*) all who attain to faith and do righteous deeds; whereas for those who are bent on denying the truth there is in store a draught of burning despair and grievous suffering because of their persistent refusal to acknowledge the truth²¹¹

In addition to this, the word *ḥaqqan* is also mentioned in relation to Prophet Muhammad and the dream of Joseph in the *Qur'ān* (3:86) and (12:100) respectively. Interestingly, the active participle *al-ḥāqqatu*, as the name of hereafter, is an eschatological concept which refers to Last Day, Day of Judgment, Day of Resurrection and Reckoning in the *Qur'ān*. However, Zamakhsharī and al-Rāzī understand it from an ontological perspective. According to them, *al-ḥāqqatu* alludes to the day in which the real essence of everything will be known.²¹² It can therefore be assumed, taking account of above discussions, that the word *ḥaqq* is closely linked to the notion of *al-'adl* in this world and eschatological reward and punishment in the Day of Judgment and Reckoning.

1.5.3.4 *Al-ḥaqq* as *asmā' al-ḥusnā*

The verbal noun *al-ḥaqq* is mentioned, to indicate explicitly one of the divine names of Allah in the *Qur'ān*. The meaning of the term seems obvious at first glance.

²⁰⁹ Please see the interpretation of verse 3 in *surat al-'Anfāl*: al-Rāzī 3.

²¹⁰ The *Qur'ān* (4:122)

²¹¹ The *Qur'ān* (10:4)

²¹² Zamakhsharī, 1; and see also: al-Rāzī 3.

However, closer examination in conjunction with eschatological concepts such ‘the Hour’, ‘punishment and reward in the hereafter’ and ‘the Day’ reveals overlapping connections with the divine Name *al-‘adl* (The Just). For example: The Qur’an speaks of attributes of Allah as follows: “This is so, because Allah is the Reality (*al-ḥaqq*) it is He Who gives life to the dead, and it is He Who has power over all things”.²¹³ Then, Allah speaks of resurrection saying “The Hour is coming” (*al-sā‘ata ātiyatun*).²¹⁴ Al-Rāzī in his *tafsīr*, on the other hand, claims that the sentence “the (only) protection comes from Allah, the True One (*al-walāyatu lillahil ḥaqq*)” alludes to eschatological connotations.²¹⁵ Furthermore, the concept of *al-ḥaqq* as a divine name of Allah is again connected to the concept of eschatological reward and punishment and the Judgment day in the Qur’an:

On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions. On that Day Allah will pay them back (all) their just dues (*al-ḥaqq*), and they will realise that Allah is the (very) Truth (*al-Ḥaqq*), that makes all things manifest.

This meaning of *al-ḥaqq* is also put forward in the Qur’an (22:59-62). In the ethico-religious discourse of the Qur’an, *al-ḥaqq* here alludes to the divine names Just and Ultimate Reality in connection with eschatological punishment and reward. Juxtaposing the sentence “And if one has retaliated to no greater extent than the injury he received, and is again set upon inordinately, Allah will help him”²¹⁶ with “That is because Allah is the Truth [Just] (*al-ḥaqq*)”²¹⁷ in the Qur’an suggests that the best meaning for *al-ḥaqq* is Just in this context.

On the other hand, many commentators such as Al-Rāzī, Zamakhsharī and Al-Bayḍawī understand *al-Ḥaqq* as the ontological essence of Allah.²¹⁸ For example, Al-Rāzī prefers to evaluate *al-ḥaqq* in the Qur’an (22:62) in connection with affairs mentioned in the Qur’an (22:60; 61) such as Allah’s promise to help those faced with injustice and changing of day into night. Hence, Razi asks what the phrase “That is because Allah - He is the Reality (*Al-ḥaqq*)” means, and offers the reply himself,

²¹³ Qur’an (22:6)

²¹⁴ Qur’an (22:7)

²¹⁵ Please see the comments on the Qur’an (22:6) in al-Rāzī 3.

²¹⁶ Qur’an (22:60)

²¹⁷ Qur’an (22:62)

²¹⁸ Please see the comments on Q. 22:6; 62, 18:44, 24:25 in Zamakhsharī, 1; al-Rāzī 3; Bayḍawī, 1.

saying that all affairs are possible because of this attribute of Allah. Since, Allah's essence is necessary existence (*al-mawjūd al-wājib*) which cannot change or become extinct, he further goes on to explain that it is necessary that Allah fulfils his threats and promises.²¹⁹ Moreover, Zamakhsharī in his *tafsīr*, followed by Bayḍāwī, understand *al-ḥaqq* as "Steady Existence (*al-thābit al-mawjūd*)".²²⁰ In addition to this, al-Bawḍāwī interprets the phrase "Allah is Truth (*Al-Ḥaqq*)" as "Because, He is Steady (*al-thābit*) in His Essence and essence of everything will realize by His Essence".²²¹

1.5.3.5 *Al-ḥaqq* associated with 'creation of universe'

The word *al-ḥaqq* (truth) is linked with divine creative activity, in particular, the creation of the earth and skies in the Qur'ān. There are many different opinions with regard to this specific context, though the meaning most often referred to is 'truth' at first glance. However, *al-ḥaqq* seems, in this context, to be connected to *al-'adl* if it is analysed in conjunction with certain eschatological concepts and the frequent juxtaposition of *al-ḥaqq* with *khalaqa* 'to create'. Moreover, as O'Shaughnessy claims, there are the seventeen verses of Qur'ān that associate *al-ḥaqq* with creation and they can be best analyzed in two sense-groups: (a) dealing completely with the creation of the heavens and the earth and: (b) apparently finding *al-ḥaqq* with the divine creative power or God's creative command, 'Let there be'.²²²

For example, one passage in the the Qur'ān (45:22) states that Allah creates with *al-ḥaqq* "in order that each soul may find the recompense of what it has earned, and none of them be wronged". In this verse, the close connection between *al-ḥaqq* and eschatological reward and punishment are emphasised by juxtaposing of the terms, such as *tajziya* (reward or punish) and *zalama* (to do injustice). Moreover, as Al-Bayḍāwī claims, it seems that the phrase "Allah created the heavens and the earth for

²¹⁹ Please see the comments on the Qur'ān (22:60) in: Fakhr al-Din Muhammad ibn Umar Razi, *Tafsir Al-Kabir* (Ankara: Akçag, 1988).

²²⁰ Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf: 'an Ḥaqāiq Ghawāmid Al-Tanzīl Wa-'uyūn Al-Aqāwīl Fī Wujūh Al-Ta'wīl*, vol. 1 (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1986).

²²¹ Please see Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar Bayḍāwī, *Tafsīr Al-Bayḍāwī Al-Musamm'a Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa-Asrār Al-Ta'wīl*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Bayrut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1999), 83.

²²² Please see for detailed discussion on two sense groups and the verses of Qur'an in Thomas J. O'Shaughnessy, "Creation with Wisdom and with the Word in the Qur'an," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 91, no. 2 (1971): 208.

just ends”²²³ is the proof of the judgment in the preceding verse of the *Qur’ān* 45:21, where Prophet Muhammad is directed against those people who indulge in sinful deeds by the strongly polemic message in the form of question expecting a negative answer: “do they think that We place them, both in their life and their death, on an equal footing with those who have attained to faith and do righteous deeds? Bad, indeed, is their judgment”.²²⁴ However, Al-Bayḍawī understands the attribute described by *al-ḥaqq* as wisdom - the cause of divine justice; God in His wisdom acts justly and His justice in recompensing good and evil is a proof of the wisdom with which He created.²²⁵ In addition to this, this meaning would receive support from the *Qur’ān* 44:39; 40; 41. The word *al-ḥaqq* in this verse is also emphasised by juxtaposition of the Day of Judgment and eschatological reward and punishment.

Additionally, other passages in *sūrat al-Rūm* bring together creation with *al-ḥaqq* and the resurrection, Allah’s fairness, punishment and reward, and finally the Hour:

Allah has not created the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth (*al-ḥaqq*) and for a specified term. And indeed, many of the people, in [the matter of] the meeting with their Lord, are disbelievers²²⁶

It was not Allah Who wronged them (*liyazlimahum*), but they wronged (*yazlimūna*) their own souls²²⁷

It is Allah Who begins (the process of) creation; then repeats it; then shall ye be brought back to Him²²⁸

Therefore, it can be said that *al-ḥaqq* (truth) in the above verses alludes to *al-‘adl* (justice) in conjunction with eschatological concepts. Thus, in other words, the creation of the universe by Allah is a work of wisdom and justice. His justice becomes fulfilled in his requiting human beings for what their good and evil deeds have done.

It is possible to provide a simple figure to illustrate the general interconnected and overlapping relations between *al-‘adl*, *al-qist* and *al-ḥaqq*.

²²³ *Qur’ān* (45:22)

²²⁴ Please see Bayḍawī, *Tafsīr Al-Bayḍawī Al-Musamm’a Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa-Asrār Al-Ta’wīl*, 2, 389.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ *Qur’ān* (30:8)

²²⁷ *Qur’ān* (30:9)

²²⁸ *Qur’ān* (30:11)

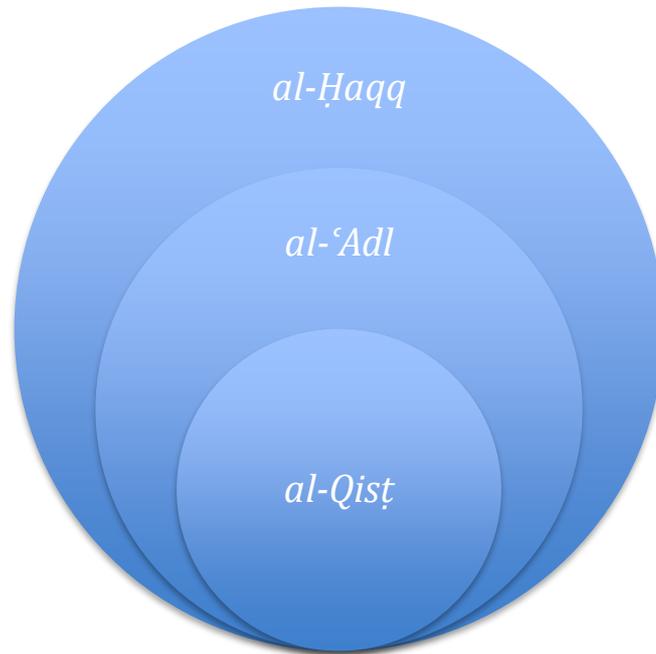


Figure 4: Overlapping relations between *al-haqq*, *al-qist*, and *al-‘adl*

Thus, it can be assumed that the concept of *al-ḥaqq* is more comprehensive than *al-qist* which is more comprehensive than *al-‘adl*. Therefore, *al-ḥaqq* may comprise *al-qist* and *al-‘adl*. On the other hand, it can be said that *al-‘adl* is maintained within scales of *al-qist* and *al-ḥaqq*.

1.5.4 Al-mīzān

1.5.4.1 Lexical meaning of *Al-mīzān*

The trilateral root *w-z-n* is mentioned 23 times in the Qur’ān, in four derived forms: (a) three times as the form I verb *wazzanu*; (b) 16 times as the noun *mīzān* (measure); (c) three times as the noun *wazn* (measure); (d) once as the passive participle *mawzūn* (balanced).

The basic meaning of the root *w-z-n*, according to Badawi, Ibn Manzūr and Jawharī, is to weigh with balanced scales and weigh out something for someone.²²⁹ The lexical

²²⁹ Please see Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 1024; and see also Ibn Manzūr; see also Ismā‘īl ibn Ḥammād Jawharī, *Al-Ṣiḥāḥ: Tāj Al-Lughah Wa-Ṣiḥāḥ Al-‘Arabīyah*, ed. Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ghafūr ‘Aṭṭār, 6 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Arabī, 1956).

meaning of *al-mīzān*, according to Ibn Manẓūr, is ‘amount’ or level and degree.²³⁰ Ibn Manẓūr substantiates his opinions with a verse of Tha‘lab’s poem:

Qad kuntu qabla liqāi ‘kum dha mirratin

*‘Indī likulli makhāšimin mīzānuhu*²³¹

The literal meaning of this verse is “I was feeling bitterness before I met you. Every adversary has [its own] degree in my presence”. In addition to this, the text of a *hadith* narrated from the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās would support this meaning, as Prophet Muḥamad said: “Be praise with Allah with amount of His throne (*vazīnati arshihī*)”.²³² Moreover, as Abū ‘Udah points out in his book on the semantics of *Qur’ān*, there are other meanings of *al-mīzān* such as ‘peer’ (*‘adīl*)²³³ and instrument for measuring weight, i.e. a balance or scale used in the real or metaphorical sense. Additionally, as al-Iṣfahānī mentions in his book, *al-mīzān* also refers to the ‘midday’.²³⁴ Furthermore, Said.S Said enumerates three different meanings of *al-mīzān* in the *Qur’ān*: (a) symbol of justice; (b) ‘a weight’ either literally or metaphorically; (c) instrument for measuring weight.²³⁵

1.5.4.2 The Semantic Range of *al-wazn*

Before discussing the cluster of notions surrounding words lexically related to *al-mīzān* itself, it seems important to understand the semantic range of ‘measurement’ in the *Qur’an*. As will be shown, the *Qur’an* employs different words to indicate scale and measure which are closely connected to the notion of *al-‘adl* in meaning. The articulation of the general idea of “measurement” in the *Qur’an*, which ranges from weighing something, be it real or metaphorical, to scales of deeds in the eschatological sense, is subsumed under words derived from seven root which are: (1) *q-d-r* (to determine); (2) *k-y-l* (to measure); (3) *dh-r-‘* (to measure) ; (4) *q-w-s* as in the *Qur’an* 53:9; (5) *th-q-l* (heaviness); (6) *‘a-r-d* (earth or deminsion) as in the

²³⁰ Please see the root w-z-n in Ibn Manẓūr.

²³¹ Please see the root w-z-n in *ibid*.

²³² Please see hadith number 4912 in Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, v vols. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmīyah, 1998). and also available as online in <http://islamweb.net/hadith/display_hbook.php?hflag=1&bk_no=158&pid=41867>

²³³ Please see: Abu ‘Udah, 381.

²³⁴ al-Iṣfahānī, 522.

²³⁵ Please see: Said S. Said 'Measurement', in Jane Dammen McAuliffe, ed. *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, 6 vols., vol. 3 (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2003), 334.

Qur’an 3:133; and (7) *kh-f-f* (to border). This chapter’s core point is to analyze the semantic field of *al-‘adl*. To this end, a lexical examination of the roots *q-d-r* and *k-y-l* is to be conducted herein.

The words derived from the root *k-y-l* occur sixteen times in the Qur’an, twice as the form I verb *kāla*, twice as the form VIII verb *iktālu*, ten times as the noun *kayl* and twice as the noun *mikyāl*. The transitive verb *kāla* is used to mean to measure out in volume as in the Qur’an 17:35: “Give full measure [*al-kayla*] when ye measure [*kiltum*]”. The form VIII verb *iktālu*, on the other hand, connotes receiving or seeking to receive in measure as in 83:2: “Those who, when they have to receive by measure [*iktālū*] from men, exact full measure”. It is clearly seen that the nomina verbi *al-kayl* is used more than other derivatives of the root *k-y-l* in the Qur’an and it refers to measuring out, selling as in the Qur’an 12:63: “when they returned to their father, they said: “O our father! No more measure [*al-kayla*] of grain shall we get”. It also means the unit of measuring, measure as in the Qur’an 12:65: “we will add (at the same time) a full camel’s load [*kayla ba‘īr*](of grain to our provisions)”. The accusative noun *mikyāl* is found twice, used to describe a measuring unit and dry measuring as in the Qur’an 11:85: “And O my people! give just measure [*al-mikyāla*] and weight [*al-mīzāna*]”.²³⁶ In relation to this root *k-y-l*, however, Al-Iṣfahānī notes that if there is special emphasis on *al-kayl*, it urges to seek the justice in measuring out and receiving measure.²³⁷ In addition to this, there is constant juxtaposition of *al-mikyāl* and *al-kayl* with *al-mīzān* and *al-qīṣṭ*. Thus, it can be said that the root *k-y-l* is found specifically connected to the idea of observing justice, not only in commercial transactions but also in dealings between man and his fellow man.

The root *q-d-r* appears more than any other root denoting a measurement. It occurs a total of 132 times in the Qur’an: (1) twenty-five times as the form I verb *qadara*; (2) sixteen times as the form II verb *qaddara*; (3) seven times as the noun *qadr*; (4) eleven times as the noun *qadar*; (5) once as the noun *quḍūr* (pot); (6) forty-five times as the nominal *qadīr*; (7) three times as the noun *miqḍār* (amount); (8) fourteen times as the active participle *qādir* (competent); (9) once as the passive participle *maqḍūr* (preordained); (10) five times as the form II verbal noun *taqḍīr* (discretion);

²³⁶ Please see: Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 828.

²³⁷ al-Iṣfahānī, 444.

and (11) four times as the form VIII active participle *muqtadir* (capable).²³⁸ The root *q-d-r* refers to a very wide cluster of meanings which cover either measures of sustenance given to all creations or order in creation of all universes. Thus, it can be said that this word means to reckon, to measure, to restrict and restrain, to be given in merge quantity, to be measured, to be destined and timing and measuring and designing.

Furthermore, Al-Iṣfahānī analyses the meaning of *q-d-r* in four fundamental categories: (a) time of something which is determined to it; (b) to tighten or restrict; (c) to comprehend the essence of something; and (d) proportion of something (*al-miqdār*). However, he seems to concentrate on the meaning of being able or having strength over something and he further focuses his discussion on the ontological essence of God as being Omnipotence.²³⁹ Moreover, Dāmaghānī provides five aspects of the meaning of the term *qadara*: (1) Greatness and power; (2) to tighten or to scant; (3) to figure and to form and to fashion; (4) to create or make; and (5) to know.²⁴⁰

The verbal form of *w-z-n* is used in the social ethics discourse in the Qur'an as in the Qur'an 17:35, 26:182, 83:3. For example, Allah orders to weigh with even balance in measurements: "Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh (*wazinū*) with a balance that is straight".²⁴¹ The same idea is expressed in another verse of Qur'an with identical wording: "Give just measure, and cause no loss (to others by fraud). And weigh (*wazinū*) with scales true and upright".²⁴² It can be seen that this verse is almost parallel in sense to the first. However, Muhammad Asad prefers to evaluate the phrase "And weigh (*wazinū*) with scales true and upright" within the context of the Qur'an 6: 152. Hence, as Asad points out, these Qur'anic orders apply not only to commercial transactions but to all dealings between man and his fellow man.²⁴³

²³⁸ Root *q-d-r* is subsumed in 11 derived forms herein. On the other hand, Badawi evaluates it in 14 derived forms adding *qādirūn* (plural form of *qādir*) and *muqtadirūn* (plural form of *muqtadir*) into another two groups respectively. Please see: Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 740.

²³⁹ Please see: al-Iṣfahānī, 394-96.

²⁴⁰ Please see: Dāmaghānī, 372.

²⁴¹ Qur'an (17:35)

²⁴² Qur'an (26:182)

²⁴³ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an* (Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1980), 423.

Interestingly, the concept of *al-wazn* is emphasised in the above verses by juxtaposing *al-qist*, *al-qistās* (scales of true) and *al-mustaqīm* (upright) which contain connotations of justice and fairness.

Therefore, it is possible to argue that the phrase “weigh with a true balance (*wazinū bil qistās al-mustaqīm*)” in the verse of the Qur’an 6:152 can be substituted for “give full measure and weight with equity (*awful kayla wal mizāna bil qisti*)” in the verse of the Qur’an 17:39 to illustrate the relational meaning of *al-mizān* with regard to *al-‘adl* and the synonymity of the two terms.

Turning now to another aspect of the root *w-z-n*, the Qur’ān employs *al-mizān* to metaphorically allude to balance and equilibrium in cosmological order. Thus, the image of *al-mizān* refers to divine measures presented in every creation. For example, in *sūrat al-rahmān*, the Qur’ān speaks of creation of the sky as follows: “And the Firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the Balance (of Justice) [*al-mizān*]”.²⁴⁴ In this verse, as Zamakhsharī claims, the concept of *al-mizān* refers to a more general implication of ‘measure’ by any means whatsoever in both the concrete and abstract senses of the word.²⁴⁵ In relation to this verse, Al-Rāzī suggests that the Qur’an 55:7 should be read in the context of the Qur’an 42:17 where Allah speaks of bestowing revelation [*al-kitāb*] and a balance [*al-mizān*] from on high for the human being to weigh right and wrong.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, Muhammad Asad clarifies this meaning by citing the verse: “through them [prophets] We bestowed revelation from on high, and [thus gave you] a balance [wherewith to weigh right and wrong], so that men might behave with equity”.²⁴⁷ Moreover, this meaning receives support from the hadīth, as reported in al-Bayḍawī in his tafsīr, in which Prophet Muhammad states that “The skies and the earth are raised up with justice [*bil ‘adl*]”.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ The Qur’ān (55:7)

²⁴⁵ Please see the comments on Q. 55:7 in Zamakhsharī, 1.

²⁴⁶ Please see the comments on 55:7 in al-Rāzī 3.

²⁴⁷ Asad, 824.

²⁴⁸ This hadīth is quoted by al-Bayḍawī in his tafsīr, see: Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar Bayḍawī, *Tafsīr Al-Bayḍawī Al-Musamm’a Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa-Asrār Al-Ta’wīl*, vol. 2 (Bayrut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 1999), 452; this hadīth also appears in This hadith is quoted by al-Bayḍawī in his tafsir. In addition to to this, this hadith also appears in Mustafa Çağrı, ‘Adālet [Justice]: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām ansiklopedisi* (Üsküdar, İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, İslām Ansiklopedisi Genel Müdürlüğü, 1988), 341–43.

Thus, if one analyses verses of the *Qur’an* 55:7, 42:17 and 57:25 taken together, it seems that there is an interconnected semantic relationship between *al-mīzān*, *al-qist* and *al-kitāb* (book).

Moreover, in relation to the creation of Earth, the *Qur’an* also employs *mawzūn*, which is the passive participle derived from the root *w-z-n*, meaning balance and proportioned:

And the earth We have spread out (like a carpet); set thereon mountains firm and immovable; and produced therein all kinds of things in due balance (*mawzūn*) (*Qur’ān* 15:19)

The above verse concerns the creation of the universe and its well-balanced maintenance.

Furthermore, the *Qur’ān* speaks of Allah’s creation of means of living in the earth and everything being sustained by Him in accordance with well-defined measure and within God’s plans in the *Qur’an* 15:20; 21. This meaning is also supported in the *Qur’an* 54:49: “Verily, all things have We created in proportion and measure”. Thus, Al-*Iṣfahānī* notes that *al-wazn* refers to *al-‘itidāl*²⁴⁹ (well-balanced) in divine creation.²⁵⁰ In addition to this, the *Qur’ān* also makes reference to the sending down of the rain “in due measure” as in the *Qur’an* 43:11, 23:18, the creation of everything “in proportion and measure” as in the *Qur’an* 54:49, and the providing of sustenance “in due measure” as in the *Qur’an* 42:27. Additionally, it is worth noting here that *al-qist* has a semantic connection with the meanings of *mawzūn* and *qadar*. In order to support this idea, the *ḥadīth* can be taken into account which speaks of Allah as the One “He makes the portion of the means of subsistence which is the share of any created being little, and makes it much [*yakhfīḍul qisṭa wa yarfa‘uhu*]”²⁵¹. According to Lane, *al-qist* refers to the way in which subsistence is given by God with due measure.²⁵² However, Ibn Manẓūr understands *al-qist* as *al-mīzān* in this *ḥadīth* and

²⁴⁹ The verbal noun ‘*al-‘itidāl*’ is also derived from the root ‘*a-d-l*’ and its meaning is well-balanced and proportioned and equilibrium.

²⁵⁰ Al-*Iṣfahānī*, 522.

²⁵¹ A. J. Wensinck, *Al-Mu‘jam Al-Mufahras Li-*Alfāz* Al-Ḥadīth Al-Nabawī : ‘an Al-Kutub Al-Sittah Wa-‘an Musnad Al-Dārimī Wa-Muwaṭṭa’ Mālik Wa-Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, 7 vols., vol. 5 (Leiden: Brill, 1936), 378.

²⁵² Lane and Lane-Poole, 2011, 2523. For detailed discussion on lexical meaning of *al-qist* please see p. 13.

he also evaluates this connection with regard to means of subsistence given to creations with balance.²⁵³

Moreover, the concept of *al-mīzān* also seems to refer to eschatological judgment in conjunction with *al-qist* and *al-ḥaqq* as in the *Qur’ān* 7:8: “The balance [*al-wazn*] that day will be true [*al-ḥaqq*] (to nicety): those whose scale (of good) will be heavy, will prosper”. This idea is supported in the *Qur’ān* 21:47:

We shall set up scales of justice [*mawāzīn al-qist*] for the Day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly [*falā tuẓlamu*] in the least, and if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed [*misqāla ḥabbatin*], We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account [*ḥāsibīn*]

In the above verse, as Zayd notes, the image of "scale" is also employed metaphorically to convey justice on the Day of Judgment.²⁵⁴ Interestingly, in the above verses, the *Qur’ān* also juxtaposes the concept *al-mīzān* with a cluster of eschatological notions such as Day of Judgment, dealing with justice, taking into account every single action carried out in this world. Thus, it can be said that there is a strong correlation between *al-mīzān* and *al-‘adl*.

Moreover, al-Rāzī interprets the concept of *al-ḥaqq* in the phrase “The balance [*al-wazn*] that day will be true [*al-ḥaqq*]” as *al-‘adl* (justice).²⁵⁵ Morphologically, however, as al-Rāzī claims²⁵⁶, two approaches could be put forward: (a) *al-wazn* is the subject of the nominal sentence and *al-ḥaqq* is its predicate. In this case, the literal translation might be “That day the scale is fair or just”; (b) the day (*yawmai ‘zin*) is the subject of the nominal sentence and *al-ḥaqq* is an adjective relating to *al-wazn* as it means ‘Just scale’.

The concept of *mīzān* also refers to the balance in the sphere of human moral actions at the holistic level. For example, as in the *Qur’ān* 42:17 Allah is the one “Who has sent down the Book in Truth, and the Balance [*al-mīzān*] (by which to weigh

²⁵³ Please see the root *q-s-ṭ* in: Ibn Manzūr.

²⁵⁴ N.H.A. Zayd, "The Qur'anic Concept of Justice," <http://them.polylog.org/3/fan-en.htm>.

²⁵⁵ Please see the comments on Q. 7:8 in al-Rāzī 3.

²⁵⁶ Please see again the comments on Q. 7:8 in *ibid*.

conduct)”. In this verse, *al-mīzān* alludes, as Ali Unal understands, to the scales by which human beings weigh their behaviours and thoughts.²⁵⁷

From the above discussion, it can thus be suggested that designations of Allah’s equilibrium and balance, can be clearly observed in both the creation of nature and in animate beings. On the other hand, in contrast to nature, human beings are also granted with the most important ability, which is freedom of choice. Therefore, by the virtue of freedom of choice, all human beings need to be guided in terms of providing justice. In order to complete this missing part in the nature of human beings, the *Qur’ān* was also sent by Allah. As the text of the *Qur’ān* 57:25 states, we sent down both book and *al-mīzān* with prophets so as to “stand forth in justice [*liyaqūma bil qistī*]”.

1.5.5 Al-Iḥsān

The verbal noun *iḥsān* (beneficence) derived from the root *ḥ-s-n* occurs twelve times as one of the key ethical terms in the *Qur’ān*. The lexical meaning of the verb *aḥsana* is, according to Badawi, to do perfectly, to make agreeable, beautiful and to make good.²⁵⁸ However, al-Iṣfahānī provides two aspects of the meaning of the term *al-iḥsān*: ‘to help somebody with something (*al-‘in ‘ām ‘alal ghayr*), and ‘to do perfectly in action (*al-iḥsān fi fi ‘lihi*).²⁵⁹ Moreover, in *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran*, Izutsu writes on the application of this word in *Qur’ānic* usage and further identifies two specific classes of goodness: (a) profound piety towards God and all human deeds that originate in it; and (b) acts motivated by the spirit of *ḥilm*.²⁶⁰

The concept of *al-iḥsān* is elaborated widely in the ethical discourse of the *Qur’ān*. For the sake of the current research, this concept will be examined in relation to *al-‘adl*. For example, in the *Qur’ān* 16:90 *al-iḥsān* is put within the framework of the semantic field of *al-‘adl*: “Allah commands justice [*‘adl*], the doing of good [*iḥsān*], and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and

²⁵⁷ Ali Unal, *The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English* (Somerset, N.J.: The Light, 2006), 1020; please see also in Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur’an* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca islamica, 1989), 67.

²⁵⁸ Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 210.

²⁵⁹ al-Iṣfahānī, 119.

²⁶⁰ Toshihiko Izutsu, *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran*, Keio University Studies in the Humanities and Social Relations (Tokyo: Keio University, 1959), 230.

rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition”.²⁶¹ In al-İşfahānī’s commentary on this verse, he notes that *al-iḥsān* is superior to *al-‘adl* and *iḥsān* more comprehensive than *al-‘adl*.²⁶²

Thus, it can be said that *iḥsān* and *‘adl* in Qur’ānic usage seem not only to be synonyms but more overlapped relations, since *al-iḥsān* contains all the elements of *al-‘adl*. However, the *Muhsins* (benevolent, active participle of *iḥsān*) are more particular than the *Muqsit̄s* (active participle of *iqsāt̄*)

1.5.6 Al-istiḳāmah and al-qawām

The root *q-w-m* has a wide range of applications in the Qur’ānic text. Here, only derivatives of this root which has a close link to the semantic field of *al-‘adl* such as *istaḳāma* (to be moderate), *al-qawāma* (curatorship) and *aqwamu* (more correct) are dealt with. The form X verb *istaḳāma*, which is derived from the root *q-w-m*²⁶³, and its active participle *mustaqīm*, ‘ occur ten and thirty two times respectively in the Qur’ān. Usually translated as to be upright, to be straight, to stand firm, the verb reveals its semantics connections with *al-‘adl* as in the Qur’ān 42:15:

Now then, for that (reason), call (them to the Faith), and stand steadfast [fastaqim] as thou art commanded, nor follow thou their vain desires; but say: "I believe in the Book which Allah has sent down; and I am commanded to judge justly [li a‘dala] between you

Interestingly, in the above verse, the verbs *istaḳāma* and *‘adala* are used side by side and morphologically; both are an imperative construction and consistently applied to Allah. In addition to this, both these verbs occur also as an antithesis of ‘following vain desires’ (*ittaba al-ahwā*) in this verse of the Qur’ān.²⁶⁴

Furthermore, in *Lisān al-‘arab*, Ibn Manẓūr elaborates two words which derives from the root verb *q-w-m* in conjunction with the semantic field of *al-‘adl*: (a) *al-istiḳāmah* refers to being balanced or moderate (*al-‘itidāl*) as in the Qur’ān “Verily those who say, "Our Lord is Allah," and remain firm [*istaḳāmū*] (on that Path),- on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve”; and (b) *al-qawāma* alludes to justice (*al-‘adl*) as in the

²⁶¹ Please see also detailed discussion on al-‘adl in relation to iḥsān p. 4

²⁶² al-İşfahānī, 119.

²⁶³ Basic meaning of root q-w-m refers to stand, to halt, to revolt, to reside, to be straight and to estimate, value and justice. Please more meanings of this word, see Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 782-87.

²⁶⁴ Please compare with constructions in Qur’ān (6:150)

Qur’ān 25:67: “Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) [*qawāman*] between those (extremes);”²⁶⁵

Moreover, other forms of the same root occurring in the Qur’ān include the adjective *al-qayyimah* which is also linked to the semantic field of *al-‘adl*. For example, the Qur’ān describes a certain group of people who were commanded to worship Allah only, to offer prayer and to give charity as the People of Book as in the Qur’ān 98:5: “That is the straight usage [*dīnul qayyimah*]. So wrong not yourselves therein [*falā tuḏlamū*]”. However, al-Iṣfahānī understands ‘*al-qayyimah*’ in the above verse as ‘the name for the nation who stands for justice and fairness’ and he further supports this meaning with the Qur’ān. 4:135: “O ye who believe! Stand out firmly [*qawwāmīn*] for justice [*bil-qisṭ*], as witnesses to Allah”.²⁶⁶

Thus, it can be said that above discussions and juxtaposition of *al-istaqāmah* with *al-‘adl* and *al-qāim* with *al-qisṭ* shows close interconnected relations between *al-istiḳāmah* and *al-‘adl*.

1.5.7 Al-wasaṭ

The next word, *al-wasaṭ* (middle), derived from the root *w-s-ṭ* occurs five times in the Qur’ān, in four derived forms: (a) once as the form I verb *wasaṭa*; (b) twice as the noun *awsaṭ*; (c) once as the adjective *wasaṭ*; and (d) once as the adjective *wus’ṭā* (middle). The basic lexical meaning of this root means ‘to move into middle’, ‘middle’, ‘centre’ and justice. However, al-Iṣfahānī, and Dāmaghānī, understand *al-wasaṭ* as *al-‘adl* (justice and justly balanced).²⁶⁷ Moreover, al-Iṣfahānī goes on to explain that *al-wasaṭ* alludes to moral attributes of a particular person who is moderate and balanced in his dealings, such as generosity (*jūd*), meaning between avarice (*bukhl*) and extravagance (*isrāf*), and he further notes that *al-wasaṭ* refers to the moral condition of someone who is protected from excess (*ifrāt*) and negligence (*tafrīt*).²⁶⁸

Al-wasat which is used in the context of moral virtue of a certain nation or people, is emphasised as the middle or middle way in the Qur’ān 2:143: “Thus, have We made

²⁶⁵ Please see the root q-w-m in Ibn Manẓūr.

²⁶⁶ al-Iṣfahānī, 417.

²⁶⁷ Please see *ibid.*, 522; see also Dāmaghānī, 464.

²⁶⁸ Please see al-Iṣfahānī, 522.

of you an Ummat [community] justly balanced [*wasāṭan*]’”. In the above verse, according to Asad, the literal meaning of *ummatan wasāṭan* is ‘middlemost community’ that ensures an equitable balance between excess (*ifrāt*) and negligence (*tafrīt*). Thus, such a community should warn its members to maintain their behavioural status, rejecting both licentiousness and exaggerated asceticism. What is interesting in the above verse is that the concept *al-wasāṭ* is linked to the term straight path (*Ṣirāṭin mustaqīm*). Thus, it can be said that there is also an interconnected semantic relationship between *al-wasāṭ*, *al-istiḳāmah* and *al-‘adl*.²⁶⁹

Therefore, *al-wasāṭ* can refer to justice and fairness in the moral, personal and social level of society being in tune with its oft-repeated call to moderation in every aspect of life.

1.6 RELATIONAL MEANING OF AL-‘ADL: SEMANTIC OPPOSITE CONCEPTS TO AL-‘ADL

In the previous section, semantically connected concepts to *al-‘adl* were discussed to expose the relational meaning *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ānic worldview. For a better understanding of this concept, it seems that one needs also to know the semantically opposed concepts to *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān. As is seen from the previous discussions, there are many relational meanings attached to the basic meanings of *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ānic context.²⁷⁰ It can be argued that *ẓulm*, (injustice) *‘udul* (deviation) and *jawr* (tyranny) as lexical opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* are reviewed in classical Arabic dictionaries and contemporary Qur’ānic dictionaries.²⁷¹ Therefore, initially only these three lexical opposites of *al-‘adl* will be dealt with here. Then the semantic opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* such as *kh-s-r* (to incur loss), *f-ḥ-sh* (to be excessive), *f-t-r* (to split or to break apart) and *f-w-t* (to escape, elude) will be examined by applying the Izutsian method for the analysis of semantics of the Qur’ān. As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, in *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān*, Izutsu suggests seven cases for his method of semantic analysis of Qur’ān.²⁷² It is worth

²⁶⁹ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur’an* (Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1980), 58.

²⁷⁰ Please see p. 1, p. 6 and p. 17.

²⁷¹ Please see for a root j-w-r in al-Isfahānī, 104; see also: Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 183; see also: Lane and Lane-Poole, 2011, 523.

²⁷² Please see: p.25.

highlighting here the third case where the semantic structure of Qur'ānic terms can be explained by contrast.

1.6.1 Lexical opposite concepts to al-'adl

1.6.1.1 *Zulm* as an antithesis of al-'adl

The trilateral root *z-l-m* (to act injustice) is mentioned 315 times in the Qur'ān, in 12 derived forms: (1) 110 times as the form I verb *zalama*; (2) once as the form IV verb *azlama* (it darkens); (3) 16 times as the noun *azlam* (more unjust); (4) twice as the noun *zālimī* (wronging); (5) five times as the noun *zallām*; (6) 20 times as the noun *zul'm*; (7) 23 times as the nominal *zulumāt* (darkness); (8) twice as the noun *zalūm* (unjust); (9) 129 times as the active participle *zālim* (unjust); (10) four times as the active participle *zālimatun* (unjust); (11) once as the passive participle *mazlūm* (wrongfully); and (12) twice as the form IV active participle *muz'lim* (the darkness).

The lexical meaning of the root *z-l-m* refers to darkness, (of darkness) to descend; to put something in the wrong place, to act improperly; to cause someone to suffer a loss; to wrong someone, to act unjustly, injustice, tyranny and oppression.²⁷³ However, in the opinion of many of the authoritative lexicologists, the primary meaning of *zulm* is discussed as to put something in the wrong place.²⁷⁴ In the moral sphere, as Izutsu notes, it appears to mean predominantly 'to act in such a way to transgress the proper limit and infringe the right of some other person.'²⁷⁵ In other words, it might be said that *zulm* is to do injustice in the sense of going beyond one's own bounds and doing what one has no right to do.

In addition to this, in his book on the semantics of the Qur'an, Ibn al-Jawzī provides six aspects of meaning for the term *al-zulm*: (1) injustice as mentioned in the Qur'ān 3:57: "but Allah loveth not those who do wrong [al-zālimīn]"; (2) ascribing partners to Allah as in the Qur'ān 6:82: "It is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with wrong [bi zulmin]"; (3) defective (*nuqṣān*) as it appears in the Qur'ān 4:49: "But never will they fail to receive justice [yuzlamūna] in the least little thing"; (4) denial

²⁷³ Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 585.

²⁷⁴ Dāmaghānī, 426; please see also: Ibn al-Jawzī, 426; see also: al-Iṣfahānī, 315.

²⁷⁵ Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'ān*, 163.

as seen in the Qur'ān 7:9: “for that they wrongfully treated [*yazlimūn*] Our signs”;²⁷⁶ (5) act of stealing as it is discussed in the Qur'ān 5:38-39: “As to the thief, Male or female, cut off his or her hands” and “But whoever repents after his wrongdoing [*bi zulmihi*]”. In this verse, Ibn Jawzī understands the word *ẓulm* as ‘act of stealing’; and (6) to wrong someone to himself as in the Qur'ān 2:58: “(But they rebelled); to us they did no harm [*zalamūna*], but they harmed [*yazlimūna*] their own souls”.²⁷⁷ It is worthwhile focussing here, for the sake of our topic on the first and third meanings, injustice and defective.

As can be seen from the previous discussions, *ẓulm* can be briefly defined as to do injustice in the sense of going beyond one's own bounds. Thus, it is worth mentioning here that the Qur'ān constantly avers that Allah does not do injustice to His servants (*yazlim*, present tense verb form of root *z-l-m*). such as in the Qur'ān 3:182, 8:51, 22:10, 41:46 and 50:29: “I do not the least injustice [*ẓallāmin* an emphatic form of *ẓālim*] to My Servants”.²⁷⁸ Furthermore, the Qur'ān repeatedly states that no one is to be wronged “even by a single date-thread (*naqīran*)” as in the Qur'ān 4:124 or slightest (*fatīlan*).

As far as the meaning of *ẓulm* as imperfect or defective (*al-nuqṣ*) or to denote shortage is concerned, it is interesting to note that *ẓulm* stands in sharp contrast to *mawāzīn al-qist* (scales of justice) in the Qur'ān 21:47:

We shall set up scales of justice [*mawāzīn al-qist*] for the Day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly [*yazlimūna*] in the least, and if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account [*hāsibīna*]

In the above verse, it can be assumed that *yuzlamūna* (passive tense of verb *z-l-m*), in the case of God, alludes mainly to the Last Judgment in the eschatological sense. In other words, God will pay every soul in full according to what they have done in this earthly life. Thus, the Qur'ān asserts that if someone commits a good deed, He will

²⁷⁶ Yusuf Ali has translated the verb *yazlimūna* as to treat wrongly. Translation of this verb would have been much more useful if it is translated as ‘to deny our signs’. To support this view, it is worthwhile to note here that elsewhere in the Qur'ān, the active participle *ẓālimūn* derived from *z-l-m* was juxtaposed with a verb *yajhādūna* which literally means to deny or reject. Therefore, it can be assumed that the meaning of verb *z-l-m* is in parallel with that of verb *j-ḥ-d*.

²⁷⁷ Ibn al-Jawzī, 426-28.

²⁷⁸ *Quran*. (50:29)

give a reward as double; whereas, if someone commits a bad deed, He will mete out punishment to him, as he deserves. In more concrete terms, the *Qur'ān* states that man will never be wronged in any way.

Interestingly, the active participle *ẓālimūn* (unjust people) is found three times in total, in contrast to the active participle *muqsiṭūn* (just people) in the *Qur'ān*. For instance, the *Qur'ān* maintains that Allah loves those people who are just in the *Qur'ān* 60: 9, subsequent to this, the *Qur'ān* further mentions *ẓālimūn* in the the *Qur'ān* 60:10.²⁷⁹

Taken together, it can be said that *ẓulm* is an antithesis of *'adl* in the *Qur'ān*. Therefore, *ẓulm* as a semantically opposed concept to *'adl* seems a more relatively independent concept compared to other concepts within the semantic field of *al-'adl* in the *Qur'ān*. Moreover, it could be said that lexically the word *ẓulm* is a direct antonym of the word *'adl* if its basic meaning is taken into consideration.

1.6.1.2 *'Udūl and Qāsiṭ as an antonym of al-'adl*

Interestingly, both *al-'adl* and *al-qisṭ*, which basically mean justice, are found as antonyms of *al-'adl* in the *Qur'ān*. As discussed previously both words are considered from *al-alfāz al-mushtarakah* (homonymous polysemic words).²⁸⁰ Therefore, it appears that these words are paradoxical in nature and they could mean either to be just, or the complete opposite, to deviate from the right path.

1.6.1.3 *al-Jawr and fasād as an antithesis of al-'adl*

Another lexical direct antonym of *al-'adl*, in the opinion of the authoritative lexicographers²⁸¹, is *al-jawr* (deviation). One of the basics meanings of the root *j-w-r* is to deviate from a right path, to be unjust, injustice.²⁸² The active participle *jā'ir* (derived from the root *j-w-r*) appears in the *Qur'ān* to mean deviant and going the wrong way as in the *Qur'ān* 19:9: “And unto Allah leads straight the Way, but there are ways that turn aside [*jā'ir*]”.

²⁷⁹ Please compare verses in The *Qur'ān* (5:42 and 5:45, 49:9 and 49:11)

²⁸⁰ For detailed discussion on *al-alfāz al-mushtarakah*, see p.13

²⁸¹ *al-Iṣfahānī*, 103.

²⁸² Please see for other meanings of root *j-w-r* Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 182.

The root of *f-s-d* occurs 50 times in the Qur'ān in four derived forms. Lexically, the root *f-s-d* connotes to corrupt, to spoil, to decay, to fall into disorder, to be perverted, to be wicked, to make trouble.²⁸³ In general, this verb implies to violate the order and harmony. Interestingly, Dāmaghānī interprets the noun *fasād* derived from the root *f-s-d* as destroy with injustice and oppression (*ẓulm and jawr*) as seen in the Qur'ān 27:34:²⁸⁴

She said: "Kings, when they enter a country, despoil it" [afsadūhā]

In the above verse, it seems clear from the context that *fasād* means to destroy with oppression and injustice. Therefore, it can be considered as a semantically opposite concept to *al-'adl* in the sense of harmony and order in the Qur'ān.

1.6.2 Semantic opposite concepts to the relational meanings of *al-'adl*

1.6.2.1 *Khusrān*

The trilateral root *kh-s-r* (to go astray) is mentioned 65 times in the Qur'ān in 10 derived forms: (1) 16 times as the form I verb *khasira*; (2) twice as the form IV verb *yukh'siru*; (3) four times as the noun *akhsarīn* (the greatest loser); (4) three times as the noun *khasār* (loss); (5) twice as the noun *khusr* (a loss); (6) three times as the noun *khusrān* (the loss); (7) 32 times as the active participle *khāsirīn*; (8) once as the active participle *khāsirat*; (9) once as the form II verbal noun *takhsīr* (in loss); and (10) once as the form IV active participle *mukh'sirīn*.

According to Badawi, the lexical meaning of *kh-s-r* is to go astray, to lose one's way, to perish; to incur loss; to decrease, to give less than what is right, to give short measure.²⁸⁵

In addition to this, Ibn Jawzī argues five aspects of the meaning of the root *kh-s-r*, two of which may stand opposed to *al-qisṭ* in the Qur'ānic context: (1) decrease, a state of diminishing or lessening, imperfection (*al-nuqṣ*); (2) defraud or cheating; (3) impotent; (4) misguidance or erroneous; and (5) punishment.²⁸⁶ As was highlighted

²⁸³ Ibid., 709.

²⁸⁴ Dāmaghānī, 358.

²⁸⁵ Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 262-63.

²⁸⁶ Please see for detailed discussions on root *kh-s-r* and its examples for each aspect of meaning in: Ibn al-Jawzī, 277-78.

above²⁸⁷, according to Ibn Jawzī, one of the meanings of root *z-l-m* is *al-nuqṣ* (imperfection), which literally denotes decrease or imperfection. Interestingly, Ibn Jawzī again discusses the root *kh-s-r* as *al-nuqṣ*. Therefore, it can be assumed that there are interconnected relations between *al-‘adl*, *al-qisṭ*, *al-zulm* and *al-khusrān*. In other words, they became key words and form the semantic field of *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ānic context.

In the following verse, “fall not short in the balance [*lā tukhsirū al-mīzān*]” is directly contrasted with “establish weight with justice [*al-qisṭ*]”.

So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance²⁸⁸

This point of view takes support from two verses of *sūrah al-shu‘arā’* in the Qur’ān (26:181,182):

Give just measure [*uwfū al-kayla*], and cause no loss (to others by fraud) [*mukhsirīn*]. And weigh [*wazinū*] with scales [*qisṭās*] true and upright.

In the above-mentioned verses, *kayl* (just measure) as a semantically related concept to *al-‘adl* and *qisṭās* (genitive masculine noun derived from the root *q-s-ṭ*) are used in explicit contrast to *al-mukhsirīn* (plural form active participle derived from the root *kh-s-r*).

1.6.2.2 *Faḥshā*

Arguably, another example for semantic opposites of *al-‘adl* could be the triliteral root *f-h-sh* (to be excessive) which occurs 24 times in the Qur’ān, in two derived forms: (1) 17 times as the noun *fāḥishah* (2) seven times as the noun *faḥshā*.

According to Badawi, the lexical meaning of *f-h-sh* is to be excessive, immoderate or beyond measure; to be foul, to be shameless, to use obscene language; adultery, to commit adultery.²⁸⁹

In his book on the semantics of the Qur’ān, Ibn Jawzī maintains that *faḥish* (noun from verb *f-h-sh*) signifies anything exceeding the proper bounds and going beyond

²⁸⁷ Please see p. 50

²⁸⁸ The Qur’ān (55:9)

²⁸⁹ Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 696-97.

measure.^{10 10} (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1979).²⁹⁰ Furthermore, he also provides four aspects of the meaning of the root *f-h-sh* in the *Qur’ān*: (1) sin or disobedience (*al-m‘aṣiyah*); (2) adultery; (3) homosexual act: and (4) lewdness.

In the following example, the word *faḥshā* in the *Qur’ān* 7:28 is contrasted with *al-qisṭ* in the *Qur’ān* 7:29:

Say: "Nay, Allah never commands what is shameful [lā ya’muru bil faḥshā].

Say: "My Lord hath commanded justice [ya’muru bil-qisṭ]

It seems that if the third case of Izutsu’s method, where *Qur’ānic* terms are elucidated by their contrast, is used for above two verses, then it exposes the antonym of *al-‘adl*. Thus, it can be said that it is contextually clear that *faḥshā* is used as an antithesis of *al-‘adl* in the *Qur’ānic* context. Additionally, this point of view might receive support from the *Qur’ān* 16:90 in which Allah again enjoins justice and kindness and strictly forbids all *faḥshā*:

Allah commands justice [al-‘adl], the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds [al-faḥshā and al-munkar], and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition.

Taken together, it is interesting to note here that four aspects of the meaning of the root *f-h-sh* refer to anything exceeding beyond measure and proper bounds. In other words, *faḥshā* implies immoderate and excessive, whereas, *al-‘adl* infers moderate and middle way. Therefore, it can be assumed that *faḥshā* is the direct antithesis of *al-‘adl* and can be considered as a semantic opposite concept to *al-a’adl*.

1.6.2.3 *Fuṭūr* and *Tafāwūt* as antithesis of *wazn*

Basically, according to Badawī, the root *f-ṭ-r* means fungi; nature; to crack open, to rend, to split; to bring out; to fashion; to break the fast.²⁹¹ The indefinite masculine noun *fuṭūr*, derived from root *f-ṭ-r*, occurs once with the meaning of ‘flaw’ or ‘disorder’ in connection with divine creation as seen in the *Qur’ān* (67:3):

He Who created the seven heavens one above another: No want of proportion [tafāwūt] wilt thou see in the Creation of (Allah) Most Gracious. So turn thy vision again: seest thou any flaw [fuṭūr]?

²⁹⁰ Ibn al-Jawzī, 466; Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur’ān*, 233.

²⁹¹ Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 716.

Interestingly, it is apparent from the above verse that the verbal noun *tafāwūt* (inconsistence) is juxtaposed with *fuṭūr* (flaw). It is worthwhile remarking here that roots of both *f-w-t* and *f-t-r* connote imperfection in the divine creation in the Qur'ānic context.²⁹² As discussed in previous sections of this chapter, the roots *'a-d-l* and *w-z-n* are most often found connected with proportioned and balanced creation in the Qur'ān.²⁹³ In this sense, it appears that the words *fuṭūr* and *tafāwūt* can be the antithesis of *'adl* as harmony and proportion.

²⁹² Please see: Lane and Lane-Poole, 2011, 2454; see also: Badawi and Abdel Haleem, 724.

²⁹³ Please see p.8 and p. 41.

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter investigated the notion of justice (*al-'adl*) as portrayed in the Qur'ān. The Izutsian approach regarding the semantics of the Qur'ān has been applied to expose the relational meanings of *al-'adl* in the Qur'ānic context. Thus, the central core of this chapter set out to determine the semantic field of *al-'adl* in the Qur'ānic worldview. To this end, a number of related and opposite concepts to *al-'adl* were examined within the semantic field of *al-'adl* using Izutsu's methodology.

In short, this chapter can be divided into three main sections: (a) the concept of *al-'adl* as portrayed in the Qur'ān; (b) connected concepts to *al-'adl*; and (c) semantically opposite concepts to *al-'adl*.

Initially, the lexical meanings of *al-'adl* in *al-wujūh wa al-naẓāir* literature and classical Arabic literature were examined. Additionally, this chapter tried to shed light on the usage of the root 'a-d-l in Jahilī poetry. Then, this section tried to determine the meanings of *al-'adl* in the Qur'ānic context. In this regard, the meanings of *al-'adl* were treated under four categories: (1) ransom and compensation as in the Qur'ān 2:48, 123; 6:70: (2) to act with equity and to observe justice and fairness and to create with balance and proportion; (3) to swerve from the right path; and (4) to equalize and attribute partner to God.

This chapter also aimed to find semantically related concepts to *al-'adl* in the Qur'ānic worldview. To this end, a number of concepts were examined such as *al-qisṭ*, *al-ḥaqq*, *al-mīzān*, *al-mikyāl*, *al-iḥsān*, *al-istiqāmah* and *al-wasaṭ* both lexically and semantically in the Qur'ānic context. Thus, this chapter formed the semantic field of *al-'adl* in the Qur'ān.

Furthermore, this chapter analysed a number of Qur'ānic concepts which are lexically and semantically opposite to *al-'adl*. To this end, this section classified opposite concepts into broad and interconnected types: (a) Lexically opposite concepts such as *ẓulm*, *'udūl*, *jawr* and *fasād*; (b) Semantic opposite concepts such as *khusrān*, *fahshā*, *fuṭūr* and *tafāwut*.

In this chapter, the aim was to evaluate the notion of *‘adl* in the Qur’ān and to examine relational meanings of *al-‘adl* using Izutsu’s method regarding the semantics of the Qur’ān.

This study found that the notion of *al-‘adl* refers to justice, fairness, harmony and balance in the creation and perfection in the Qur’ānic context. Interestingly, the concept of *al-‘adl* was known to the Arabs of the Jahilī period; however, *al-‘adl* and its connected concepts, such as *al-mīzān* and *al-ḥaqq*, gained an eschatological dimension with the introduction of the Qur’ān. Therefore, it can be assumed that the findings of this research show the Qur’ān to have brought a new dimension and colouring to the meanings of *al-‘adl*.

The results of this research support the idea that there is no consensus between the scholars in terms of the meanings of *al-qist* and *al-‘adl*. Both terms are used to mean justice by many scholars, although they have different implications. Hence, it can be noted from the above discussions that *al-‘adl* can be accepted as more comprehensive in a sense than *al-qist*, whereas, it can be seen as specific and concerned with social and economic life in the Qur’ānic context.

Taken together, these results suggest that *al-qist* can be considered an ethical term, which is used in focussing on relations between Allah and man; on the other hand, *al-‘adl* appears to be a legal term, which alludes to relations between man and his fellow man.

The second major aim was to find the relational meanings of *al-‘adl* in connection with *al-ḥaqq*. In this regard, it can be perceived that *al-ḥaqq* may refer both to worldly and eschatological sense. It can therefore be assumed that the word *ḥaqq* is closely linked to the notion of *al-‘adl* in this world and eschatological reward and punishment on the Day of Judgment and Reckoning.

Thus, the findings of research show that the concept of *al-ḥaqq* is more comprehensive than *al-qist*. Therefore, *al-ḥaqq* may comprise *al-qist* and *al-‘adl*. On the other hand, it can be said that *al-‘adl* is maintained within the scales of *al-qist* and *al-ḥaqq*.

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that the concept of *al-‘adl* is semantically interconnected and overlapped with the concept of measurement, such as *mīzān*, *mikyāl*, *miqdār*, whereby it forms its own semantic field in the Qur’ānic context.

Another finding that has been shown in this chapter is that the concept of *al-‘adl* arises from the analysis of its juxtaposition with the concept of *al-wasaʿ* in the Qur’ān. Thus, it can be said that *al-wasaʿ* refers to justice and fairness on the moral, personal and social level of society being in tune with its oft-repeated call to moderation in every aspect of life.

Finally, it was also shown that *ẓulm*, as a semantically opposed concept to ‘*adl*, seems more relatively independent than other concepts, such as *jawr*, *fasād*, ‘*udūl*, *khusrān*, *faḥshā*, *tafāwut* and *fuṭūr* within the semantic field of *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān.

Taken together, the following conclusions can be drawn from the present study: All aspects of the meaning of the connected opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* refer to anything exceeding beyond measure and proper bounds. In other words, all antitheses of *al-‘adl* imply inequality, something immoderate and excessive, whereas, *al-‘adl* infers equality, the moderate and middle way in the Qur’ānic worldview.

Chapter 2

INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY OF SAID NURSI

2.1 INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter diachronic analysis of Nursi's writings on 'adl and important events of his life are presented. Since certain terms in his life are closely interrelated with notion of justice, presenting a chronological biography of his life would not be sufficient to comprehend his ideas and perspectives on justice. A diachronic analysis of the major themes of justice in Nursi's writings might provide clues on how Nursi's thoughts evolved.

This type of analysis would clarify whether Nursi's use of the concept of justice was centered around the creational sense in the writings of New Said period such as *Sözler*, *Mektubat*, *Lemalar* and *Şualar*, compared to the Old Said's writings such as *Muhākamāt* and *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*. Additionally, it would explore if the later changes of his ideas were developments of his thoughts or just an irregularity of habit. Such questions can only be answered by a chronologic analysis of the relevant texts.

2.2 THE OLD SAID

There is no consensus among Said Nursi's biographers on his birth date.²⁹⁴ In Şahiner's '*Bilinmeyen Taraflarıyla Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*' [*Said Nursi's Life with Unearthed Facts*], Nursi is presented as being born in 1873 in the province of Bitlis in eastern Anatolia.²⁹⁵ On the other hand, in Vahide's findings, Nursi is presented as being born in 1876 or 1877.²⁹⁶ However, in Nursi's official biography,²⁹⁷ which was

²⁹⁴ 'Bediüzzaman Hangi Tarihte Doğdu?', Risale-i Nur Enstitüsü, accessed 23 August 2012, <http://www.risaleinurenstitusu.org/index.asp?Section=SaidNursi&Subsection=DogumTarihi>.

²⁹⁵ Necmeddin Şahiner, *Bilinmeyen Taraflarıyla Bediüzzaman Said Nursî: Kronolojik Hayatı* (Nesil, 1997), 25.

²⁹⁶ Please see: Sukran Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi', *The Muslim World* 89 (1999): 208; see also: Şukran Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', in *Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*. Albany, ed. Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi' (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003), 3, <http://ahd1113.activehost.com/pdf/60742.pdf>; see also: Şukran Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi*, ed. Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi' (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 3.

prepared by his authority, Nursi is found as being born in 1877.²⁹⁸ In contrast to earlier findings, Risale Enstitüsü has claimed that Nursi is born in 1878.²⁹⁹ It seems possible that these different results are due to complexity and variation in conversion from Hijri and Julian calendars to the Gregorian calendar. Because, both *Hijrî* and Julian calendars were used in the Ottoman Empire.

The first event stated in his official biography is his leaving home for the village of Tag to begin his studies at the age of nine.³⁰⁰ As a child and youth, Said was notable by both his outstanding intelligence and talent to absorb knowledge. Besides, he was also distinguished for his instinctive dissatisfaction with the existing education system and wish to reform it.³⁰¹ Moreover, in *An Introduction to Said Nursi*, Markham notes that in Nursi's childhood, one dominant feature of his character was *parrhesia*, speaking candidly. Nursi was always ready to offer his views on certain issues and challenge any injustice. There were events in his childhood when he challenged older students and dared to correct scholars. Arguably, this behaviour, in his later life, led Nursi to resist injustices and develop unique understanding of justice stemmed from the Qur'ân.³⁰² The evidence of upholding justice and resisting injustices in Nursi's life can be clearly seen in his official biography. For instance, according to his official biography, he could not endure being dominated and fell out with four other students. They constantly joined forces to harass him. Eventually, Nursi went to principal of *madrasah* (school) and said: "Shaykh Efendi [Sir] please tell them that when they fight me, they may come two at a time but not all four at once." Nursi's behaviour made his teacher pleased and he said: "You are my student, no one shall bother

²⁹⁷ Nursi's official biography was compiled by some of his close students under his supervision. It was first published under the title of *Risâle-i nur külliyyatı müellifi Bediüzzaman Said Nursî : tarihçe-i hayat* in 1958 by Sozler Nesriyat.

²⁹⁸ Said Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, vol. 2 (Istanbul: Yeni Asya Yayınları, 1995), 2122.

²⁹⁹ Please see for detailed discussion: 'Bediüzzaman Hangi Tarihte Doğdu?'

³⁰⁰ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, 2:2122.

³⁰¹ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 3.

³⁰² I. S. Markham and S. Birinci, *An Introduction to Said Nursi: Life, Thought and Writings* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate Pub Co, 2011), 8.

you”.³⁰³ This event shows that, by character, Nursi tried to uphold justice and refrain from injustice from his early childhood.

From a few references to his childhood in Nursi’s later writings, Vahide derives that he was independently-minded boy with a great self-esteem. In her article on Nursi’s life and thoughts, Vahide further writes that he acted as though he was unconsciously aware of his future service to the Qur’ān and Islam.³⁰⁴

His minimal attendance of *madrasas* in the neighbourhood of *Nurs*, his village, then *Dogubeyazit*, was adequate for him to achieve required level of standard at the time and he was awarded the diploma (*ijāzat*) in 1882. It confirmed that he had completed the main courses of the curriculum in Eastern Anatolia.³⁰⁵ Up until this time, he had taken lessons in principles of Arabic grammar and syntax. Therefore, Sahiner argues that Nursi started his real education in *Dogubeyazit*.³⁰⁶ Nursi had received a three months full-time course supervised by Shaykh Mehmed Jalālī (b. 1851). Interestingly, Nursi studied only the main text of the books listed in the syllabus of *madrasah* without reading the annotations and commentaries in the footnotes. When Jalālī asked Nursi about this, he responded:

I am not able to read and comprehend all these books. But these books are caskets of jewels, treasure chests, and you have its key. What I need is a clue to its contents so that at first I want to know what topics these books mentions and then I will choose those which are appropriate to my character.³⁰⁷

According to Vahide, Nursi read around one hundred works in this way in three-months, grasping the most difficult books in a very short time.³⁰⁸

³⁰³ Please see: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Işarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, 2:2123.

³⁰⁴ Vahide, ‘The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’, 208–9.

³⁰⁵ Vahide, ‘Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi’, 3.

³⁰⁶ Şahiner, *Bililmeyen Taraflarıyla Bediüzzaman Said Nursi: Kronolojik Hayatı*, 36; Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Işarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, 2:2123.

³⁰⁷ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Işarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, 2:2113.

³⁰⁸ Vahide, ‘The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’, 209.

It was a right of the *mudarris* (*madrasah* lecturer) to wear turban and gown during graduation ceremonies. When Nursi was offered to wear the formal dress for *mudarris*, he rejected on the grounds of his immaturity.³⁰⁹

He used to hold discussions on different Islamic topics with all scholars (*'ulama*) of the area. He is said to have defeated *'ulama* of the area in their own game and answered all the questions raised by the *shayks* of the *madāris*. Thus, young Said received the name of '*Bad'uzzamān*', 'the wonderful beauty of the age' in recognition of his success and outstanding ability.³¹⁰

Vahide notes that Nursi was only fourteen or fifteen years old³¹¹ when he gained popularity among the scholars of Eastern Anatolia as well as the public. Nursi's difficulties also increased with his fame. He travelled from place to place, Siirt, Tillo, Cizre and the Miran Tribe, Mardin and Bitlis, often on demand and order of the authorities. During these trips, he experienced many exciting events, some of which included the plots of rivals and enemies. Vahide notes that it was also the time when Nursi started to be known as a teacher.³¹²

According to the biographies on Nursi's life, the *madāris* (schools) where Nursi taken his formal education were administered both by *'ulamā* and *Şūfī shaykhs*. However, looking at the available sources, it appears that majority of those *madāris* provide Islamic sciences lessons rather than instruction in the mystical *şūfī* path. In addition to this, it is worthwhile to note here that Nursi never got involved in any of the *şūfī* orders, because, as he explained, preoccupation with his studies prevented him.³¹³

Nursi's activities at this time reveal his other exceptional qualities. Nursi was sent or deported from Mardin to Bitlis due to his activities. Vahide notes that Nursi nevertheless has gained the patronage of the Governor of Bitlis first and later the patronage of the Governors of Van, Hasan Pasha and Tāhir Pasha.

³⁰⁹ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 4.

³¹⁰ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 209; Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 204.

³¹¹ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 209.

³¹² Vahide, 209.

³¹³ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 4; Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 212; Please see in Said Nursi, *Sikke-i Tasdik-i Gaybi in Nursi, Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2084.

It is recorded that Nursi stayed in the Governor's residence in Bitlis in 1893-1895. It seems that Nursi took advantage of the facilities such as library resources and books, and pursued his education until he left for Istanbul in November, 1907.³¹⁴ During this period, Nursi has studied all of the standard works on the main Islamic sciences independently.³¹⁵ He is said to have memorised forty such works.³¹⁶

While Nursi was in Van, he increased his general knowledge about situations besetting the Ottoman Empire and Muslim World. It was here in *Van* that Nursi became aware of the fact that classic Islamic sciences such as *kalām* (Islamic theology) in its traditional form lacked the capacity to solve the questions raised by scientists and modern advances in Western knowledge.³¹⁷

Nursi appears to have taken the unprecedented step among the *'ulamā* of the region at that time because he paid more attention to modern sciences. He was also one of the first pioneers of educational reform in the Ottoman Empire. For instance, Nursi propounded that modern and Islamic sciences should be taught together in the *madāris* (schools).

As Kalin claims, unlike many of his contemporaries, Nursi had a substantial knowledge of the scientific discoveries of his time. His method of confronting Western ideology was simple yet highly influential one: instead of taking an opposition, he incorporated its findings into the Islamic perspective.

Moreover, Kalin states that Nursi, like many of his contemporaries, was acutely aware of the power of modern natural sciences, and, as it is evident in his great work *Risale-i Nur*, he certainly was considering them as universally objective discoveries.³¹⁸ Taking advantage of Pasha's library facilities, Nursi studied all the new sources of modern sciences, which he himself referred to as *'funūn al-madaniyya'* including

³¹⁴ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 211.

³¹⁵ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 4.

³¹⁶ See Vahide, 4; Please see also *Tarihçe-i Hayat in: Nursi, Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2123–24.

³¹⁷ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 213.

³¹⁸ See Ibrahim Kalin, 'Three Views of Science in the Islamic World', 2002, 7.

history, geography, mathematics, geology, physics, chemistry, astronomy and philosophy.³¹⁹

It is worthwhile to note that, as Acikgenc and Vahide mention that Nursi's study of the modern sciences led him to come up with his ideas on the educational reform and renewal of *madrasah* of that time.

Nursi developed his own particular method of teaching³²⁰ and implemented this method in his own *madrasah* in Van where he combined teaching of the religion and the modern sciences.³²¹

It is recorded in his official biography and other primary sources on Nursi's life, such as Vahide's work, that it was at this time when Nursi first put forward the idea of founding an Islamic University in the Eastern Provinces of Ottoman Empire. Nursi named this university as '*Madrasat uz-Zahrā*' which would be a representative model of his ideas on educational reform. It would be a sister university in the eastern Islamic world to *al-Azhar* University in Cairo.³²² Nursi considered the project of '*Madrasat uz-Zahrā*' as one of the utmost important matters of his life.³²³

Vahide takes the view that one of the important events during this period, as far as Nursi's future is concerned, was his awareness of the severity of the threats to the

³¹⁹ Please see: Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 4; please see also: Kamil Yasaroglu, 'Namaz', *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2006).

³²⁰ In his *Munāzarāt*, Nursi stresses the importance of the unity of the heart (*wijdān*) and reason (*aql*) in his educational reform for the future of humanity. But reason (*aql*) is described as 'the sciences of modern civilization' (*funūn al-madaniyya*): 'The light of the heart (*wijdān*) are the religious sciences whereas the light of reason are the modern sciences. The truth arises from the blend of the two. When they are separated, the former produces dogmatism and the latter deception and suspicion. Please see 'Münazarat' in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1958.

³²¹ Please see: Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 203; see also: Yasaroglu, 'Namaz'.

³²² Please see 'Münazarat' in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1955; see also: Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 203.

³²³ Please see 'Emirdağ lahikası II': in Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1822.

Qur'ān.³²⁴ Nursi described his shock at learning from a newspaper that Gladstone of the British Colonial Regime had started a war against the Qur'ān and named it as the main obstacle to their imperialist ambitions.³²⁵ This event happened in 1900 and brought about a revolution in his mind, whereupon he was determined to make all the knowledge he had acquired a means to understand the Qur'ān and prove its truthfulness, and resolved to dedicate his life to its service.

However, elsewhere in his writings, Nursi wrote that 'deceptive' events at the time of his youth set him back to take up the duty till the beginning of the First World War.³²⁶ It is worthwhile to note here that one can learn from Nursi's writings that he began to work on his Qur'ānic commentary '*Ishārāt al- 'ijāz*' which is 'the first stage of *Risale*' in 1913.³²⁷

Nursi set out for Istanbul towards the end of 1907.³²⁸ The available sources on his life mention his intention of going to Istanbul, the Ottoman capital, to raise support for his educational projects in the eastern province of the Empire, in particular, for the *Madrasat uz-Zahrā*, the Islamic University which was to be the example of his ideas on educational reform.³²⁹

Thereupon, Nursi began to establish his reputation as a scholar among the '*ulamā*' and intellectuals of the Istanbul. He settled in a hotel in Fatih district, which operated as a place of residence for a number of intellectuals of those days.³³⁰ To draw attention, he hung a poster on his door: "Here all questions are answered, all problems are solved, but no questions are asked". It is recorded in his official biography that many students

³²⁴ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 5.

³²⁵ Please see 'Tarihçe-i Hayat' : Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2131; and see also 'Şualar' : Said Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Nesil Yayınları, 1994), 840.

³²⁶ Please see 'Şualar' in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:840.

³²⁷ See 'Sikke-i Tasdik-i Gaybi' in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2074.

³²⁸ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 214.

³²⁹ Please see: Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 5; see also: Hasan Horkuc, 'Said Nursi's Ideal for Human Society : Moral and Social Reform in the Risale-i Nur' (Durham University, 2004), 105–6.

³³⁰ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 214.

and scholars visited him and went back astonished by his extraordinary ability to answer all the questions they have asked to him.³³¹

In addition, Acikgenc mentions that once Nursi arrived at Istanbul, Nursi has given number of speeches in Fātiḥ Mosque and made himself accepted as a scholar among the intellectuals of Istanbul.³³² Within a few months, Nursi submitted a petition to Sultan ‘Abdulḥamīd, asking for government to support his ideas on educational reform. But, Nursi’s proposal was not welcomed by ‘Abdulḥamīd’s government.³³³ Some sources suggest that the proposal has never arrived to Abdulhamid and melted away in the Ittihad and Terakki Party (Unity and Development Party) bureaucracy who were favoured the idea of Western educational reform at the time.³³⁴

However, it was impossible for Nursi’s activities to remain unnoticed. Besides, he gained rivals among the ‘ulamā who were resentful of his achievements. Being overtly critical of the *Şultān* Nursi was kept under surveillance. His petition to ‘Abdulḥamīd was later published in a number of newspapers such as *Şark wa Kurdistān Gazetasi*, 19 November 1908.

As consequence of his activities, according to Vahide, he was arrested and sent before the Yildiz Palace’s Court Martial, from there he was dispatched to *Topbashi* Mental Asylum where he was incarcerated for a short period of time. The medical report given by doctors on Nursi’s mental condition was favourable. Having done his defence before the court, he eventually regained his freedom.³³⁵

Shortly after this event, the Constitutional Revolution took place in July 1908.³³⁶ Many intellectuals of late Ottoman period such as Namik Kemal and Said Nursi believed that, in principal, constitutionalism and the related concepts such as equality

³³¹ Please see ‘Tarihçe-i Hayat’ in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü’l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2131.

³³² Yasaroglu, ‘Namaz’.

³³³ Vahide, ‘Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi’, 5.

³³⁴ Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 71; please see also: Abdülbaki Çimiç, ‘Bediuzzaman, Abdülhamid Han ve Helâllik Meselesi’, Sorularla Said Nursi, accessed 23 October 2017, <http://www.sorularlasaidnursi.com/bediuzzaman-abdulhamid-han-ve-helallik-meselesi/>.

³³⁵ Vahide, ‘The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’, 215.

³³⁶ Vahide, ‘Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi’, 5.

before the law, justice, sovereignty of the nations, rule of law and consultation were completely in compliance with the corpus of Islamic injunctions.³³⁷

On the other hand, Nursi argues that constitutionalism and principles of freedom has to be based on and limited by principles of Islamic injunctions. Otherwise, he thought, it would make Ottomans see a tyranny worse than the ones they have previously gone through.³³⁸ Therefore, it can be said that Nursi has supported constitutional government and freedom against despotism, and favoured the constitutional principles as the key factors for progress in all fields such as education and religious revitalisation of the society.

It seems that Nursi found this approach to strengthen the unity of Empire and the Muslim world, not only the most effective but also the most ‘politically’ feasible option at the time yet later he became critical of it.³³⁹ Regardless of his subsequent self-criticisms, as Vahide notes, it can be assumed that Nursi aimed at strengthening the unity of the Empire and Muslim world and encouraging its development and progress. Nursi’s various activities of that period were mainly directed to three things: (a) educational reform in *madāris* of the eastern provinces of Ottoman Empire and revitalisation of the region’s educational system as a whole; (b) his advocacy of the constitutional government, and (c) his support of the Islamic Unity and the *Ittihād-i Muḥammadī Jamīyati* (Union of Muhammadan Society).³⁴⁰

During this period of his life, Nursi was actively involved in political and social life.³⁴¹ For example, in the first days of the constitutional government he delivered a speech on freedom entitled ‘Address to Freedom’ in Beyazit in Istanbul, and two or three days later in Salonica.³⁴² He also published numerous articles in the newspapers and journals of the time. In 1910, a selection of his speeches and writings were

³³⁷ Vahide, ‘The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’, 216.

³³⁸ Please for more info on Nursi’s understanding of freedom in his speech named ‘Hürriyete Hitap [Address to Freedom] in ‘Tarihçe-i hayat’ in: Nursi, *Kaynaklı, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü’l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2132.

³³⁹ Vahide, ‘Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi’, 5.

³⁴⁰ Vahide, 5.

³⁴¹ Colin Turner and Hasan Horkuc, *Said Nursi, Makers of Islamic Civilization*. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 15.

³⁴² Vahide, ‘The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’, 216.

published under the title of *Nuṭuq*; it is claimed to be Nursi's first published work.³⁴³ Another example of his political activities was his official membership of a number of religiously oriented societies such as *Ṭalaba-i 'Ulūm Jam'īyyati* (Society for Students of the Religious Sciences) and *Ittiḥād-I Muḥammadī Jamīyyati* (Union of Muhammadan Society)³⁴⁴ that was later held responsible for stirring up of the '31st of March Incident'. Said Nursi attended its opening ceremony where he gave a speech, and subsequently appeared to be an active member of the society. Besides, Nursi also published articles in the society's famous newspaper *Volkan*. After the 31 March revolt, the leading members of the society were tried and hanged.

In relation to that uprising Nursi also was detained and his case was heard in the Military Court. The Court found him innocent after his long defence speech which was later published under the title *İki Mektebi Musibetin Şehadetnamesi veya Divanı Harbi Orfî ve Said Nursi* (The Testimony of Two Schools of Misfortune or the Military Court and Said Nursi).³⁴⁵ After the trial, Nursi returned to *Van*.

It can be deduced from the sources, as Vahide notes, that the constitutional government in Istanbul did not bring the expected positive changes in regard to the freedom. On the contrary, it brought about a regime no less repressive or despotic than Sultan 'Abdulḥamīd's absolutism.

However, arguably, the negative situation in the government did not lead Nursi into disillusion with the ideas that he initially claimed to represent; so as he safeguarded his ideas about freedom and constitutionalism.³⁴⁶ In the summer of 1910, setting off from *Van*, Nursi travelled the cities and tribal areas of the eastern provinces of the Empire. Nursi stopped by every city and tribe, and delivered a number of speeches and lectures on freedom and constitutionalism to persuade them about these ideas and to prove that they do not contradict the Islamic principles.³⁴⁷ There, Nursi ran several debates by means of question-answer method. These debates were compiled into a

³⁴³ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 7.

³⁴⁴ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 217.

³⁴⁵ Please see Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 15; please see also: Horkuc, 'Said Nursi's Ideal for Human Society : Moral and Social Reform in the Risale-i Nur', 108.

³⁴⁶ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 7.

³⁴⁷ Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey : An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 84–89.

work under the title of *Munāẓarāt*, which was published in 1911.³⁴⁸ A certain set of important questions can be seen in this book.³⁴⁹ Another work that came out of Nursi's journey to the eastern provinces is titled '*Muḥākamāt*'; its Turkish version was published in 1911. Nursi stated that his book *Munāẓarāt* is dedicated to address the intellect of '*awam*' (public or ordinary people) and his *Muḥākamāt* to address the '*ulama* of his time.³⁵⁰

In the early 1911, Nursi visited Damascus where he delivered his famous speech in the Umayyad Mosque. It is reported that ten thousand people attended the ceremony, including one hundred scholars. This speech was printed twice under the title of *The Damascus Sermon* in Damascus a week later.³⁵¹

Following his stay in Damascus, Nursi came back to Istanbul to join Sultan Rashād's official visit to the Balkans in June 1911 as a representative of the eastern provinces.³⁵² According to the available sources on Nursi's biography, Nursi's goal in going to Istanbul for the second time was to use this as an opportunity to obtain official support for his idea of establishing the Islamic university, *the Madrasat uz-Zahrā*, in the Eastern Anatolia.³⁵³

Sultan Rashād's official visit to the Balkans was intended for revitalisation of feelings of loyalty in their Balkan subjects.³⁵⁴ Furthermore, this visit was also an attempt to pacify Albanians in their demand for greater autonomy and some other calls such as introduction of Latin script in their schools. Hence, a decision was made to open up a university in Kosova with the allotment of 19 thousand gold liras. This provided Nursi with a motive to explain to Sultan Rashād and CPU leaders that there is a greater need to establish an Islamic university in the east for it was the centre of the

³⁴⁸ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri*.

³⁴⁹ Please see '*Munāẓarāt*' in: Nursi, 2:1937–58.

³⁵⁰ Please see: Abdullah Aymaz, *Münazarat üzerine* (Istanbul: Şahdamar Yayınları, 2006), 4, <http://www.iikv.org/academy/index.php/books/article/view/682>.

³⁵¹ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 15.

³⁵² Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 9.

³⁵³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri*, 2:2133; see also: Horkuc, 'Said Nursi's Ideal for Human Society : Moral and Social Reform in the Risale-i Nur', 106.

³⁵⁴ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 9.

Islamic world. As a result, they accepted his argument and promised to found the university in the east. In October 1912, the Ottoman Empire lost Kosova in the First Balkan War. Consequently, the university project in Kosova was cancelled. The 19 thousand gold liras were given to Nursi's university project in the east in advance.³⁵⁵ Although, the foundation of the university was laid down on the shore of the Lake Van, soon afterwards the project was abandoned owing to the outbreak of First World War.³⁵⁶

According to Vahide, Nursi devoted his time to teaching in his *madrakah* prior to the commencement of the First World War in Van.³⁵⁷ During these years, Nursi worked on the subject of logic and later compiled a book titled *Ta'liqāt 'alá Burhān al-Kalnabawī fī al-mantiq*.³⁵⁸ In 1913, Nursi started to write his work on the commentary of the Qur'ān *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*.³⁵⁹

Then, Nursi joined the Ottoman Armed Forces as a voluntary regimental mufti (religious functionary), and was posted as to the Van to the Thirty-Third Division (*fırqa*) and sent to the front at Erzurum. Later he served as a commander of the militia forces in the eastern part of the Empire. Nursi was wounded in the battle, and in March 1916 taken captive by Russian forces in Bitlis. For two years he was kept in the prison camp in Kostroma, Russia.³⁶⁰ The Communist Revolution brought instability and chaos into Russia. This opened up an opportunity for Nursi to escape Russia. Consequently, he arrived back to Istanbul via Petersburg, Warsaw, Berlin and Vienna.³⁶¹

³⁵⁵ Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey : An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 102.

³⁵⁶ Please see 'Tarihçe-i Hayat' in: Nursi, *Kaynaklı, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2134.

³⁵⁷ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 9.

³⁵⁸ Nursi's book on logic is a commentary for *Al-Sullam-al-Munawraq fī 'Ilm al-Mantiq* by 'Abdurrahmān al-Aḥḍarī (d.1512-13). Please see for detailed info: Çelikkanat Abdullah, 'Bediüzzaman Said Nursi'nin Mantıkla İlgili Bir Eseri: KIZIL İCAZ', *Yeni Ümit* 18, no. 73 (2006).

³⁵⁹ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 9.

³⁶⁰ Vahide, 9.

³⁶¹ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 17.

2.3 THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION (1918-1925)

It took another two years for the transition from ‘old Said’ to ‘new Said’ to become complete. In the intervening time, Nursi was respected as a hero and exemplar of Ottoman courage in Istanbul. He was also immediately awarded a war medal and appointed to *Dārul Hikmatil Islāmiyya* (The Academy of Higher Islamic Studies).³⁶² According to Vahide, he received invitations from prominent pashas and dignitaries, or was visited by them. He was offered various positions of honors, and was awarded a war medal.³⁶³

It was also at this time when, with a support of the Anwār Pāshā, the Minister of War, Nursi’s partial Qur’ānic commentary, *al-Ishārāt al-‘Ijāz* was published.³⁶⁴

Turner notes that with recommendation of the *Shaykh ul-Islām*, Musa Kāzim Bey, Nursi was appointed to the rank of ‘*makhraj*’³⁶⁵ by Sultan Vaḥdaddīn in 1920. Nursi remained in Istanbul and continued to write on the causes of the demise of Ottomans. Later, he published *Şunūḥāt* (1920), *Haḳīket Çekirdekleri* (1920), *Noḳta* (1921), *Rumūz* (1922) and *Işārāt* (1923) in this period.³⁶⁶

Nursi also supported the foundation of charitable organisations and societies such as the *Cem‘yyet-i Mudarrisīn* (The *Madrasah* Teacher’s Association) and the *Yeşilay* (Green Crescent Society).³⁶⁷

It is worth noting that when the *fatwā* by *Shaykh al-islām*’s office in Istanbul was released to outlaw the national independence groups, Nursi also issued a counter-*fatwā* (ruling on a point of Islamic law) for the legitimacy of existence of such groups

³⁶² Joshua D. Hendrick, ‘Globalization and Marketized Islam in Turkey: The Case of Fethullah Gülen’ (UMI, 2009), 104, /z-wcorg/.

³⁶³ Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey : An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 113.

³⁶⁴ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 19.

³⁶⁵ *Mahrec*, is one of the ranks in Islamic sciences tradition and sometimes used as “*mahreç mevleviyyeti*” which is a rank higher than “*kibar-ı müderrisîn*” and lower than, “*bilâd-ı hamse mevleviyyeti*”. Please see: Mehmet Z. Pakalin, *Osmanlı tarih deyimleri ve terimleri sözlüğü 2.*, vol. 2 (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1951), 385.

³⁶⁶ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 19.

³⁶⁷ Turner and Horkuc, 20.

and declaring the national struggle against occupation of Istanbul by British.³⁶⁸ Vahide states that Nursi performed memorable services in those days opposing the forces of occupation using his writings. He was invited to Ankara several times, possibly as a recognition for his services to the struggle for independence.

Finally, following the victory of the National Army in the War of Independence, Nursi came to Ankara on August 4, 1922. Later, he was given an official welcome in *Büyük Millet Meclisi* (the Grand National Assembly) of the Turkish Republic on November 9, 1922.³⁶⁹

However, Nursi did not find what he has expected in Ankara. His intention was to support the new centre of government becoming a centre of the Islamic civilization. In contrast, he realized that the new centre of government was dominated by officials who supported Westernization, secularization³⁷⁰ and atheistic ideas of philosophic materialism. In this regard, Nursi wrote his ideas in *The Flashes*:

When I went to Ankara in 1922, the morale of the people of belief was extremely high as a result of the victory of the army of Islam over the Greeks. But I saw that an abominable current of atheism was treacherously trying to subvert, poison and destroy their minds. "O God!" I said, "this monster is going to harm the fundamentals of belief."³⁷¹

Furthermore, Nursi noticed that parliament members in the Assembly of new Turkish Republic were demonstrating a lax attitude towards fundamentals of Islam and its obligations. Consequently, he published a declaration³⁷² inviting the members of the assembly to be more concerned about their prayers (*şalah*) and observe religious duties, causing, fifty to sixty parliament members to restart regular prayers.³⁷³

³⁶⁸ Please see 'Tuluât' in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2335.

³⁶⁹ Please see: Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 12; see also: Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 20.

³⁷⁰ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 12.

³⁷¹ Said Nursi, *The Flashes*, trans. Vahide Şukran, The Risale-i Nur Collection (Istanbul: Sözler, 2004), 233.

³⁷² Please see full text of declaration in Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1317–18.

³⁷³ Nursi, 2:2138.

It is recorded that Nursi remained in Ankara for around eight months. During this period, he actively supported the cause of Islam among the authorities and deputies of the Assembly. As a result, Nursi had number of stormy meetings with Mustafa Kemal. Eventually, Nursi realised that it is impossible to serve Islam and the Qur'ân by being involved in politics in Ankara. Thus, he did not accept the offers by the Government officials of the time and left Ankara for Van where he withdrew himself from social life and started to live in solitude.³⁷⁴

The Sheikh Said rebellion which was planned for May of 1925 broke out prematurely in February in the eastern part of Turkey.³⁷⁵ After this event, Nursi was taken into custody and exiled into Burdur, at western part of Turkey even though, he said nothing that could be construed as an attack on the regime, nor did he encourage people to rise in a revolt. On the contrary, he strongly advised to the revolt leaders not to rise against the current regime by force. All the same, Nursi remained in Western Anatolian town of Burdur for about six months.³⁷⁶

Nursi did not stop writing during this period. He compiled his instructions and lessons into a book entitled *Nurin İlk Kapisi* (The First Door of the Risale-i Nur). According to Vahide, Nursi's deep thought and contemplation in Van reflected on his works of this period. Vahide further goes on to say that this reflection was embodied and fully expressed in the *Risale-i Nur*.³⁷⁷

It seems that Nursi's writings and his increasing popularity in the region made the newly established Government of Ankara anxious. Eventually, to reduce his influence, Nursi was sent to a remote village of Barla in Isparta Province in the Western Turkey.

³⁷⁴ Şükran Vahide, *Bediüzzaman Said Nursi: The Author of the Risale-i Nur* (Sözler Publications, 2000), 184.

³⁷⁵ Please see for detailed info about the Shaykh Said rebellion in: Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 184.

³⁷⁶ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2140.

³⁷⁷ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 225.

2.4 THE NEW SAID

Nursi was forced to stay for almost eight and a half years in Barla. During this period of his time, he had managed to write most of the one hundred and thirty parts of his *Risale-i Nur*. It is stated, in his official biography, that by keeping him in a remote village of Barla the authorities aimed to isolate Nursi from the outside world, and quell his enthusiasm for the Qur'ân and the Islamic values.³⁷⁸

Nevertheless, Nursi did not stop his activities of revitalizing the fundamentals of belief and injunctions of the Qur'ân. Throughout his stay in Barla, Nursi devoted himself to the writing of the *Risale- Nur*.

Initially, Nursi began his writings on the Resurrection of the dead and the existence of the Hereafter from which *Haşr Risalesi* (The Book on Resurrection) was compiled. Then, he wrote *Mu'jizât-i Qur'âniya* (The Miraculousness of the Qur'ân). The first book of the *The Risale-i Nur Collection* entitled *Sözler* was finished by 1929. Other important books such as *Mektubat* (The Letters) and *Lemalar* (The Flashes) were also written during this period of Nursi's life.³⁷⁹ In his book on *Islam in modern Turkey: an intellectual biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, Vahide states, Nursi started his silent struggle against the irreligious system.³⁸⁰

In addition to the main books of *Risale-i Nur* such as *Sözler*, *Mektubat*, *Lemalar* and *Şualar*, Nursi's supplementary letter to his students and their replies were compiled into three volumes under the title of *Lahikalar* (The Appendices). Later, these letters were included into *Risale-i Nur Collection* of which, one of the most popular was entitled as *Barla Lahikasi* (The Barla Appendix).³⁸¹

The writings of Nursi became more and more popular as a tool to revitalize the faith and Islamic fundamentals. Owing to this, the number of Nursi's followers increased. This made the authorities more disturbed. Since, the newly established government put in place policies to sweep away the role of Islam in the society. Therefore, the

³⁷⁸ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2140.

³⁷⁹ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 26.

³⁸⁰ Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey : An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 205.

³⁸¹ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 26.

office of Shaykh-ul Islam and *Madrasas* were closed. The new law was passed by parliament that prohibited the recitation of Azan in Arabic in the mosques of the country. The authorities redoubled their efforts to exert pressure on Nursi and his students. Towards the end of summer of 1934, Nursi was brought back from Barla to Isparta where he was forced to stay for the next nine months.

Nursi continued writing, despite the difficulties and the strict surveillance by a policeman, posted permanently at his door. Imprisonments continued, nevertheless Nursi finished *Lemalar* (The Flashes), the third book of the *Risale*, while he was in Eskişehir prison.³⁸²

On the 25 April 1935, 120 students of Nursi in Isparta and some others from Van were taken into custody. Soon after this event, Nursi was also arrested for establishing an illegal secret society aimed at undermining the regime. The detainees were held in Eskişehir prison for the duration of trial. After Nursi finishing his book *Lemalar* Nursi began to write *Şualar* there in this prison, which he later refers to as the *Madrasa-i Yūsūfiya* (the School of Joseph).³⁸³

Eskişehir High Criminal Court imposed a sentence of eleven months of incarceration for his short book on the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses of Islamic dress code. Fifteen of his students were jailed for six months. Others were released without a charge.³⁸⁴

In spring of 1936, Nursi was discharged from the Eskişehir prison and exiled to Kastamonu in the Black Sea region of Anatolia. At first, Nursi had to stay in a Police station for three months. Then he was allowed to rent a house nearby the police station. Likewise, Nursi was kept under the strict surveillance of police. He stayed in the city of Kastamonu for seven years.³⁸⁵

In a short time, Nursi began to attract new student in Kastamonu. As well, he kept up a ceaseless round of correspondence with his old students in Isparta. Later on, his

³⁸² Turner and Horkuc, 27.

³⁸³ Turner and Horkuc, 27.

³⁸⁴ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2149.

³⁸⁵ Please see: Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 28; see also: Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 236.

letters and some of their responses were included in the *Risale-i Nur* under the title of *Kastamonu Lahikası* (Kastamonu Appendices). Notably, one of the most important treatises in the *Risale-i Nur*, his *al-Āyāt al-Kubrā* (The Supreme Signs) was also written in Kastamonu. There, Nursi also completed significant sections of *Şualar* (The Rays) of which, the *Fifth Ray* is on *ḥadīths* about the signs of the end of time.³⁸⁶

It is worth noting that, in 1940-1941, high school students in Kastamonu started to visit Nursi and Nursi had given special importance to these school children and responded to all of their questions attentively. Later, some of these responses were put together and published as *Gençlik Rehberi* (A Guide for Youth).³⁸⁷

On 31 August 1943, Nursi and around twenty-two of his students once more were taken into custody on the account of his writings and dissemination of the treatise on 'the end of time'. They were held in Kastamonu Police station. It is recorded that more than 120 students from Kastamonu and Isparta were arrested.

They were brought to trial in Denizli for (a) creating new Sufi sect, (b) forming a political society aimed at subverting the regime, and (c) exploiting religious feelings, in particular, with regards to the treatise on 'the end of time'. Upon the order of the Criminal Court, committee of experts was appointed to examine the writings of Nursi but the released report by the committee concluded that the *Risale-i Nur* consisted of a scholarly explanations of the fundamentals of belief and Islam, and that the writings of Nursi were purely religious in nature. They also confirmed that there was no need for these books to be prohibited. Due to this report, The Court cleared Nursi of all charges. All detainees including Nursi himself were acquitted.³⁸⁸

It is worth noting that even in prison Nursi did not stop writing *Risale-i Nur*. For example, *Fruits of Belief* and the *Eleventh Ray* and his defense speeches were written in Denizli prison, and later added to '*Aşā-yi Mūsā* (The Staff of Moses) from the *Risale-i Nur*.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁶ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 28.

³⁸⁷ Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey : An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 247.

³⁸⁸ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 29.

³⁸⁹ Nursi, *Kaynaklı, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2182.

After being discharged from Denizli prison, Nursi stayed in Şehir Hotel in Denizli for two months. Then he was expelled to Emirdağ where he was forced to live for the following seven years.³⁹⁰

In Emirdağ, Nursi completed his books *'Aşā-yi Mūsā* and *Zulfiqār Majmu'asi* which were later added to the Risale-i Nur collection. It might not be wrong to say that the Risale-i Nur Collection was approaching its completion in Emirdağ. Additionally, Nursi also continued writing letters to his students to different parts of the country. These letters written by Nursi and his prominent students, such as Hulusi Yahyagil, Feyzi and Emin from Kastamonu, were added to the Risale-i Nur and published under the title of *Emirdağ Lahikasi* (Emirdağ Appendix).³⁹¹

On 23 January 1948, Nursi and fifty-four of his students were arrested and taken into custody in Afyon prison. The accusations were virtually identical to those in the Eskişehir and Denizli trials. Therefore, in his defense, Nursi drew to attention that to rise the same questions again “trampled the honor of the three high courts and cast aspersions on their justice”.³⁹² This was the third imprisonment of Nursi. Therefore, Afyon prison was referred as the third *Madrassa-i Yūsūfiya* in the *Risale-i Nur*.³⁹³ During his stay in Emirdağ, Nursi devoted most of his time to the correction of handwritten pieces and duplicate copies of the *Risale-i Nur*. In Afyon prison, Nursi continued writing and finished *al-Khujjah al-Zahrā*, the 15th part of the *Şualar* (The Rays). This treatise can be considered to be the final component of the *Risale-i Nur*.³⁹⁴

In spite of his strong defense, Nursi was pronounced guilty and sentenced for 20 months. Twenty of his students served six months sentence. Nursi immediately appealed against the conviction. Although, the Higher Court overturned the decision taken by Afyon Criminal Court on Nursi's case, due to delays and postponements Nursi still had to serve twenty months in Afyon prison. Nursi was finally released from Afyon Prison on 20th September, 1949.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁰ Nursi, 2:2185–93.

³⁹¹ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 31.

³⁹² Said Nursi, *The Rays* (Sözler Neşriyat, 2004), 370.

³⁹³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdağ Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2133–34.

³⁹⁴ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 32.

³⁹⁵ Vahide, ‘The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’, 241.

2.5 THE THIRD SAID (1950-1960)

Under an escort of police officers Nursi was brought to his home in Afyon, which had been rented by some of his students. Nursi stayed in Afyon for around two months, then he left for his old house in Emirdağ.³⁹⁶

In the last ten years of his life, Nursi witnessed the expansion in the publication and dissemination of the *Risale-i Nur*, and the growth of the *Risale-i Nur* students into a movement. This period featured the emergence of a new generation of students. They were mainly dealing with the printing and publishing activities in Ankara, Istanbul and other centres.³⁹⁷ According to Vahide, this generation of Nursi's students became a kernel in the formation of the *Risale-i Nur* movement in the future.

It is important to note, that this period coincided with the Democratic Party rule, an easing period in the conditions in Turkey in terms of religious freedom and freedom of speech. In addition to this, Vahide further claims that in this period he was thought to be more preoccupied with the social and political matters.³⁹⁸ He started to read daily newspapers and observed social life and developments in Turkey and Islamic world closely.

Furthermore, Nursi sent a letter to Director of Religious Affairs of Turkey, Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, in which he asked to allow free circulation of the *Risale-i Nur* within the country. Nursi also requested in his letter for the publishing and printing of the Qur'an in "miraculous" calligraphy of Hüsrev in photographic form which shows face to face "coinciding" (*tawāfuqāt*) of the word 'Allah' and other Divine Names on its pages. But this project had never been accomplished by The Directorate.³⁹⁹

Another example of Nursi's activities in social and political life of this period can be illustrated briefly by Nursi's official letter to the President of Turkey, Celal Bayar, and his support for Democratic Party in the general elections. Interestingly, in his letter to

³⁹⁶ Horkuc, 'Said Nursi's Ideal for Human Society : Moral and Social Reform in the *Risale-i Nur*', 127.

³⁹⁷ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdağ Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2201.

³⁹⁸ Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 242.

³⁹⁹ Please refer for the full text of this letter in Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdağ Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2203.

Adnan Menderes, Head of the Democratic Party, Nursi referred to him as a 'Hero of Islam'.⁴⁰⁰ For the reason that, as Vahide claimed, Nursi saw the Democrats as an ally of the *Risale-i Nur* students for combating atheistic currents and repairing the moral and spiritual damage caused by the governments headed by Mustafa Kemal and his successors. Therefore, in the multi-party elections Nursi and his followers of the time supported the Democratic Party. However, it is worth noting that Nursi provided only an advisory support; Nursi gave guidance and urged them to formulate policies that would strengthen religious values and reinforce relations with the Islamic world. On the other hand, Nursi considered the Democrats to be "the lesser of evils".⁴⁰¹

Democratic Party uplifted the ban on Arabic *Adhan* (call to prayer) in the mosques and issued a general amnesty. Consequently, Nursi and his followers became free to move and act as they wished. However, the state was not ready to this kind of drastic changes. Besides, many supporters of Republican People's Party, whose agenda was enshrined with *Kemalist* and anti-religious ideas, still held the positions of power and key points of the government structure.

Owing to this, Nursi and his students were again kept under pressure. They had to be circumspect in their dealing with issues which concerned government authorities. Arrests and court cases did not stop. In 1952, Nursi was again requested to attend the case in Istanbul, which was filed against him for the printed book under the title of *Gençlik Rehberi* (The Guide for Youth). The charges were approximately similar to those in the past; infringing the principle of secularism by making religious propaganda.⁴⁰² After his defence Nursi was acquitted without charge. After twenty-seven years, it was the first time when Nursi returned to Istanbul. In the following year, Nursi came to Istanbul again to attend another case.⁴⁰³

Nursi rented a house in Isparta when he came back from Istanbul. He started to make short trips to visit his students and *Dershane*s (the *Risale-i Nur* study circle houses) around Isparta. He visited Barla in 1954. Eventually, Afyon court had issued a report which confirmed that Nursi's works were free from any hidden political agenda or

⁴⁰⁰ Please see for the full text of that letter: 'Tarihçe-i Hayat' in Nursi, 2:1882.

⁴⁰¹ Please see 'Emirdağ Lahikası-II' in Nursi, 2:1914.

⁴⁰² Vahide, 'The Life and Times of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 242.

⁴⁰³ Said Nursi, *Emirdağ LahikâSi*, vol. 1 (Envar Nesriyat, 2004), 135–38.

provocations to violate the secularism and constitutional regime of Turkey. From this date on, free circulation of the *Risale-i Nur* books was allowed. Therefore, Nursi described this event as 'the *Risale-i Nur*'s festival'.⁴⁰⁴

On 12 April 1957, Nursi was invited to lay the foundation of the mosque of the third military division in Isparta. In 1958, the authorised version of Nursi's official biography was published.⁴⁰⁵

Interestingly, towards the end of his life, Nursi organised several trips to cities such as Konya, Eskişehir and Emirdağ. He also arranged several trips to Ankara. It may not be wrong to say that these trips were intended for spreading the *Risale-i Nur* among the public as well as the officials of the time. His second trip to Ankara was on 30th of December, 1959. This visit was publicised falsely and with exaggerated headlines by mainstream media organisations such as *Hurriyet* and *Milliyet*. Therefore, Nursi's car was stopped by police and returned to Emirdağ on the advice of the Cabinet.⁴⁰⁶

In the early morning of 20 March, 1960, Nursi and his closest students left for Urfa for his last trip. He finally arrived in Urfa on 21 March, 1960, and stayed in the Ipek Palas hotel with his students. The Ministry of Interior issued an order requesting Nursi to come back to Isparta but Nursi's health condition did not allow him to return.

Despite his weakness, Nursi received visitors and his students who came to see him in Urfa. In the early morning of 23 March, 1960, Said Nursi died in the Ipek Palace Hotel in Urfa. On 24 March, 1960, the funeral took place in the Ulu Mosque crowded by people, and he was buried in Halilürrahman Dergah in Urfa.

After the military coup of the 1960 in Turkey, following the order of the military officials, on the night of 12 July 1960 Nursi's remains were taken from Halilürrahman Dergah to an unknown spot in Anatolia.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁴ Markham and Birinci, *An Introduction to Said Nursi*, 16.

⁴⁰⁵ Horkuc, 'Said Nursi's Ideal for Human Society: Moral and Social Reform in the *Risale-i Nur*', 225.

⁴⁰⁶ Turner and Horkuc, *Said Nursi*, 39.

⁴⁰⁷ Vahide, *Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 345–47.

2.6 DISTINCTIVE FEATURES BETWEEN THE WRITINGS OF THE OLD SAID AND THE NEW SAID

As illustrated in the previous parts of this chapter, Nursi's whole life was devoted to the goal of proving the Qur'an to be the main means of attaining the true knowledge and progress. Therefore, Nursi devised himself with acquiring extensive learning tools in numerous branches of knowledge. However, in the Old Said period, Nursi sought other urgent goals to revitalise the Empire and the Islamic world.

On the other hand, with transformation from the Old Said into the New Said, Nursi devoted himself exclusively to the Qur'an and to the reinvigoration of the faith and belief of individuals in the society.⁴⁰⁸

It is worth highlighting some of the distinctive features of the Old Said and the New Said from the intellectual point of view. It also needs to be underlined, as Işeri pointed out, that three periods of Nursi's life are not completely different from each other. Rather, each of these periods may be taken as a series of developments in his life.⁴⁰⁹ There are also differences between the works of the Old Said and New Said to be discussed. This should confirm if there are thematic changes in the themes of *al-'adl* in the writings of Old and New Said.

A comparison of the two periods of Nursi's life reveals that the Old Said studied philosophy along with the religious sciences. Nursi's approach to the modern sciences and religious sciences can be best illustrated by his words:

The light of the heart (*wijdān*) is the religious sciences whereas the light of reason are the modern sciences [philosophy]. The truth arises from the blend of the two. When they are separated, the former produces dogmatism and the latter deception and suspicion.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁸ Vahide, 'Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi', 1.

⁴⁰⁹ Mustafa Said Işeri, 'Bediüzzaman'ın Üç Hayat Devri: Eski Said, Yeni Said ve Üçüncü Said', *Kopru*, no. 112 (2010), <http://www.koprudergisi.com/index.asp?Bolum=EskiSayilar&Goster=Yazi&YaziNo=1076>.

⁴¹⁰ Please see 'Münazarat' in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Işarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1858.

Moreover, in parts of his *Risale-i Nur*, many times Nursi himself mentioned that the Old Said had been involved in philosophy. For example, in *Sözler*, Nursi is characterised as being an author much concerned with philosophy.⁴¹¹ In a different place in *Sözler*, Nursi again refers to the Old Said: “Let philosophers who have studied secular science explain everything in terms of cause and effect, like the Old Said”.⁴¹² Furthermore, in the beginning of Turkish translated edition of *Mathnawī al-Nūriya*, The Old Said was again characterised as someone who dealt with the intellectual sciences (*‘ulūm-i ‘aqliyya*) and philosophy.⁴¹³ In addition to this, The Old Said was spoken of as one “[who] studied the deep questions of the *‘ilm-i hikmat* (philosophy) and *‘ilm-i haqiqat* (true knowledge) and discussed the big [philosophical] questions with great scholars of his time”.⁴¹⁴ Moreover, in *Lemalar* (The Flashes), Nursi writes:

Western science and civilization had to some extent a place in the Old Said’s thought, so when the New Said embarked on his journeys of the mind and the heart, they were transformed into sicknesses of the heart and were the cause of excessive difficulties. The New Said therefore wanted to shake off from his mind that fallacious philosophy and dissolute civilization. In order to silence the emotions of his evil-commanding soul, which testified in favour of Europe, he was compelled to hold in his spirit the following discussion – which in one respect is very brief and in another is long – with the collective personality of Europe.⁴¹⁵

Looking at the above-mentioned discussions as a whole, it seems that the Old Said was engaged in Western philosophy and thoughts along with the religious and Islamic sciences. Whereas, the New Said was suffered from the sicknesses of heart caused by erroneous and misleading philosophy and dissolute civilization. On the other hand, the New Said took the Qur’an as his sole inspirational source in his writings.⁴¹⁶

Further distinctive features between the Old and New Said can be seen in the methods and styles of his writings. For instance, the brevity and conciseness (*al-ījāz*) are

⁴¹¹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:245.

⁴¹² Nursi, 1:146.

⁴¹³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1277.

⁴¹⁴ Nursi, 2:1277.

⁴¹⁵ Nursi, *The Flashes*, 2004, 160.

⁴¹⁶ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:516.

predominately found in the writings of Old Said such as *Muḥākamāt* and *al-Ishārāt al-‘Ijāz* and *Munāzarāt*.⁴¹⁷

Nursi employed short and brief sentences to explain deep phenomenon in his books during the Old Said period. According to Balcin, the work of Old Said was heavily poetic, whereas the work of New Said tends to be more prosaic in style.⁴¹⁸ To be more precise, as Nursi mentioned, the audience of the Old Said’s writings was Nursi himself and his students who were advanced in religious sciences.⁴¹⁹

In addition to this, Nursi asserted in the *Risale-i Nur*, that methods of his reasoning and rationing were sufficient to meet the expectation of mind in the Old Said writings.⁴²⁰ In other words, the style of writing in the Old Said period tends to be more logic based and aimed at satisfying intellect of a human being. On the other hand, according to Nursi, much of the writings in the New Said period resulted from an inspiration (*ilhām*) and divinely influenced thoughts (*Şunūḥāt*).⁴²¹

Therefore, Nursi further elaborated, the New Said’s writings not only satisfy human intellect and mind, but also indulge heart, spirit and other subtle faculties. Apart from this, Nursi also stated that the Old Said sometimes employed strong language in his writings.⁴²²

A further difference in the Old Said and the New Said can be seen in his writing style and the means of reaching the true knowledge. In *Barla Lâhikası*, Nursi pointed to some of the different ways or means by which he attains the realities. For example, during the Old Said period, Nursi stressed, he came to know the true meaning of life and universe through his power of knowledge and reasoning of the intellect. Whereas, during the new Said period, he attained the understanding of life and universe through

⁴¹⁷ Said Nursi, *İşârâtü’l-İ‘câz* (Istanbul: Söz Basım Yayın, 2006), 17.

⁴¹⁸ Kerim Balci to Dusmamat Karimov, ‘RE: Sorular: Eski Said ve Yeni Said’, 2 August 2013.

⁴¹⁹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü’l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1277–78.

⁴²⁰ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:232.

⁴²¹ Nursi, *Emirdağ LahikâSi*, 1:110.

⁴²² Said Nursi, *Sözler* (Istanbul: Envar Neşriyat, 2004), 387.

the spiritual inspiration of the heart (*shuhūd-i qalb*) and the light of conscience (*nūr-i wijdān*).⁴²³

Besides, in his *Mektubat*, Nursi mentioned some of the unique features of his writings during the New Said Period: “[they] have been bestowed [1] instantaneously [2] and suddenly [3] in consequence of some need arising from my spirit, [4] not from any outside cause”.⁴²⁴ In a different place in *Mektubat*, Nursi again drew attention to this point: “The majority of the Words and Letters [which are the writings of the New Said] that have been written occurred to my heart instantaneously [suddenly and] without the exercise of will; and they turned out very well.”⁴²⁵

Another important difference between the ‘three Saids’ can be grasped from his political life. In other words, Nursi’s behaviour towards politics varied greatly in every three periods of his life. On the whole, the Old Said was involved with politics mostly. Whereas, the New Said seemed apolitical in social life.

It is possible to hypothesise that these conditions are likely to have impact on the themes of *al-‘adl* in the writings of both the Old and New Said.

2.6.1 Thematic evolution of the notion of *al-‘adl* in Nursi’s writings

Before analysing the thematic evolution of the notion of *al-‘adl*, it is worth to touch on the hermeneutics of Nursi. In *al-Mathnawī al-Nūriya*, Nursi lists the main features of eloquence of the speech or written text as follows: (a) speaker or subject (*al-mutakallim*); (b) addressee (*al-mukhāṭab*); (c) aim (*al-maqṣad*); and (d) place or context (*al-maqām*).⁴²⁶ Therefore, it may not be wrong to say, that themes of *al-‘adl* in Nursi’s writings may vary depending on its addressee, context, place and time.

In his article on Nursi’s understanding of *al-‘adl*, Turner argues that there are three different but interconnected spheres in which *al-‘adl* functions in Nursi’s writings: (a) the relationship between God and the cosmos in general; (b) the relationship between God and man in particular; (c) the relationship in which man enjoys with his fellow

⁴²³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, 2:1517.

⁴²⁴ Said Nursi, *The Letters*, trans. Sükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sözlür Nesriyat, 1994), 432.

⁴²⁵ Nursi, 324.

⁴²⁶ Said Nursi, *al-Mathnawī al-Nūriya*, (Sözlür, 2005), p. 156.

man.⁴²⁷ For the categorisation of the themes of *al-‘adl* in Nursi’s writings, this section of the study aims to analyse which sphere of *al-‘adl* is discussed most in the Old Said and the New Said’s period of writings.

Table 4: List of the Old Said’s writings in chronological order

| No: | Title | Year |
|-----|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Ƙızıl ‘icāz</i> | 1899 |
| 2 | <i>İki Mekteb-i Musibetin Şehadetnamesi</i> | 1909 |
| 3 | <i>Nutuk</i> | 1910 |
| 4 | <i>Münazarat</i> | 1911 |
| 5 | <i>Hutbe-i Şamiye</i> | 1911 |
| 6 | <i>Muhakemat</i> | 1911 |
| 7 | <i>Devai’l- Yeis Zeylinin Zeyli</i> | 1912 |
| 8 | <i>Talikat</i> | 1913 |
| 9 | <i>Al-Ishārāt al- ‘Ijāz</i> | 1914-1916 (printed in 1918) |
| 10 | <i>Tarihçe-i Hayat</i> | 1919 |
| 11 | <i>Nokta</i> | 1919 |
| 12 | <i>Hutuvat-ı Sitte</i> | 1919 |
| 13 | <i>Sünuhāt</i> | 1919 |
| 14 | <i>Rumuz</i> | 1919 |

⁴²⁷ Colin Turner, ‘Bediuzzaman and the Concept of Adl: Towards a Nursian Ontology of Divine Justice’, *Asian Journal of Social Science* 38, no. 4 (2010): 554–82, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853110X517782>.

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------|------|
| 14 | <i>Şuaat</i> | 1919 |
| 15 | <i>Tuluat</i> | 1919 |
| 16 | <i>İşarat</i> | 1919 |
| 17 | <i>Hakikat Çekirdekleri-I</i> | 1919 |
| 18 | <i>Hakikat Çekirdekleri 2</i> | 1921 |
| 19 | <i>Lemaat</i> | 1921 |

Table 4 provides the list of Nursi's works during the Old Said period in a chronological order.

The single most striking observation that emerges from comparing the themes of *al-'adl* between the Old and the New Said's writings, is that the discussion of justice in the Old Said's writings was mainly centred around the relationships and social intercourse between man and his fellow man.

It is often seen in the Old Said's works that the term *al-'adālah* is used by Nursi to refer to equality, parity, likeness (*al-musāwah*). For example, in *Şunūhāt*, Nursi wrote: "Justice without equality is not justice".⁴²⁸ In *Khuṭba-i Shāmiya*, Nursi further argued that:

Yes, it is only through the truths of Islam that the Islam will prosper and flourish. Islamic society can function only through the Shari'a of Islam and its worldly happiness be achieved. Otherwise justice [*al-'adālah*] will disappear, public security be overturned⁴²⁹

Furthermore, in *Diwān-i Ḥarbi 'Urfī*, Nursi maintain that Sharia could be the means of happiness and pure justice⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2052.

⁴²⁹ Said Nursi, *The Damascus Sermon* (Istanbul: Sözler Nesriyat, 1996), 67.

⁴³⁰ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1920.

Nursi also touched on the concept of *al-‘adālah* very briefly and concisely within the context of creational sense and with regard to relations between God and man as well.⁴³¹

It worth mentioning that Nursi wrote *al-Mathnawī al-Nūriya* between 1922 and 1926, which coincides with his transitional period from the Old Said into the New Said.

Table 5: List of Nursi's works in his the New Said Period in chronological order

| No: | Title | Year |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 1 | <i>Et-Tefekkürü el-İmaniyyu er-Refi'</i> | 1918-1930 |
| 2 | <i>Nur'un İlk Kapısı</i> | 1925 |
| 3 | <i>Sözler</i> | 1926-1930 |
| 4 | <i>Mektûbat</i> | 1929-1934 |
| 5 | <i>Barla Lahikası</i> | 1926-1935 |
| 6 | <i>Lem'alar</i> | 1932-1936 |
| 7 | <i>Şualar</i> | 1936-1949 |
| 8 | <i>Kastamonu Lahikası</i> | 1936-1943 |
| 9 | <i>Emirdağ Lâhikası-I</i> | 1944-1947 |
| 10 | <i>Emirdağ Lâhikası-II</i> | 1949-1960 |
| 11 | <i>Nur Âleminin Bir Anahtarı</i> | 1953 |

⁴³¹ Please see for further details of Nursi's discourse of *al-‘adl* in a creational sense and in connection with the relationship between God and man, Said Nursi, *Bediüzzaman Said Nursi'nin ilk dönem eserleri. (Lûgatli, kaynakli, indeksli)*. (Istanbul: Söz, 2012), 215.

Table 5 lists Nursi's works during the New Said period in a chronological order. A general overview of Nursi's works after 1918 shows that Nursi elaborated on the concept of *al-'adl* in different parts of *Sözler*, *Mektûbat*, *Lemalar* and *Şualar*.

It is interesting to note that in all of his works in the New Said period, the themes of *al-'adl* seem to be centred around the relationship between God and Cosmos, in particular, and in the creational sense, rather than the relationship between man and his fellow man. For example, in *Sözler*, Nursi discussed justice as one of the reasons of resurrection. Elsewhere, in *Mektûbat*, the concept of justice is examined as being one of the proofs for the existence and unity (*tawhîd*) of God.⁴³²

Therefore, in general, in the old Said period it seems that the themes of *al-'adl* are elaborated overwhelmingly within the context of the equality and justice between man and his fellow man, whereas, in Nursi's writings after 1918, the beginning of the New Said period, the concept of *al-'adl* was centred on the relationship between God and Cosmos, and between God and Man.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued diachronic analysis of Nursi's writings on *'adl* and important events of his life, which are closely related to the notion of justice. The purpose of this study was to determine whether Nursi's use of the concept of justice was centered around the creational sense and the relationship between God and Cosmos, in particular, in the writings of New Said such as *Sözler*, *Mektubat*, *Lemalar* and *Şualar*, or between the individuals of society in Old Said's writings, such as *Muḥākamāt* and *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*. The study sought to establish if the difference is a later development, an irregularity of habit, or caused by the effect of the events in his life.

Above-mentioned findings suggest that, in general, in the Old Said period, the themes of *al-'adl* are studied largely in relation to the equality and justice between man and his fellow man. Whereas, concept of *al-'adl* was centred on the relationship between God and Cosmos and between God and Man in the New Said period.

⁴³² Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:452.

A second major finding was the significant difference in style and method between the Old Said and New Said's works.

Taken together, from the above-mentioned discussions, it can be suggested that the discussion of the themes of *al-'adl* in relation to different contexts were not a complete change or evolution in his discourse, but rather a series of developments of his ideas.

Chapter 3

THE CONCEPT OF ‘ADL IN CREATION ACCORDING TO SAID NURSI: JUSTICE AS BALANCE AND ORDER

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Nursi considers ‘*adl* as one of the four main aims and essential elements of the Qur’ān; the others are *tawhīd* (monotheism), *nubuwwah* (prophethood) and *ḥashr* (resurrection).⁴³³ He also claims that these four aims exist and prevail in the entirety of the Qur’ān; so much so that, one could deduce that the manifestations of these four concepts in almost every *ayat* (verse).

Upon scrutiny of the *Risale-i Nur*, it becomes clear that the sciences of belief are its central topic, and Nursi examines almost every possible topic related to believing in God in it. Therefore, in the *Risale-i Nur*, the concept of ‘*adl* (justice) is discussed in the framework of *nizām* (balance) and *tawzīn* (balancing) and *muwāzanah* (balance). Thus, Nursi seems to be employing the concept of ‘*adl* to prove the necessity of resurrection, i.e., life after death and the necessary existence of God. This is significant since *hashr* (resurrection), and *tawhīd* (divine unity of God) are the two most important aims of the Qur’ān

This chapter will analyse the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the creational sense as a balance and an order in the universe from Nursi’s perspective. It will also discuss the role of holistic examination of *al-asmā al-ḥusnā* (Names of God) in Nursi’s design argument.

This chapter is organised in the following way: First, it will examine the importance of the Divine Names in Nursi’s writings. Then it will highlight the definitional problem of the notion of ‘*adl* in his writings and examine his approach to see whether it is compatible with the Qur’anic ‘*adl*. Later, it will evaluate the Nursian concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in two realms, Macrocosm, and Microcosm. Finally, it will discuss Nursi’s design argument for the existence of God, his argument for the existence of

⁴³³ Said Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘Ijāz Fī Mizān Al-‘Ijāz*, ed. İhsān Qāsim Şālihī (Istanbul: Sözlür, 1999), 23.

the hereafter from the Divine Names and his argument for the hereafter from justice and injustice. Finally, it will conclude with some objections to Nursian design argument.

This chapter will seek to answer following questions: What is the definition of justice according to Nursi? How do the manifestations of Divine Names of God interact with each other? How does Nursi use the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) and Divine Names of God as a tool to formulate his design argument for the existence of God?

3.2 DEGREES OF MANIFESTATIONS OF DIVINE NAMES INTERACTING WITH EACH OTHER: THE NURSIAN PERSPECTIVE

The concept of Divine Names can be considered as one of the core themes of *Risale-i Nur*. Indeed, the way Nursi articulates the Divine Names and the methods he employs in explaining the manifestations of these names on various things are at the very core of his writings. In other words, as Berghout points out, in order to understand the Nursian discourse, one has to be aware of the importance of the use and the function of the Divine Names as the core element of *Risale-i Nur*. Therefore, the concept of Divine Names (*Al-Asmā al-Husnā*) provides a deep and comprehensive outlook to any theme in *Risale-i Nur*, including the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice).

In his writings, when Nursi argues the manifestation of Divine Names, he sometimes draws the reader’s attention to the degrees of manifestations interacting with each other. That is what he calls ‘*grift tajalli*’ (intricate manifestation) of Divine Names. In this regard, in *The Words*, Nursi writes:

[God] has functions and attributes in the levels of His dominicality, which are all different but that look to one another; and Names and signatures in the spheres of His Divinity which are all different but which appear one within the other; and manifestations and revelations in the performance of His splendid deeds which are all different but which resemble each other; and titles in the disposal of His power which are all different, but which hint of one another; and sacred appearances in the manifestation of His attributes which are all different but which all point to each other; and acts of disposal in the manifestation of His actions which are all different but complete one

another; and He has a majestic dominicality in His multi-coloured art and creatures whose aspects are all different but which gaze on one another⁴³⁴

Throughout the *Risale-i Nur*, Nursi highlights that manifested Divine Names in the universe are like intersecting circles, which blend into one other like the seven colours of the rainbow. In other words, they penetrate each other, assist one another and adorn one another's work of art.

To be more precise, Nursi further elaborates on this point. He explains that once God creates something, His divine name *al-Muhyī* (Giver of Life) manifests on it. The Name *al-Ḥakīm* (All-Wise) also becomes visible, as the body of that conscious being is organised in a rational manner. At the same time, a manifestation of the name *al-Rahīm* (Munificent) adorns the body. Concurrently, the names *al-Rahmān* (all-Compassionate) and *al-Razzāq* (Provider) are also manifested. The former presents the body's needs benevolently, and the latter also provides the material and spiritual sustenance for the existence of that living creatures in unexpected ways. That is to say, the manifestation of the name of *al-Muhyī* (Giver of Life), *al-Ḥakīm* (All-Wise), *al-Rahīm* (Munificent), *al-Rahmān* (All-Compassionate) and *al-Razzāq* (Provider) interact with another in creation.⁴³⁵

In order to clarify further, Nursi gives the example of a king, who has different positions or titles in the offices of his government. The same king can have various names, titles and marks in his sovereignty. For instance, he can be mentioned as the Wise 'Judge' in the legislative branch, as the 'Sovereign' in the administrative services and as the 'Commander-in-Chief' in the army.

Similarly, Nursi further argues that the manifestation of one divine name can be the more prominent than the others in a particular creature. Other names can be subjugated to that particular dominant name in certain circles. In other words, other names may manifest under that particular Divine Name.⁴³⁶

⁴³⁴ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 589.

⁴³⁵ See Appendix 1: Names and Attributes of God in Islām

⁴³⁶ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 588.

According to Gulen, an essence of divinity can only be understood accurately by taking all the Divine Names into consideration at once. In this way, he further notes that it is important to consider all the ordinances required by the Divine Names and to preserve their mutual proportion. Gulen supports his point of view with a quotation from *The Words*:

[The Qur'an] has brought together all the ordinances dictated by the Divine Names and preserved their mutual proportion, and it has brought together the dominical and divine acts with perfect balance. Thus, this preserving and balance and bringing together is a characteristic which is certainly not present in man's works nor in the products of the thought of the eminent among mankind.⁴³⁷

Furthermore, Aymaz points out that in the *Risale-i Nur*, the Divine Names are elucidated in detail. In other words, Nursi gives an explanation for each Divine Name when they are connected to others; thus, Nursi's approach to the Divine Names is holistic. On the other hand, some Sufi scholars who intensified the attention on the name of *Wadūd* (All-Loving) in their spiritual journeys, usually neglected the name of '*Alīm* (All-Knowing).⁴³⁸

Therefore, there is a clear need for a holistic examination of the Divine Names in Nursi's writings. For the sake of this research, it is worthwhile highlighting that to understand the manifestation of *al-Ādil* (All-Just) in the Nursian perspective, one needs to consider other Divine Names such as *Al-Qādir* (the Omnipotent), *al-Ḥakīm* (All-Wise), *al-Raḥmān* (All-Compassionate), *al-Muzayyin* (beautifier), *Al-Badī'* (The Incomparable), *Al-Qahhār* (The Subduer), *Ar-Rahīm* (Munificent), *Al-'Alīm*, *As-Sami'* (The Hearer of All), and *Al-Baṣīr* (The All-Seeing), because, they are visible concurrently in one single thing and the interact with each other.

When the role and function of the Divine Names are examined thoroughly from the Nursian perspective, one can understand why Nursi pays particular importance to them in his discourse. He makes the Divine Names a founding framework for the study of the Qur'an and its main themes and visions of life.

⁴³⁷ Fethullah Gülen, *Cemre Beklentisi*, Kırık testi 10 (Istanbul: Nesil Yayinlari, 2011), sec. Esma-i Husnanin butunune birden nazar.

⁴³⁸ Abdullah Aymaz, *Risale-i Nur Readings*, interview by Dushmanat Karimov, 19 February 2013, Personal Notes.

3.3 THE CONCEPT OF 'ADL IN THE RISALE-I NUR : THE DEFINITIONS OF 'ADL AS PRESENTED IN THE WRITINGS OF NURSI

Nursi does not attempt to offer clear cut definitions for 'adl but provides many examples to explain the process from which one can easily deduce 'adl. He also directs attention to the manifestations of the Name All-Just God. In this respect, two points are prominent with regard to Nursi's style.

First, Nursi is an interpreter of the Qur'ān because he uses Qur'ānic methods in interpreting concepts and themes. Before delving more deeply into this style, it is useful to touch on what the Qur'ānic methods are. The Qur'ān has its own original and wise method in answering questions. For example, in *sūrah al-Baqarah*, questions about new moons and things which is taken as spoils of war are asked.⁴³⁹ However, this example should not be taken as specifically meaning the moon and spoils of war. The Qur'ān explains the essence of them as "they are but signs to mark fixed periods of time in (the affairs of) men, and for Pilgrimage" in Q. 2:189 and "(such) spoils are at the disposal of Allah and the Messenger" in Q. 8:1. Hence, the Qur'ān elucidates things, not according to what someone wishes to know, but what one needs to know according to the Qur'ānic realities of nature. In other words, the Qur'ān knows the true meanings of answers in reality, and it draws a clear picture of everything with this idiosyncratic method in order to be able to facilitate our understanding. Nursi mainly utilises this method of the Qur'ān in his writings and explains the notion of justice according to the needs of the reader.

Second, Nursi prefers to explore certain notions, such as *īmān* (belief), *ṣāliḥāt* (good deeds) and 'adl (justice) with the method of homiletic and didactic rather than descriptive methods, as descriptive methods restrict the meaning. If a descriptive method had been used, some of the certain notions may not have been clearly

⁴³⁹ The Qur'ān (2:189, 8:1). In the verse 2:189, the question about the new moons is asked as "They ask thee concerning the New Moons. Say: They are but signs to mark fixed periods of time in (the affairs of) men, and for Pilgrimage". The question on the spoils of war is asked as "They ask thee concerning (things taken as) spoils of war. Say: "(such) spoils are at the disposal of Allah and the Messenger"

explained. Therefore, in parallel with the Qur'ān, Nursi does not define things. But, he explains how they function.

In this respect, since the notion of 'adl and manifestations of the name All-Just are discussed within the overall context of Resurrection, Hereafter, Divine Unity and Divine Determining, Nursi's thoughts on the notion of 'adl is extensively elaborated in his books, such as *The Words*, *The Letters*, *The Flashes* and *The Rays*. In particular, in *The Tenth Word* (Book on Resurrection and the Hereafter) and *The Thirtieth Flash* (Book on Six Divine Names). Therefore, in order to be able to understand Nursi's perspective on the notion of 'adl, one needs to examine these abovementioned books.

In the following part, some key definitions of 'adl in the context of *Risale-i Nur* will be examined and checked against verses of the Qur'ān.

First, 'adl is the endowing existence of all things, giving shape and putting in suitable place in accordance with precise equilibrium and in an appropriate measure.

Second, 'adl is the giving to all things their rights in accordance with their disposition and providing all the necessities of their being and all the requirements of life in the most fitting form. It can be said that these two definitions were deducted from Q. 82:6-8 in which Allah addresses the human being, saying: "O man! What has seduced thee from thy Lord Most Beneficent? Him Who created thee. Fashioned thee in due proportion, and gave thee a just bias; In whatever form He wills, does He put thee together", and the assertion that what 'adl actually denotes, as Turner points out, is the 'putting things in their rightful place'.

Third, 'adl is the giving of answers to every petition and request made by the tongue of disposition, and of natural need or necessity.⁴⁴⁰

Fourth, 'adl is one of the four powerful and comprehensive spiritual elements, the others being wisdom, beneficence and compassion. They are as important as light, air,

⁴⁴⁰ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*.

water and earth in corporal world. They are the manifestations of the Names All-Wise, Generous, Just and Merciful.⁴⁴¹

Fifth, ‘*adl* is the giving to wrongdoers their due, by way of requital and punishment.⁴⁴²

The following verses refer to this meaning:

Nor is thy Lord ever unjust (in the least) to His Servants” (Qur’ān 41:46) and “And not one will thy Lord treat with injustice” (Qur’ān 18:49) and “None will be unjustly dealt with” (Qur’ān 16:111) and “Verily Allah will not deal unjustly with man in aught.” (Qur’ān 44:10) and “Allah is never unjust in the least degree (Qur’ān 40:04)

Sixth; ‘*adl* as the act of weighing and balance, which are the manifestations of the Names Justice and All-Just in this world is the single act and truth demonstrating the necessary existence and Unity of Single Being.⁴⁴³

Seventh, ‘*adl* is one of the principles that are the truths of the Qur’ān and Islam. These truths are powerful and all-encompassing truths which govern the universe and all the beings in it, and they ensure happiness in this world and the next. The same principle is referred to in the Qur’ān (16.90) as “God commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion”.⁴⁴⁴

Therefore, ‘*adl* is an act of measuring and balancing in the universe for Nursi. In other words, it is a manifestation of the Name All-Just as order and balance and ordering and balancing in all living and inanimate beings.

In the next section, the concept of *al-‘adl* will be examined from this perspective.

3.4 BALANCE AND ORDER IN THE UNIVERSE.

3.4.1 Macrocosm: Kitāb-i Kabīr-i Kāināt (The Great Book of Universe)

Instead of analysing the arguments for the existence of a designer or its monotheistic God we rather analyse Nursi’s interpretation of tools as balance and order in the

⁴⁴¹ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 97.

⁴⁴² Nursi, 98.

⁴⁴³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:800.

⁴⁴⁴ Said Nursi, *The Flashes*, trans. Sükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sözlür, 2004), 403.

creation of the universe in this part of the text. These tools are used to develop his argument on the existence of God and its unity.

In Nursian discourse, his line of argumentation is similar to teleological arguments. For example, in his *Ishārāt al-‘ijāz fī miẓān al-ījāz*, Nursi lists two arguments for the existence of a monotheistic God. These are *limmī* and *innī* arguments: (a) *limmī* is an argument from cause to effect. A well-known example of this argument is fire. The existence of fire indicates the existence of smoke by inference, and (b) *innī* may be defined as an argument from effect to cause. For instance, the existence of smoke can be an evidence of fire. According to Nursi, the *innī* proof is sounder than the *limmī* proof. Nursi goes on discussing this based on *imkānī* (contingency). According to him, contingent beings are equal in respect of being or non-being. Thus, the inference follows that there must be a necessary being to choose this.

Furthermore, Nursi argues that the *limmī* argument can also be based on *ḥudūthī* (createdness). For him, since there is constant change and renewal in beings, thus it can be inferred that there must be a monotheistic God to provide them with their existence (*al-mujid*).

In addition, Nursi further draws our attention to two other arguments. These are: (a) *ikhtirā‘ī* (giving existence out of nothing); and (b) *‘ināyatī* (divine providence).⁴⁴⁵ For Nursi, the *‘ināyatī* argument relates to the order which is found in the universe and the benefits and instances of wisdom which stem from this order. Nursi further argues that this order, which is the sources of benefit and wisdom, may indicate the existence of the Orderer (*Naẓẓām*). He also emphasises that the Orderer proves the Maker’s intention and wisdom.⁴⁴⁶ Nursi does not seem to discuss the orderly creation of the universe (*niẓām*) explicitly in respect of *al-‘adl* (justice) or with regard to the Divine Name All-Just (*al-‘Adl*) in his Old Said writings.

⁴⁴⁵ Said Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Miẓān Al-ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur‘anic Conciseness]* (Istanbul: Sözlür, 2006), 150.

⁴⁴⁶ Nursi, 150.

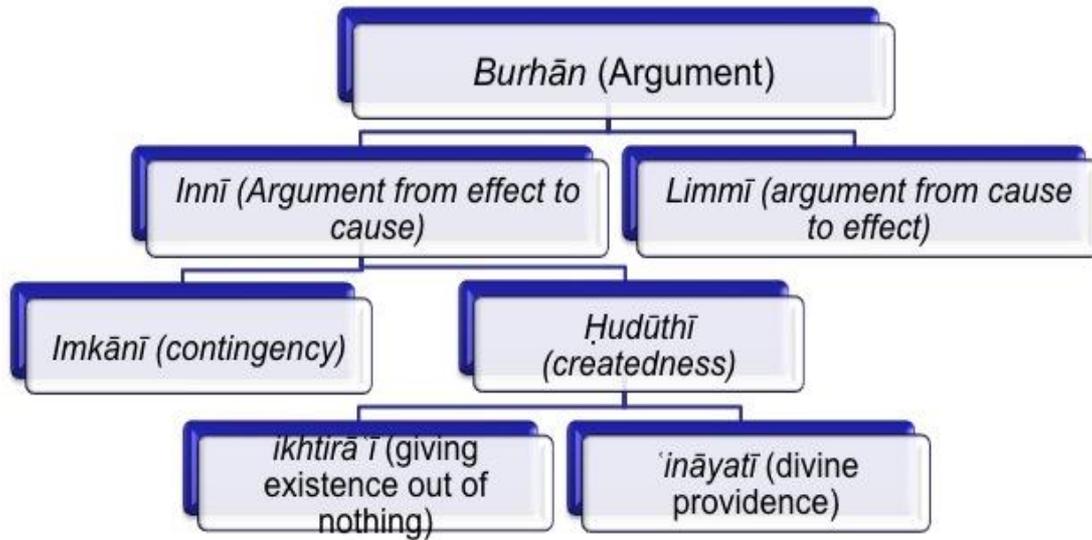


Figure 5: Classification of Nursi's teleological arguments

Based on our earlier discussions, Nursi's categorisation of evidence and proof regarding the order and providence of a monotheistic God can be seen in Figure 1. This shows that Nursi's writings on the order and balance in the universe in his Old Said writings are discussed more technically within the boundaries of *‘ilm al-dalālah* (Science of proof).

In other words, Nursi examined the order and balance in the universe, in his earlier life, using the methodological concepts of *al-‘Ilm al-Dalālah* and *al-Manṭiq* (Logic) such as *al-burhān al-limmī* and *innī* and *al-dalīl al-‘ināyatī* and *ikhtirā'ī*.⁴⁴⁷

Nursi also analyses *al-‘adl* as balance and order in his New Said writings, later on, but here the discussions of the themes of *al-‘adl* centre on *al-Asmā al-Ḥusnā* (Divine Names) such as *al-Ḥakīm* and *al-‘Adl*, the concept of *ḥashr* (resurrection) and *tawḥīd* (unity of God).⁴⁴⁸

As Kuspinar notes, in *The Words*, like his predecessors, Nursi examines justice as balance and equilibrium in the creational sense in two realms: (a) microcosm, i.e. the human realm; and (b) macrocosm, i.e. the realm of the universe. According to Kuspinar, the Qur'ān speaks of these two realms, i.e., microcosm and macrocosm as

⁴⁴⁷ Please see for detailed discussion: Nursi, 150.

⁴⁴⁸ Please see: Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 77–95; see also: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:452, 771, 800–801.

in Q. 41:53: “Soon will We show them our Signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth) [viz. in the universe], and in their own souls [viz. in human bodies and souls]”. In this regard, one can argue that the balance and order which are seen in these two domains are obvious signs of God. Therefore, Nursi also discusses that order and balance in the universe testify to the wisdom and justice of the All-Just (*‘Adl*) and All-Wise (*Hakīm*).

According to Nursi, the name *al-‘Adl* (All-Just) is the Greatest Name or “one of the six lights of the Greatest Divine Name”. As was mentioned before, the various manifestations of the Divine Names may be seen interacting with each other in the universe. In *The Flashes*, Nursi writes on the name of *al-‘Adl* (All-Just). He uses a verse of the Qur’ān, Q. 15:21, in which Allah says: “And there is not a thing, but its (sources and) treasures (inexhaustible) are with Us, but We only send down thereof in due [*biqadarin*] and ascertainable measures.”. This verse could be a foundation for this discussion.

The lexical meaning of the root *q-d-r* refers to measurement and balance. In his writings on justice, Nursi quotes other verses from *surat al-Rahmān* (Q. 55:7): “And the Firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the Balance of Justice (*al-mīzān*). In order that ye may not transgress due balance (*al-mīzān*). So establish weight with justice (*al-qist*) and fall not short in the balance (*al-mīzān*).” It is worth noting here that the Nursian analysis of the concept of *al-‘adl* is in line with the Qur’ānic outlook of justice. As was examined in the chapter on the concept of *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān, the concept of *al-qadar* and *al-wazn* are examined within the semantic field of *al-‘adl*.

Nursi begins by arguing that the universe is like a magnificent palace in a city which is subjected to constant destruction and reconstruction. Within the city, he further goes on to say, is a country, which is constantly disturbed by on-going war and emigration. In addition, within the country, there is a world, which is always affected by death and life. Despite all transformation and constant changes, Nursi argues that an amazing balance and order continue to exist in all of them, i.e. in the place, city, country and world. Therefore, Nursi claims that by inference, these transformations, outgoings and incomings in these innumerable beings indicate an orthodoxly

conceived monotheistic God who administers and regulates with well-measured and well-balanced scales. He further debates:

If causes had been free and unrestrained, which try to destroy the balance and overrun everything, with a single fish laying a thousand eggs and a single flower like the poppy producing twenty thousand seeds, and with the onslaught and violence of change and the elements flowing in floods, or if it had been referred to aimless, purposeless chance, anarchic blind forces, and unconscious dark nature, the equilibrium [*muwāzanah*] of beings and balance of the universe would have been so utterly destroyed that within a year, indeed within a day, there would have been chaos.⁴⁴⁹

It seems that the following is the basic argument that Nursi means to defend:

1. The natural world contains amazing balance, order and equilibrium. (Premise)
2. This fact is well explained if the balance, order and equilibrium in the universe and world as well as within our creation are regulated and administered by the Divine Name all- Just God. (Premise)
3. If observable balance, order and equilibrium did not stem from the justice of a monotheistic God, all this apparent balance and order in the universe would become total chaos. (Premise)
4. (Hence) Certainly, this balance, order and equilibrium in the universe and beings are being measured and assessed every moment on the scales of an orthodoxly conceived monotheistic God who sees and supervises the whole universe.

To be more precise, the above-mentioned argument can be summarised in following way:

If Not God then Chaos

Not Chaos (Order)

Then God

⁴⁴⁹ Nursi, *The Flashes*, 2004, 397.

Furthermore, Nursi claims that sensitive balance and fine measure exist in polarities and complimentary opposites such as light-and-dark, life-and-death and construction-and-deconstruction:

Everything from the cells of an animate body, the red and white corpuscles in the blood, the transformations of minute particles, and the mutual proportion and relation of the body's organs, to the incomings and outgoings of the seas, the income and expenditure of springs under the earth, the birth and death of animals and plants, the destruction of autumn and the reconstruction of spring, the duties and motion of the elements and the stars, and the alternations, struggles and clashes of death and life, light and darkness, and heat and cold, are ordered and weighed with so sensitive a balance, so fine a measure, that the human mind can nowhere see any waste or futility, just as human science and philosophy see everywhere and point out the most perfect order and beautiful symmetry. Indeed, human science and philosophy are a manifestation and interpreter of that order and symmetry.⁴⁵⁰

Furthermore, balance and order in the heavenly bodies of the solar systems and the plants and animal species of the terrestrial ecosystems are adduced as particular evidence of Divine justice (*al-'Adl*). Nursi draws our attention to the evidence for fine-tuning in the movement of the sun and its planets. He also points out the anthropic cosmological principle and irreducible complexity in the movement of the earth:

[The earth] travels an orbit of twenty-four thousand years in one year, not scattering or shaking the things stored up and stacked on its face, despite its extraordinary speed, nor throwing them off into space. If its speed had been increased or reduced just a little, it would have thrown its inhabitants off into the atmosphere and scattered them through space. And if its balance was to be destroyed for a minute, or even a second, it would destroy the world⁴⁵¹

He further remarks on the attentive balance in the livelihoods and lives of plant and animal species on the face of the Earth. Thus, Nursi claims that this balance indicates an orthodoxly conceived Just and Compassionate monotheistic God.⁴⁵² Interestingly, Nursi starts by speaking of the balance and order in wider dimensions such as planets and sun and earth. Then, he reduces the discussion of the balance to smaller areas

⁴⁵⁰ Nursi, 401.

⁴⁵¹ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 401.

⁴⁵² Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:800.

such as plants and animals and corpuscles in the blood particles. Afterwards, he points out the fine balance and order between the organs, faculties and senses of those minute organisms and species.

Nursi claims that this balance and mutual proportion, which are seen in the faculties and the senses of minute species, can be considered as evidence for *al-Ḥakīm* (All Wise) and *al-Ṣāni'-i 'Adl* (Just Maker). Lastly, Nursi argues that there is fine, sensitive and marvellous balance in the cells and blood vessels in the bodies of animals and in corpuscles in the blood and particles in the corpuscles. According to him, these actions in living beings are nurtured and administered through the balance, law and order of the single All-Just and Wise Creator (*Khāliq al-'Adl wa al-Ḥakīm*).⁴⁵³

Turning our attention now to usage of the different Divine Names and Attributes of God in this context, it can be inferred from the text manifestations of Divine Names such as 'Adl (Just), *Qādir* (All Mighty), *Raḥīm* (Compassionate), *Ṣāni'* (Maker), *Ḥakīm* (Wise) and *Khāliq* (Creator) interact each other.

In most cases, similar discussions on the concept of *al-'adl* as an order and balance can be seen in both Old Said and New Said's works.⁴⁵⁴ Interestingly, all the discussions also accord with our earlier observations, which showed that Nursi postulates on the concept of *al-'adl* as order and balance in the microcosm and macrocosm.

It is worthwhile giving some examples for the measured balance and order in Nursi's writings. In *al-Mathnawī al-Nuriya*, Nursi enumerates fifty-five different proofs for the existence of God. At the beginning of his discussion he writes:

As a whole and with all its parts, the universe displays an evident order and extraordinary concord (*tanzimāt*, *nizāmāt* and *muwāzanāt*) among its individual parts. This points to the necessary existence of Him Whose Hand of Power holds the universe and bears witness in the tongue of this universal order (*nizām* and *mizān*) that there is no deity but God. Everything is so

⁴⁵³ Nursi, 1:800.

⁴⁵⁴ For detailed discussion and comparisons please see "First Stopping-Place of Thirty-Second Word" in: Nursi, 1:127 and 268-272; ; please see also 'The Twentieth Letter' in Nursi, 1:452, please see also 'The Fifteen-Rays' in: Nursi, 1:116, please see also 'Katre' in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1298–99.

exactly measured (*al-intizām*) and proportioned (*al-iṭṭirād*) that it announces that there is no deity but God, Who set this measure and made all things in proportions and exactly commensurate with one another⁴⁵⁵

In *The Letters*, Nursi also argues that there is continuity in order and balance in the universe. Everything is measured and ordered with great accuracy. He further points out that the order is changed regularly and the balance is renewed with a certain, measured interval, variation by someone. Thus, as Nursi claims, when examined closely, it can be perceived that *hikmah* (wisdom) and ‘*adl* (justice) appear behind the apparent order and the balance. Therefore, Nursi concludes that the order and balance in all beings demonstrate a universal ordering and balancing. Thus, the ordering and balancing manifest a universal wisdom and justice.⁴⁵⁶ In others words, Nursi considers balance and order in the universe as cosmic justice (‘*adl*). In *The Words*, he also holds that there are complete and minute order and fine-tuning in the universe.⁴⁵⁷

In this regard, the following remarks can be put forward: (a) order and fine-tuning are adduced in eight different realms starting from a particle to planets as opposed in *The Flashes*. As was discussed before, in *The Flashes*, Nursi enumerates those realms starting from the planets to the particle.⁴⁵⁸ These realms are best illustrated in Figure 2; and (b) It could be said that Nursi’s argument on design, particularly in *the Words*, is based on the Qur’ānic teachings such as Q. 21:22: “Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allah , they both would have been ruined”; and (c) These findings in *The Words* not only support the discussion of the order and balance of the universe as a manifestation of the Divine Name all-Just in other writings of Nursi, but also corroborates with each other.

Taken together, it can be said that all the discussions in the different parts of Nursi’s writings form a cumulative set of arguments for his logical design argument for the existence of God.

⁴⁵⁵ Said Nursi, *Al-Mathnawi Al-Nuri : Seedbed of the Light*, The Risale-i Nur Collection (Rutherford, NJ: Light, 2002), 72.

⁴⁵⁶ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlük, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:452.

⁴⁵⁷ Nursi, 1:23.

⁴⁵⁸ See page 7

3.4.1.1 Lost in Translation: Mutual assistance versus equilibrium according to Nursi

Having discussed Nursi's analysis of *ta'āwun* (mutual assistance) and *muwāzanah* (balanced order), it is important to focus our attention on the term 'equilibrium'. One question, is whether the usage of the term equilibrium in the translations of Nursi's writings is adequately suitable to refer to the balanced order (*muwāzanah*) and balance (*intizām*) which arises here.

The term, 'equilibrium'⁴⁵⁹ is generally understood to mean a state of rest or balance due to the equal action of opposing forces. For example, in *Saunders Comprehensive Veterinary Dictionary*, the term equilibrium is defined as "a state of balance between opposing forces or influences."⁴⁶⁰ In the body, equilibrium can be chemical or physical. Chemical equilibrium may be broadly defined as "a reversible chemical reaction in which the rate of forward and backward reactions is the same so that the chemistry concentrations of reactants and products remain unchanged."⁴⁶¹ In other words, a state of chemical equilibrium can be attained when the proper proportions of water and salts are contained in the body tissues.⁴⁶² In physics, the equilibrium tends to be used to refer to "a state in which the various forces acting on an object or objects in a system balance each other so that there is no tendency for any part the system to move".⁴⁶³ Physical equilibrium, for instance, is the state of balance required for walking or standing. This state is attained by a very complex interplay of opposing sets of muscle.⁴⁶⁴

With regard to the term equilibrium, it is worthwhile mentioning the natural philosopher and physician, Alcmaeon, (c.570-490 B.C.) of Croton, who is said to have been the first person to put great emphasis on the internal causes of disease in the human body. He also claimed that the first principle of everything that exists in the universe is a pair of contraries; however, he did not suggest a definition or

⁴⁵⁹ Equilibrium is derived from Latin *aequilibrium*, from *aequi-* EQUI- + *libra* pound, balance] Please see: 'Equilibrium', in *Chambers 21st Century Dictionary* (Chambers Harrap, 2001), <http://www.credoreference.com/entry/chambdict/equilibrium>.

⁴⁶⁰ 'Equilibrium', in *Saunders Comprehensive Veterinary Dictionary* (Elsevier Health Sciences, 2012), <http://www.credoreference.com/entry/ehsvetdict/equilibrium>.

⁴⁶¹ 'Equilibrium', 2001.

⁴⁶² 'Equilibrium', 2012.

⁴⁶³ 'Equilibrium', 2001.

⁴⁶⁴ 'Equilibrium', 2012.

systematic enumeration for these polarities. These opposing forces can be said to be white-black, sweet, bitter, good evil, large-small, wet-dry, cold hot, and so on. In the medical application of his general principles, Alcmaeon maintains that a state of equipollence or equilibrium (*isomonía*) among the powers of contrary qualities brings a health in the human body; whereas, illness can result from immoderateness among those qualitative powers, for instance, an excess of hot or cold.⁴⁶⁵

In addition to this, with regard to the concept of equilibrium, it is worth mentioning the Pre-Socratic philosopher, Anaximander's (c. 610-540 B.C.) account of the philosophical concept of nature.⁴⁶⁶ Anaximander held that, as Vlastos notes, "philosophical concept of nature as a self-regulative equilibrium, whose order was strictly immanent, guaranteed through the fixed proportions of its main constituents".⁴⁶⁷ According to Preudenthal, Professor Vlastos adduces three distinct theses on Anaximander:

- (i) The basic constituents of Anaximander's world are equal opposite powers balanced against one another in a dynamic equilibrium. (ii) This equilibrium is strictly inner-worldly: it is maintained by the sole equality of the opposites and, in particular, does not involve an intervention of the Boundless. (iii) Anaximander's notion of the world as a self-regulative equilibrium, in which cosmic justice prevails, depends on contemporary societal order subsumed under the political notion of *isonomia*.⁴⁶⁸

Taken together, it can be assumed from the above discussion that, the term equilibrium refers to the inner-worldly and self-regulative state of balance due to the equal action of opposing forces. In other words, it appears that equilibrium can be maintained by the polarity of equal forces without the intervention of the Boundless, i.e. God. To be more precise, if one understands equilibrium in this way, there is a danger of comprehension that there is actually a competition between equal forces.

⁴⁶⁵ 'ALCMAEON (c. 570-490 B.C.E.?)', in *Encyclopedia of Classical Philosophy* (Greenwood, 1997), http://www.credoreference.com/entry/cwclassical/alcmaeon_c_570_490_b_c_e.

⁴⁶⁶ 'ANAXIMANDER (c. 610-540 B.C.E.)', in *Encyclopedia of Classical Philosophy* (Greenwood, 1997), http://www.credoreference.com/entry/cwclassical/anaximander_c_610_540_b_c_e.

⁴⁶⁷ Gregory Vlastos, 'Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies', *CLASSICAL PHILOL Classical Philology* 42, no. 3 (1947): 173.

⁴⁶⁸ Gad Freudenthal, 'The Theory of the Opposites and an Ordered Universe: Physics and Metaphysics in Anaximander', *Phronesis* 31, no. 1 (1986): 198.

On the other hand, Nursi claims that measured order and balanced harmony are maintained with mutual assistance (*ta'āwun* and *muwāzanah*) rather than opposing forces. According to Nursi, mutual assistance (*ta'āwun*) and balanced order (*muwāzanah*) within an intricate web of relationships between animate and inanimate beings are assured by the divine utilisation of God's mercy (*taskhir*) and employment of God's compassion (*istikhdām*).⁴⁶⁹

Importantly, it can be seen in Nursi's writings, that a set of words such as *nizām*, *tanzīm*, *intizām*, *tawzīn*, *muwāzana*, *ta'āwun* and *mu'āwanah*, which were used to refer to measured balance and orderliness, are derived from Qur'ānic concepts.

In *The Flashes*, Nursi explicitly refutes self-regulatory and inner-worldly equilibrium within the object of the universe. In contrast, he argues that there is a principle of mutual assistance among the beings of the universe through the divine supervision of an orthodoxly conceived monotheistic God. Thus, he writes:

A number of your rotten and baseless foundations are as follows. You say: "Every living being from the greatest angel to the tiniest fish owns itself and works for itself and struggles for its own pleasure. It has the right to life. Its aim and purpose and all its endeavour is to live and continue its life." And you declare idiotically: "Life is conflict," because you suppose to be conflict the compassionate, munificent manifestations of the universal law of the All-Generous Creator which is manifested through plants hastening to the assistance of animals and animals hastening to the assistance of man through a principle of mutual assistance, which is conformed to in perfect obedience by all the principal beings of the universe"⁴⁷⁰

From the above discussions, it appears that Nursi held that an ordered universe and balance within the realms of the universe are maintained by the principle of "mutual help at the command of a Munificent Sustainer."⁴⁷¹

Therefore, it can be assumed that Nursi does not use the concept of equilibrium in the Western philosophical context, which raises questions about the usage of the term 'equilibrium' in the translations of his writings into English. For example, in most cases, both Huseyin Akarsu and Şukran Vahide use the term 'equilibrium' to refer to "*muwāzanah*" in their translations. For instance, in *The Seventh Ray*, Vahide uses

⁴⁶⁹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:915.

⁴⁷⁰ Nursi, *The Flashes*, 2004, 162.

⁴⁷¹ Nursi, 162.

equilibrium to translate the word *muwāzanah* (balanced order).⁴⁷² Therefore, the translations of Nursi's writings into English would have been more useful if the translators considered the actual meaning of the term equilibrium and made some explanatory notes on its the real meaning in the philosophical context.

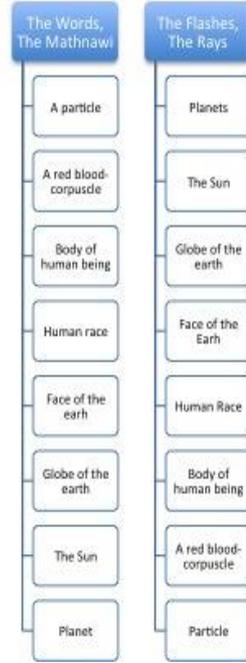


Figure 6: Order of realms discussed in Nursi's writings

3.4.2 Microcosm: Kitāb-i ṣagīr or insān

As mentioned earlier, the term *kitāb-i kabīr* (great book) or *insān-i akbar* (big human being) were used by Nursi to refer to 'universe'.⁴⁷³ According to Nursi, the same fine balance, harmony and order, which exists in the universe, can also be seen in human beings. It is worth remarking here that Nursi refers to two dimensions of balance, order and harmony in human beings, i.e. physical and metaphysical. For example, the Qur'ān speaks of such a physical order, balance and harmony in the creation of the

⁴⁷² Please see for the word equilibrium in: Nursi, 134; see also: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:899.

⁴⁷³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İřarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1368.

human body as in *sūrat al-Infīṭār*: “Who created you, proportioned you, and balanced you (*fa ‘adalaka*)?”⁴⁷⁴

Leaving the detailed discussion of balance and order in the human body, let us now turn our attention to the metaphysical dimension of order and balance in human beings. In other words, order and balance in faculties and powers in man. To be more precise, according to the Islamic teachings, human beings are ordered to maintain the principle of moderation and the middle path in their lives.

In the chapter on the concept of *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ān, interconnected semantic relations between *al-wasaṭ* (middle way), *al-istiḳāmah* (straight path) and *al-‘adl* were discussed.

Interestingly, in *Ishārāt al-‘Ijāz fī Mizān al-‘Ijāz*, Nursi also elaborates the concept of *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaḳīm* (straight path), which is mentioned in *sūrah al-Fātihah*, in conjunction with *al-wasaṭ* and *al-‘adl*.⁴⁷⁵ There, he also notes that the human soul was endowed with three powers:

(a) the power of animal appetites (*al-quwwa al-shahawiyya al-bahīmiyya*). This group of faculties may be broadly known as sensual and bestial faculties to attract useful things to him;

(b) the power of animal passion or repulsion (*al-quwwa al-ghaḍabiyya*). This category of powers are given to drive off all harmful and destructive things, and

(c) the power of intellect (*al-quwwa al-‘aqliyya*). This group of powers includes rational and angelic faculties by which one make a clear distinction between good and evil and beneficial and harmful. According to Nursi, unlike other living beings, these faculties and powers are bestowed on the human by God’s wisdom, without any limit, for his development.

In other words, the human being’s faculties and powers are not subject to innate limitation by God. On the contrary, God’s Divine Law controls other living beings intrinsically. Therefore, Nursi maintains that due to non-restriction in their faculties,

⁴⁷⁴ The Qur’ān (82:7)

⁴⁷⁵ The Qur’ān (1:6)

human beings may cause imbalance and mischief in their actions unless they are regulated and controlled by divinely ordained law. He further explains three different levels of the above-mentioned powers as: (1) excess (*ifrāt*); (2) negligence (*tafrīt*); and (3) middle way (*al-wasaṭ*).

Nursi believes that those faculties and powers in human beings have to be controlled by Divine Law. This is supported by the principle of moderation and the middle path enjoined on human beings by the Qur’ān as mentioned in Q. 7:112: “So remain on a right course as you have been commanded”. In contrast, they were forbidden from doing excess (*ifrāt*) and deficiency (*tafrīt*) in their actions as it is seen in Q. 7:112: “and do not transgress”. According to Nursi, both *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* and *al-wasaṭ* (middle way) refer to *al-‘adl*, which is a summary of wisdom and courage and chastity.

On the other hand, Nursi seems to examine these concepts within the context of a personal level and he urges the human soul to be on the level of *al-wasaṭ* so that its effect can be seen at the societal level.⁴⁷⁶ Therefore, it can be assumed that Nursi sees *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* (straight path) as justice, which contains three of the finest virtues, i.e. wisdom, chastity and courage. Interestingly, Nursi asserts that excess and deficiency in the usage of faculties lead to injustice. That is to say, he puts *al-‘adl* as an opposite of imbalance and disproportion. Taken together, as Kuşpinar points out, the manifestation of divine justice in the realm of human being, i.e. both physical and metaphysical dimensions, may be broadly described as a state of harmony and balanced order within the human being’s faculties and powers through the assistance of divine law.⁴⁷⁷

Kuşpinar’s conclusion would have been much more useful if he had considered Nursi’s point of view on mutual assistance and harmony, since it seems that Kuşpinar also uses the concept of equilibrium to refer to *tawzīn* (balancing) and *muwāzanah*

⁴⁷⁶ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 33.

⁴⁷⁷ Bilal Kuşpinar, ‘Justice and Balance in Creation: Said Nursi’s Analysis’, in *Theodicy and Justice in Modern Islamic Thought: The Case of Said Nursi*, ed. Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi’ (Ashgate Pub, 2010), 227.

(balanced order).⁴⁷⁸ It can be said that he also used translations of Nursi's writings by Vahide and Akarsu, which may have led him to use the concept of equilibrium.

For Nursi, Divine Law (*Shari'a*) is of two kinds: (1) one emanates from the Divine Attribute of Speech, and is intended to regulate the acts of servants issuing from their free will. This type of Divine law consists of comprehensible laws; (2) Innate Divine Law. It is also called as '*awāmir-i takwīnī*' (the Divine Command of creation). This type of Divine Law issued from the Divine attribute of Will and Power, and it consists of nominal laws existed in the universe.⁴⁷⁹ Nursi believes that the same order and balance which is found in the universe can also be found in the realm of human beings. He furthermore claims that human beings, by their actions, may influence the order and balance in the universe either positively or negatively. Later on, Chapter Five of this thesis will address this issue in detail.

3.5 NURSI'S ARGUMENT FOR RESURRECTION FROM JUSTICE

The following is a summary of Nursi's argument for resurrection and the existence of God from justice:

1. Vice is not always punished in this life.
2. Justice demands that vice is always punished in the end.
3. (Therefore) There is a hereafter in which an orthodoxly conceived monotheistic God guarantees that the cruel are punished.
4. (Therefore) There is an orthodoxly conceived monotheistic God.⁴⁸⁰

Of course, Nursi's argument for a heavenly afterlife for the virtuous that is supervised by an orthodoxly conceived monotheistic God may also be reformulated as an argument for a hellish afterlife for the less than virtuous that is supervised by the same orthodoxly conceived monotheistic God.

⁴⁷⁸ Please see to usage of 'equilibrium' in Kuşpınar's article in: Kuşpınar, 19.

⁴⁷⁹ Nursi, *Kaynaklı, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1369.

⁴⁸⁰ Nursi's argument for existence of the hereafter and existence of God from justice and injustices can be found in many of his writings. It seems that the first part of 'The Tenth Word' is very relevant in this matter. Please see for detailed discussion: Nursi, *Kaynaklı, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:20.

The concept of Resurrection is an article of belief in all religions, including Islam. Nursi's main mission in this argumentation is to elaborate the idea of resurrection, and he put much effort into proving it. He gives actions as examples from which one can conceive 'adl. He explains that justice demands the rights of others are preserved and saves the reputation of the state. Since the requirements of justice must be fulfilled, this leads to the requirement of the hereafter, which he calls the Supreme Tribunal.⁴⁸¹

The Tenth Word in *The Words* is primarily dedicated to proving the resurrection and the hereafter. According to Nursi, this book was written in the form of metaphors, comparisons and stories in order to facilitate comprehension and to show how rational, appropriate, well founded and coherent the resurrection and hereafter are. He further discusses the meanings of the stories which appears in the truths and become a conclusion for them. Each story functions as an allusion pointing to its concluding truth.⁴⁸²

It is worthwhile giving some examples from his discussion to illustrate the notion of 'adl and the manifestations of the Divine Name All-Just that necessitates the resurrection and hereafter. Nursi often uses analogies between the dominion of this world and the state. In his writings, the world is often likened to a state in which affairs are managed with lofty wisdom and ordering, and transactions are made with true justice and balance.

As a rule, Nursi argues that wise polity and the rule of law requires that those who seek refuge under the protecting wings of the state should receive a reward. Justice, he goes on writing, demands that the rights of the people be protected, so that the authority of the government and the splendour of the state should not suffer.

However, here in the real land, not a thousandth part of the requirements of such wisdom and justice is fulfilled. By way of illustration, Nursi claims that the majority of guilty people leave this realm without being punished. In other words, apparently there is a great injustice, and often people who act virtuously suffer, and those others

⁴⁸¹ Nursi, 1:20.

⁴⁸² Nursi, 1:19.

who commit vice prosper. Thus, he claims there are matters that are postponed for the consideration of the Supreme Tribunal.⁴⁸³

As mentioned before, the meaning of this comparative story is contained in the third truth that concludes *The Tenth Word*. Therefore, it is worth elaborating the third truth on justice (‘*adl*), the manifestation of the Name Just from *The Tenth Word*.

According to Nursi, if God displays His dominical sovereignty in the universe with wisdom and order, al-‘*adl* (justice) and harmonious regulations, then such a God will give favour to those believers who seek refuge beneath the protective wings of His dominicality, who take care to suit their actions to His Wisdom and ‘*adl* through believing and prayer. His justice and wisdom require that rude and discourteous people who disobey God’s wisdom and ‘*adl* (justice) with disbelief and oppression should be punished.⁴⁸⁴

Nursi goes on to argue the proofs that all things are done with ‘*adl* (justice) and fine balance. In fact, all things are endowed with being, given shape and put in their appropriate place in accordance with precise order and harmony and in appropriate measure, which shows that all matters are implemented in accordance with infinite ‘*adl* (justice) and balance. Furthermore, he maintains that all things are accorded their rights in accordance with their disposition.

In other words, he further explains, they receive all the necessities of their being and all the requirements of life in perfect form. Therefore, Nursi believes that these actions are only supervised with infinite divine justice.⁴⁸⁵

In addition, Nursi further states that God’s always answers every petition and request if it is made through the tongue of disposition and natural need. This also, he claims, demonstrates the existence of infinite ‘*adl* and wisdom. Taken together, Nursi seems to conclude that God provides the smallest need of the minutest creation in the universe purposefully and within his ‘*adl* and wisdom.

⁴⁸³ Nursi, 1:19–20.

⁴⁸⁴ Nursi, 1:28.

⁴⁸⁵ Nursi, 1:28.

Therefore, he draws an inference that God's wisdom and 'adl (justice) will bring immortality to the greatest creature. In other words, God's justice and wisdom require the hereafter for humankind to fulfil his need for immortality. Thus, Nursi maintains that God's justice and wisdom necessitate the protection of the rights of His servants in order to preserve the dignity of God's dominicality.

As a matter of fact, Nursi is of the opinion that man lives in this world for too short a span of time and cannot experience the true essence of justice in this transient world. For this reason, Nursi again further claims:

...matters are postponed for a supreme tribunal. For true justice requires that man, this apparently petty creature, should be rewarded and punished, not in accordance with his pettiness, but in accordance with the magnitude of his crime, the importance of his nature and the greatness of his function. Since this passing and transient world is far from manifesting such wisdom and justice for man, who is created for eternity, because of this necessity, there will be an eternal Hell and everlasting Paradise of that Just.⁴⁸⁶

Taken together, from the above discussion, Nursi argues that wisdom; justice, balance and harmonious divine supervision show the trace of 'adl within the creation of existence. Thus, 'adl also requires the resurrection and hereafter. It is worthwhile recalling, here again, the third truth of The Tenth Word which corroborates with the Third Indication of the same book and they complement each other as discussed in the preceding analysis.⁴⁸⁷

So far, this part of the chapter has discussed Nursi's analysis of the argument for the existence of the hereafter from justice as a very curiosity-provoking form of moral argument. Interestingly, Nursi's argument is in agreement with Russell's analysis on the remedying of injustice in which he presents a similar argument for the existence of God as an encoding of widespread monotheistic intuitions.⁴⁸⁸ With regard to the argument for the hereafter and the existence of God, Russell writes:

In the part of this universe that we know there is great injustice, and often the good suffer, and often wicked prosper, and one hardly knows which of those is the more annoying; but if you are going to have justice in the universe as a whole you have to suppose a future life to redress the balance of life here on

⁴⁸⁶ Nursi, 1:29.

⁴⁸⁷ Please compare 'Third Indication' with 'Third True' of Tenth Words in: Nursi, 1:27–29.

⁴⁸⁸ Bertrand Russell, *Why I Am Not a Christian: And Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects* (London: Routledge, 1992), 19–20.

earth. So they say that there must be God, and there must be heaven and hell in order that in the long run there may be justice⁴⁸⁹

In addition to the similarities between Nursi's and Russell's arguments, there are some differences as well. The following part of the section highlights these differences.

3.6 NURSI'S ARGUMENT FOR RESURRECTION AND THE HEREAFTER FROM THE DIVINE NAMES: ALL JUST, WISE, GENEROUS AND MERCIFUL

Nursi is of the opinion that God has numerous names and attributes. For him, each name and attribute have different manifestations in this world and in the world to come. As discussed before, God's names can also be manifested as names which interact with each other. In his analysis of God's wisdom, grace, mercy and justice, Nursi suggests another argument for the hereafter from the Divine Names. In his argument, he discusses manifestations of the Divine Name All-Just as a rationale behind the creation of the hereafter in connection with other Divine Names such as Wise, Generous, and Merciful.⁴⁹⁰

A close scrutiny of Nursi's writings on this topic reveals the following arguments from Divine Names for the hereafter:

1. There are miraculous works in different places
2. The order and harmony betokening manifest wisdom, indications of evident favouring, signs of lofty justice, and fruits of comprehensive mercy are seen in these transient stations, impermanent spheres, and passing scenes
3. (Hence) this impermanent realm [this world] is not adequate for the full manifestation of his wisdom, favouring, mercy, and justice

⁴⁸⁹ Russell, 19.

⁴⁹⁰ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:37–39.

4. (Premise) If there were no permanent abodes, fixed stations, and permanent residence [or hereafter] in His kingdom, then, we would have to deny the wisdom, provision, mercy, and justice
5. (Premise) It accepts God as a trickster or a tyrant. This would mean truths changing into their opposites
6. (Therefore) There is another realm that contains a supreme tribunal. All this favouring, wisdom, mercy, and justice will be manifested fully.

Nursi presents this argument in 'The Eleventh Picture' and 'The Tenth Truth' of The Tenth Word in *The Words*.⁴⁹¹ Discussions in The Eleventh Picture and The Tenth Truth appear complementary to each other, and both support one conclusion.

After examining these complementary parts of the book, it seems that Nursi's argument for the existence of the hereafter from the Divine Names is an argument by inference to the best analogous - an explanation or a moral argument, perhaps both of these things at once.

Initially, Nursi again begins his argument by giving a metaphor. He draws attention to the miraculous works of a king, carried out in different parts of his kingdom. These miraculous works, however, may differ from each other with respect to art and form. Then, Nursi again calls attention to the order and harmony, betokening manifest wisdom, indications of evident favouring, signs of lofty justice and fruits of comprehensive mercy in these transient stations, impermanent spheres and passing scenes.

This means the King must have permanent places to manifest all his bounties and skills. In other words, if the King does not have a permanent place of residence, viz. hereafter for his subjects, then one has to deny the manifestation of wisdom, mercy and favouring and justice in this world.

Furthermore, Nursi asserts that this world is not suitable for the full realisation of God's wisdom, mercy, favouring and justice. Thus, he contends that there must be a

⁴⁹¹ Said Nursi, *The Words : The Reconstruction of Islamic Belief and Thought*, trans. Huseyin Akarsu (Somerset, N.J.: Light, 2005), 74-75 and 98-101.

hereafter for the full manifestation of God's attributes, *viz.* mercy, favouring, wisdom and justice.

The one who denies wisdom, mercy, favouring and justice in this world is like someone who denies the sun, whose light is clearly visible in the middle of the day. Therefore, Nursi claims that "there is another realm that contains a supreme tribunal, a lofty place of justice, and an exalted place of reward. There, all his favouring, wisdom, mercy, and justice will be manifested".⁴⁹²

In the above discussion, Nursi uses an analogy to develop his argument and later, in *The Tenth Truth of The Tenth Word*, he deploys the story of *The Eleventh Picture*, an allusion to the attributes of God such as Merciful, Wise and Just. Interestingly, in this part of the discussion, he tends to use the design argument rather than making analogies.

Therefore, in this regard, he asserts, "The meaning of the stories is contained in the truths that conclude them; each story is like an allusion pointing to its concluding truth. Therefore, they are not mere fictitious tales, but veritable truths".⁴⁹³ For example, one can easily grasp how the story in *The Eleventh Picture* is relevant to *The Tenth Truth* from the upcoming discussion.

Nursi begins by arguing that God's manifested wisdom; pervasive grace, comprehensive mercy and overwhelming justice are clearly seen in this impermanent world, transitory testing ground and unstable display of Earth.⁴⁹⁴ In other words, God creates everything in this universe for a purpose and with finite measure (*'adl*) and gives sustenance to everything out of his mercy and grace. To be more precise, Nursi takes the view that God is intrinsically All-Wise, Munificent, Just and Merciful. The manifestation of these divine names cannot be realised in full capacity in this temporal world. Therefore, Nursi claims, God has to create 'permanent abodes', *viz.* the hereafter with immortal inhabitants. Thus, he further discusses, if God does not

⁴⁹² Nursi, 75.

⁴⁹³ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 58.

⁴⁹⁴ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 98.

create the hereafter “the truth of wisdom, grace, mercy, and justice that we witness should decline into nothingness”.⁴⁹⁵

As mentioned before,⁴⁹⁶ Nursi is of the opinion that ‘*adl* (justice) endows existence to all things, gives their shapes and puts them into their appropriate places in accordance with their due, precise equilibrium and in an appropriate measure.

Elsewhere in *The Words*, he sees divine ‘*adl* as something that gives all the things their rights in accordance with their disposition and provides their being with all the necessities and requirements of life in the most fitting form.⁴⁹⁷

Moreover, Nursi believes that God is absolutely Just and Wise as the Qur’ān mentions in Q. 3:182: “Allah is not ever unjust (*Bizallam*) to [His] servants”. In the same way, in a *qudsi hadith*⁴⁹⁸, Prophet Mohammed reports that God says “I have forbidden injustice for Myself and forbade it also for you.”⁴⁹⁹

For this reason, Nursi’s assumption is that God puts human beings in charge of certain duties and responsibilities and furnishes them with developed senses and faculties, such as a desire for eternal life, love of a creator, consciousness of the universe, language, a beautiful body, spirit, heart, brain, etc. Given that human beings possess all important attributes, if God then gave them only some worldly rewards which are temporary and insignificant, that would render all this meaningless and worthless.

In other words, God’s justice and wisdom require the creation of another realm for human beings to realise all their faculties and senses in their full capacity and for them to be rewarded deservedly. Thus, it appears that Nursi employs deductive reasoning and asserts that if God were to bring about things to contradict their own nature, then one has to ascribe All-Wise, Munificent, Just and Merciful God by their opposites.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁵ Nursi, 98.

⁴⁹⁶ See page 5

⁴⁹⁷ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:28.

⁴⁹⁸ Qudsi Hadiths are the words of the God, mentioned by the prophets that are not in the Holy Books.

⁴⁹⁹ al- Husain ibn al-Ḥajjāj Muslim, *Şahih Muslim* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmīyah, 1998), 1994.

⁵⁰⁰ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 99.

Furthermore, Nursi maintains that there is an apparent disparity in this world. For example, there are universal fusions of life; on the other hand, there are swift separations of deaths that coexist with those fusions in this fleeting world too. Imposing gatherings also are irreconcilable with rapid dispersions.

He further highlights that splendid parades, performances and mighty manifestations are incompatible with negligible results and insignificant temporary purposes in this world.⁵⁰¹ This apparent disparity is illustrated in Figure 7. To be more precise, according to Nursi, the lack of proportion between beings, matters and their purposes pertaining to this world may reveal that there must be a hereafter so that God's wisdom and justice can be manifested fully.

Nursi concludes as follows: "since the world exists, and since the Wisdom, Favouring, Mercy and Justice prevail therein with their imprints, the Hereafter also exists".⁵⁰² Taken together, it can be assumed that Nursi's argument for the existence of the hereafter from justice and the Divine Names of God not only support but also complete each other. Therefore, it could be said that Nursi tries to form a cumulative set of arguments for the existence of God and the hereafter.

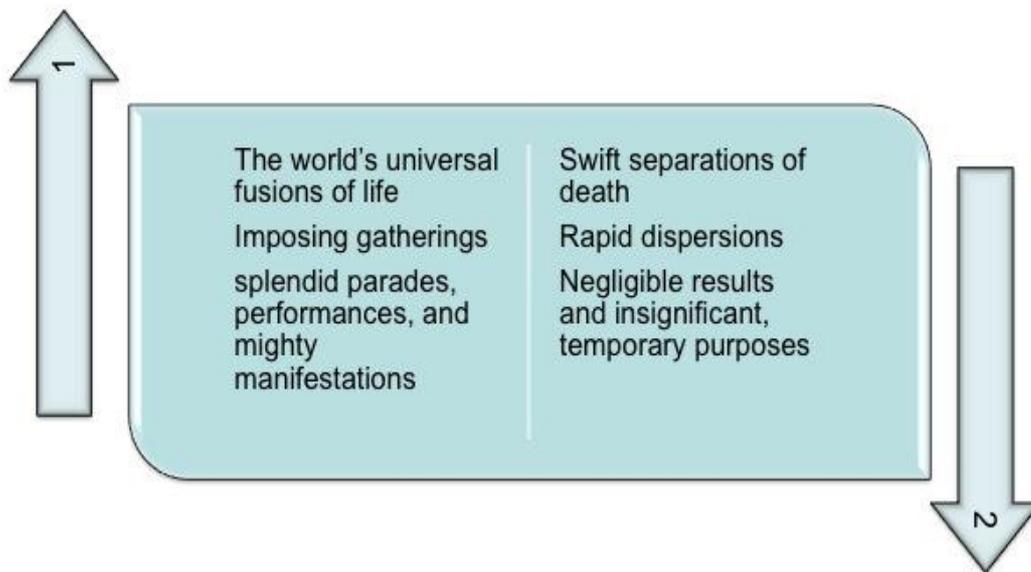


Figure 7: Apparent opposite sciences that require hereafter

⁵⁰¹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:38.

⁵⁰² Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 101.

3.7 SOME OBJECTIONS TO NURSI'S ARGUMENT

Nursi's argument from design has features similar to the famous 'watchmaker analogy', a teleological argument for the existence of God, propounded by pre-modern philosophers such as Voltaire and Descartes.

The most popular version, as Turner notes, is British philosopher, William Paley's (1743-1805) 'watch and watchmaker' argument for the existence of God.⁵⁰³ In brief, Paley argues that when someone finds a watch, he or she will naturally assume that the watch had a designer and maker.⁵⁰⁴

Then Paley compares the watch and the natural world, considering living beings as more complex than a watch. Therefore, he claims that they must have a Maker and a Designer.⁵⁰⁵

Many scholars have criticised the design argument from various points of view such as Scottish philosopher and historian, David Hume (1711-76)⁵⁰⁶ and the contemporary Australian philosopher Graham Oppy.

For example, Hume puts forward two criticisms. Firstly, he refutes the analogy between known human artefacts, i.e. pocket watch in the case of Paley's argument, and the natural world. He claims, as Turner mentions, that their clear difference in nature does not bring inference that they have similar effects and causes.⁵⁰⁷

For example, he argues, if one sees a house, it is easy to infer that there must be an architect and a builder. On the other hand, the creation of the universe is much more complex than a simple house, therefore he says it is not true to conclude that they have similar causes.

⁵⁰³ Colin Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed: A Critical Analysis of Said Nursi's Epistles of Light* (Berlin: Gerlach Press, 2013), 102.

⁵⁰⁴ Graham Robert Oppy, *Arguing about Gods* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 175.

⁵⁰⁵ Please see: William Paley, Matthew Eddy, and David M Knight, *Natural Theology or, Evidence of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected from the Appearances of Nature* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), chaps 1-3, <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10177891>.

⁵⁰⁶ 'Hume, David', in *The Columbia Encyclopedia* (Columbia University Press, 2013), http://www.credoreference.com/entry/columency/hume_david.

⁵⁰⁷ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 103.

Secondly, Hume maintains that the analogy between the natural world and a human artefact such as a pocket watch might compel us to assume that they have similar causes, but it would not necessarily convince us that there is a god who possesses attributes of perfection. To be more precise, he says, it could be one god, but it does not follow that he is one who is perfect and wise. In addition to this, he also writes, the analogies themselves are inadequate as a manufactured object is more likely to come from many hands rather than one hand. In other words, there must be a creator, but the analogy does not prove that the creator is one.⁵⁰⁸

At first glance, as far as drawing conclusions from the analogy between human artefacts and the natural world is concerned, it seems that Nursi's argument from design is also subject to similar kinds of criticism as those addressed by Hume and others. When examined closely however, as it mentioned before, it appears that Nursi's argument should not be put in the same line as other design arguments that came under fire from Hume, because Nursi's argument from Divine Names is a kind of design argument yet it is not only an argument by analogy but also an argument by inference to the best explanation. Additionally, Nursi also supports his design argument with the argument from justice which is a moral argument. This view is in accordance with Turner's following observations:

Nursi's is a more sophisticated design argument and arguably avoids Hume's rejection of the analogy between human artefacts and the natural world of living beings. Nursi's argument, unlike arguments from simple analogy, does not depend on a premise which asserts that there is only a general resemblance between the two objects he is discussing. What matters for Nursi is that the medicinal concoction and the living being both possess features which indicate the presence of design. Regardless of how similar or dissimilar they may be to each other, both the concoction and the living being are characterised by the kind of complexity that warrants the inference that it is the result of something or someone possessing power, knowledge, will and purpose.⁵⁰⁹

As far as the last part of Hume's second criticism is concerned, Nursi develops many counterarguments to refute the notion of a plurality of deities throughout the *Risale*, however this subject is not the main concern of this chapter. All the same, various discussions on Divine Unity in the *Risale-i Nur* can be read to understand Nursi's approach to this topic.

⁵⁰⁸ Turner, 103.

⁵⁰⁹ Turner, 103.

On the other hand, the first part of Hume's second criticism may have some grounds. Although the design argument is able to indicate the existence of a designer of this cosmos, this does not mean that the Designer is necessarily All-Perfect or All-Good. As might be expected, Nursi would have propounded a counter argument to this with lots of proofs. However, as Turner claims, it can be argued that he would probably agree with Hume's objection if the criticism were as follows: "even if the design argument points to the existence of a creator, it can, in reality, say very little about the exact nature of that creator over and above the fact that he, she or it designs".⁵¹⁰ Of course, Nursi may also raise objection to this again on the grounds that the argument from design on its own is of limited usage and, as Turner notes, it needs to be supported and expanded by various other arguments and proofs in order to set up more coherent and authentic picture of the God.⁵¹¹ This remark seems to be supported by Nursi's own account.

In *Kastamonu Lâhikası*, in response to the question about the reasons behind the usage of various arguments and proofs for existence of monotheistic God, Nursi argues that the *Risale-i Nur*'s mission is "not [to] rehabilitate partial injury, but also massive devastation and its duty is not [to] repair one single room, but also a great castle in which mountain size stones were thrown, and it embraces whole Islam".⁵¹²

This means that, during Nursi's era, the existence of God was attacked by various arguments and Nursi was of the opinion that one single argument such as the design argument is not enough to prove the existence of monotheistic God. He, therefore, argues that reasoning such as the design argument needs to be augmented by various other arguments.

In fact, as the discussions above show, he uses various arguments in one place to support his stand. For example, he deploys the argument from design, the argument

⁵¹⁰ Turner, 104.

⁵¹¹ Turner, 104.

⁵¹² Nursi, *Kaynaklı, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1583.

from justice and divine names at once to prove the existence of God and the hereafter in The Tenth Words.⁵¹³

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the balance and order in the universe according to Nursi. Following the previous discussions, one can argue that Nursi elaborates the notion of ‘*adl*’ as the manifestations of Divine Name of All-Just (‘*Adl*’). For him, the balanced order and the harmonious relations between living beings and the natural world are maintained by God’s divine name All-Just.

This chapter commenced with the aim of assessing the importance of the Divine Names in Nursi’s writings and concluded that, in fact, there is a need for a holistic examination of the Divine Names in Nursi’s writings. That is to say, in order to understand the manifestation of All-Just (*al-‘Adl*) from the Nursian perspective, one needs to consider other Divine Names such as *Al-Qādir*, *al-Ḥakīm*, *al-Raḥmān*, *al-Muzayyin* and so on because these Names are visible and interacting with each other.

With regard to the definition of *al-‘adl* (justice) as presented in Nursi’s writings, the most obvious finding of this study is that Nursi uses the Qur’anic idiosyncratic method to define certain notion concepts such as *īmān* and ‘*adl*’.

Therefore, Nursi does not give clear definitions of the concept of *al-‘adl*. For Nursi, however, ‘*adl*’ is a manifestation of the Name All-Just as order and balance and ordering and balancing in all living and inanimate beings. In other words, it is an act of measuring and balancing in the universe.

Another main finding of this chapter is that Nursi employs the concept of *al-‘adl* as a tool to formulate his arguments for the existence of God and the hereafter.

Accordingly, this chapter has found three different and interconnected arguments made by Nursi for the existence of God and hereafter:

(a) Argument from design;

(b) Argument from justice for the hereafter; and

⁵¹³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:19–43.

(c) Argument from Divine Names for resurrection and the hereafter.

One unanticipated finding was that Nursi puts forward the mutual aid and assistance argument to oppose the idea of conflicting forces in equilibrium. To be more precise, he does not accept the term 'equilibrium' in the pre-Socratic and Western context. The balanced and ordered universe and harmonious relations between living beings are maintained by mutual assistance with the supervision of God's divine names *al-'Adl* (all-Just), *al-Ḥakīm* (All-Wise), *al-Karīm* (Gracious) and *al-Raḥmān* (Merciful). However, in most cases the word *muwāzanah* (balanced order) is translated as 'equilibrium' into English, which is an obvious mistranslation. Hence, it could conceivably be hypothesised that the translation of *muwāzanah* (balanced order) as equilibrium is something confusing for the readers of Nursi's writings.

This chapter discussed some criticisms of the argument for the existence of a monotheistic God and the hereafter from design, and Nursi's counter arguments were presented.

To sum up, the Nursian analysis of the concept of *al-'adl* is in agreement with the Qur'anic outlook of justice. As previous discussions reveal, Nursi's arguments from design, justice and Divine Names of God for the existence of God and the hereafter not only support but also complete each other.

Interestingly, he employs the notion of *al-'adl* as balance and order in all his arguments. Therefore, it could be said that Nursi tries to form a cumulative set of arguments for the existence of God and the hereafter.

Chapter 4

THE CONCEPT OF AL-‘ADL (JUSTICE) IN RELATION TO QADAR (DIVINE DETERMINING)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the concept of justice (*al-‘adl*) in relation to the *qadar* (predestination) from Nursi’s perspective.

At first, it will provide general background information on the history of Islamic creeds and their perspectives on the relationship between free will and predestination in the literature. Then, Nursi’s position among other classical Islamic scholars on the subject of human free will and predestination will be examined.

This chapter will try to answer the following questions: What are the key reasoning behind the discussion of free will and predestination? How did this discussion start in the history of Islamic creeds? Where did Nursi position himself on the issue of human free will and predestination among other Islamic scholars? How was divine determining perceived and how can it be compatible with the notion of human free will? Why does God hold human beings responsible for their actions even though they cannot create their actions?

4.2 THE BEGINNINGS OF THE DOCTRINE OF QADAR AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

One of the most important disputes in Islamic theology among religious intellectuals was that of ‘free will and predestination’. This issue was discussed as a problem of *qadar*. A number of early theologians, such as Ma‘bad al-Juhanī (d. 699), Ghailān al-Dimashqī (d. before 743), Wāsil b. Aṭā (d. 748), Yūnus al-Aswārī, and ‘Amr b. ‘Ubaid (d. 762), were among the first to discuss this subject.⁵¹⁴

Watt argues that it might be worthwhile to put forward the following points regarding Muslim perspectives on the relationship between free will and predestination:

⁵¹⁴ W. Montgomery Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*. (London: Luzac, 1948), 44.

(a) At the beginning of Islam, the Muslims had given little importance to the concept of human free will. However, their perspective changed with the spread of Islam into Iraq and Syria, where the Muslims were faced with Christians and others who had been influenced by Greek civilisation and thought, which emphasised human achievement. Later on, this outlook became popular among Muslim theologians too.⁵¹⁵

(b) The Umayyads seem to have argued that they had been given the privilege of rulership from the God. Any attempt of revolt against them was therefore framed as disobedience towards God. Thus, opponents of the regime had to find a theological justification for their opposition. However, the Umayyadian position represents a prominent logical fallacy and is known in Western literature as “the end justifies the means”, in that “the fact that I am ruling (end) is the reason (means) that I should rule” which is a popular tautology found in the field of logic.⁵¹⁶

Given the limited scope of this work, it seems impossible to give a detailed historical background of the debate and the various related arguments. Instead, certain principles can be explained in the history of the development of *qadar* as a religious concept in Islamic literature.

According to Watt, *qadar* refers to the “power to determine events.”⁵¹⁷ Watt argues that the problem lies in specifying whether this power belongs to the God alone or was shared with humans. Watt claims that the discussion begins with the Qadarites, who believed that some power can be allocated to men.⁵¹⁸ Yet, the Qadarites are only one of the groups that represent the whole spectrum of theological schools in Islamic history. Classical scholarship on divine determining and human accountability can be analysed in three main groups:

⁵¹⁵ W. Montgomery Watt, *What Is Islam?* (London [etc.]; [Beirut]: Longmans ; Librairie du Liban, 1968), 158.

⁵¹⁶ “*Ends (Means).*” In *The Essentials of Philosophy and Ethics*, by Martin Cohen. Routledge, 2006.

http://ezphost.dur.ac.uk/login?url=http://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/hodderpe/ends_means/0

⁵¹⁷ Watt, *What Is Islam?*, 157.

⁵¹⁸ Watt, 158.

(a) scholars who advocated human free will and supported the notion of man’s/women’s responsibility for his own actions, such as the *Qadarīya* and some sects of *Khawārij* (e.g, the disciples of Ḥārith al-‘Ibādī, the *Aṣḥāb al-Su‘āl*)⁵¹⁹;

(b) scholars who maintained that human beings have no free will and that works are decreed and predestined by the will of God, such as *Jabarīya*;

(c) scholars who advocated the issue of compatibility of Divine power and human free will such as al-Ash‘arī and al-Māturidī. This group is considered to be the ‘middle way’ position between the two extreme groups; the *Qadarīya* and the *Jabarīya*.⁵²⁰

Interestingly, all of these groups, including both the advocates of predestination and free will, claim a scriptural basis for their opinions and their arguments stem from both the Qur’ān and the Prophetic tradition.⁵²¹

In most cases, the Qur’an speaks of Allah as being the Almighty Lord of the Worlds, the Creator of everything, and Supreme Controller of everything. Conversely, human beings are described as entities that can do nothing unless Allah wills or permits them to do something.⁵²² For example, in *Sūrah al-Shūrà* Allah is described as the One to whom “belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills (and plans). He bestows (children) male or female according to His Will (and Plan)”.⁵²³

God, as the Supreme controller of everything, can be seen in following verses of the Qur’ān:

⁵¹⁹ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 39.

⁵²⁰ Turner, *The Qur’an Revealed*, 364.

⁵²¹ A. J Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, (Cambridge [Eng.: University Press, 1932), 51.

⁵²² William M Watt, ‘Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam’, *MUWO The Muslim World* 36, no. 2 (1946): 124.

⁵²³ The Qur’ān (42:49)

Say: "Truly Allah leaveth, to stray, whom He will; But He guideth to Himself those who turn to Him in penitence."⁵²⁴

This is an admonition: Whosoever will, let him take a (straight) Path to his Lord. But ye will not, except as Allah wills; for Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom.⁵²⁵

These verses can be taken as evidence that man has no choice unless God permits a choice. On the other hand, the whole conception of the Last Judgment and the Hereafter in the Qur'ān can be taken as proof of man's/women's responsibility for his/her acts. The Qur'ān maintains that human beings are rewarded and punished in accordance with the principles of justice. This means that people are truly accountable for their actions and deeds.⁵²⁶ The following verses may illustrate this point clearly:

Say, "The truth is from your Lord": Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it): for the wrong-doers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames) ... As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a (single) righteous deed.⁵²⁷

Then, on that Day, not a soul will be wronged in the least, and ye shall but be repaid the needs of your past Deeds⁵²⁸

We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least, and if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account.⁵²⁹

One may raise the question of whether Divine determination and human responsibility from the above-mentioned quotations in the Qur'ān are compatible. As noted by Watt, this dual aspect of the question is complimentary, but it does have intellectually incompatible aspects within the one truth represented in the Qur'ān.⁵³⁰ To be more precise, God's Omnipotence creates all things and supervises all of the actions of human beings. The Qur'ān also asserts that God is Just and Merciful.⁵³¹ In that case, how is it possible that a Just and Merciful God allows humans to be held to account for their actions in the Hereafter? Likewise, as Wensinck mentions, this keen and

⁵²⁴ The Qur'ān (13:27)

⁵²⁵ The Qur'ān (76:29, 30)

⁵²⁶ Watt, 'Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam', 126.

⁵²⁷ The Qur'ān (18:29,30)

⁵²⁸ The Qur'ān (36:54)

⁵²⁹ The Qur'ān (21:47)

⁵³⁰ Watt, 'Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam', 126.

⁵³¹ Please see: The Qur'ān (49:9) and (41:2)

intellectual debate was held between upholders of belief in *divine determination* and human *free will* with regard to the origins of an individual’s faith and works, i.e. deeds. In other words, are the faith and works of a man a product of his will, or a creation of Allah?⁵³² Scholars’ opinions vary considerable on these questions. In the following sections, some of the various positions regarding these questions held by various Muslim schools will be dealt with.

4.2.1 Upholders of Free Will

4.2.1.1 The Khawārij

Watt describes the Khawārij as one of the “religio-political opposition parties”⁵³³ which emerged during the Umayyad caliphate (661-750). The outset of Khārijī doctrine was that the Muslim community must be governed by the best qualified Muslim leader.⁵³⁴ The first group of the Khawārij were called the “*Muḥakkima*” or the “*Muḥakkimūn*” (Arbitrators). This group had broken away from the supporters of ‘Ali after the Battle of Ṣiffīn.⁵³⁵ They claimed that all matters had to be decided in compliance with the Word of God. Therefore, they were known by their motto ‘*La Ḥukma illā Lillah*’ (The decision is God’s alone). According to them, if all matters are resolved by reference to God’s word, there would be no quarrel and difficulty amongst the Muslims.⁵³⁶

The Khawārij can also be seen as a principal focal point in the development of Islamic theology with regard to the doctrine of *Qadar* and human responsibility. At the centre of their theological teachings was the conception of the *righteous God*. For this reason, they maintain that God demands righteousness from His subjects as well. Even the *Imām* (head of the state) was bound by the Divine law. Thus, they held that the imam can be replaced if he goes against the Divine Law.⁵³⁷

In the literature, some sections of the Khawārij’s view, regarding the eternal fate of children, may be incompatible with the concept of predestination. According to the

⁵³² Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 52.

⁵³³ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 34.

⁵³⁴ Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 37.

⁵³⁵ Ḥusayn al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (Muassah al-Ḥalabī, 2000), 114.

⁵³⁶ al-Shahristānī, 115.

⁵³⁷ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 35.

tradition, the killing of women and children is forbidden during a war in Islam.⁵³⁸ This point of view is also founded on the notion that every child is born in the *fiṭra*, the natural form which is in line with the true religion. It is said in the tradition: “Every child is born in the *fiṭra*; it is his parents who make of him a Jew or a Christian or a Parsi”.⁵³⁹ In contrast, some of Khawārij were of the opinion that children, whether born of a believer or of an infidel, were in the state of neutrality. Therefore, they held that they should be requested to accept Islam when they reach at the age of majority. This was in contradiction to the tradition of the concept of *fiṭra* (natural religion), upon which every child was born.⁵⁴⁰ The argument against the Kharidjite’s perception of children has been summarized by Watt:

The Development of Khārijī doctrine about children and about ignorance shows how the conception of the righteous God demanding righteousness from His creatures leads by an irresistible logic to the doctrine of human responsibility with its corollary the doctrine of *Qadar*, namely, that man has power to perform the duties imposed on him. Thus doctrine of *Qadar* grows naturally out of side of the teaching of the Quran.⁵⁴¹

In his *Maqālāt*, al-‘Ash‘arī grouped the Khawārij into three broad sects: 1) *al-‘Ajāridah*; 2) *al-Ibāḍiyah*; and 3) *al-Bayhasiyah*.⁵⁴² Likewise, his book *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, al-Shahristānī further argues that there seven sects of Khawarij, which are: 1) *al-Azāriqah*; 2) *al-Najdāt al-‘ādhiriyyah*; 3) *al-Bayhasiyya*; 4) *al-‘Ajāridah*; 5) *al-Tha‘ālibah*; 6) *al-Ibāḍiyah*; and 7) *al-Ṣafriyyah al-Ziyādiyyah*.⁵⁴³ It will be an advantage not to go into a detailed discussion of these abovementioned sects of the Khawārij as it will be a digression from the main topic.

Therefore, with regard to the concept of *Qadar* and human accountability, the Khawārij can be broadly classified into two main groups:

(a) Maimūnīya. In relation to views of this group on *Qadar* and human responsibility, al-‘Ash‘arī writes:

⁵³⁸ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1364, trad. 1744.

⁵³⁹ Muslim, 2047, *Qadar*, trad. 2658.

⁵⁴⁰ Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 44.

⁵⁴¹ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 38.

⁵⁴² Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, al-Ṭab‘ah 2, Nasharāt Al-Islāmīyah 1 (Vīsbādin: Dār al-Nashr Frānz Shtāynir, 1382), 86–131.

⁵⁴³ al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 118–37.

They asserted the doctrine of Qadar in compliance with the view of the Mu‘tazila. They held that God entrusts [*fawwāḍa*] acts to human being, and provides the capacity [*istiṭā‘a*] to carry out all the duties imposed on him. Owing to this, they held that the human being is capable of both of disbelieving and believing. God has no will [*mashī‘a*] in regard to the acts of men. The acts of men were not created by God⁵⁴⁴

(b) Shu‘aibīya. They are the followers of Shu‘aib. This group is considered to be the fifth sect of the ‘Ajāridah in al-‘Asharī’s account.⁵⁴⁵ Shu‘aib is the one who breaks away himself from Maimūn and his doctrine. According to him, “no one is capable of doing anything except what God wills, and that the acts of men are created by God”⁵⁴⁶.

Initially, the Khāridjites doctrine came out from the political matters and struggles in the Battle of Şifḥīn and Camel.⁵⁴⁷ This movement has caused many debates between Muslim scholars. It has resulted in the development of Muslim theology. Therefore, it may not be wrong to say that some sections of Khāridjite position on Qadar and human responsibilities became a starting point for the leading idea of the Qadarities. On the other hand, some sections of them became the forerunners of the Mu‘tazilites.⁵⁴⁸

According to Wensinck, the Muslim community was forced to define its own position as a result of the rise of the Khāridjites. For example, discussions on the difference between *islām* and *īmān*, questions of who is Muslim and who is an infidel, and who will be saved from the Hell and who will be entitled into Paradise started with emergence of the Khawārij. However, he also notes that, even if these questions had not been put forward by the Khawārij towards the Muslim community, the community would have been compelled to find out answers over the course of its historical development.⁵⁴⁹

One can assume that the focal point of the debate in the Khāridjite doctrine of the *Qadar* and human responsibility was located at the origin of both faith and works. To

⁵⁴⁴ Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, 93.

⁵⁴⁵ Ash‘arī, 94.

⁵⁴⁶ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 32.

⁵⁴⁷ Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm ansiklopedisi*, vols 13, article: Hariciler, p. 169.

⁵⁴⁸ Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 37.

⁵⁴⁹ Wensinck, 37.

be more precise, the debates addressed the following questions: “Is man the author of his works?”, “Are faith and works products of his will or creation of God?”, “Do man’s works have relation to his eternal fate?”. On these questions, as seen above, the Khawārij did have differing opinions. The majority of the Khawārij accepted predestination, whilst a minority of them accepted another path. For them, a man is the author of his own acts. This minority, as Wensinck claims, formed the basis of the Qadariya. Later, they became known as ‘Qadarites’. Eventually, their views became a foundation for the leading ideas of the Mu‘tazilites.⁵⁵⁰

4.2.1.2 The Qadarīya

It has been mentioned above that the Qadarities doctrine of destiny might be a cornerstone for the Mu‘tazilī school of thought. They share a similar approach to the doctrine of *Qadar* and human responsibility. However, The Qadarīya is little different from the Mu‘tazilīya. This difference will be discussed at the end of the section dedicated to the Mu‘tazilis.⁵⁵¹ However, in general, they are both basically posit a theological defence of free will.⁵⁵²

Interestingly, literal meaning of ‘*Qadarī*’ refers to someone who is adherent of the doctrine of predestination. There have been many reasons given for this ambiguity. For example, Wensinck argues that the name ‘Qadarī’ has been given to them because their doctrine pivots on the concept of *qadar* and free will. He further maintains that the first discussion on the Divine *Qadar* was started by Ma‘bad al- Dhuhānī at Basra. Therefore, Ma‘bad often remembered as ‘the father of the Qadarīya.’⁵⁵³ Likewise, Watt holds the view that the term ‘*Qadarīya*’ was applied to those people who “spent a lot of time discussing the *Qadar*, the ones who made it an important question”.⁵⁵⁴

In general, early writers on ‘*Aqīdah* (Islamic theology) such as al-Ash‘arī and al-Shahristānī did not analyse the Qadarīya as a separate school of thought in their accounts. Both writers seem to examine and incorporate the *Qadarīya* in the scope of

⁵⁵⁰ Wensinck, 52.

⁵⁵¹ Please see p.139.

⁵⁵² Peter S Groff and Oliver Leaman, *Islamic Philosophy A-Z* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 174, <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10435314>.

⁵⁵³ Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 53.

⁵⁵⁴ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 48.

either the Mu‘tazila or the Khawārij.⁵⁵⁵ Apart from this, in his analyses of Islamic theology, al-Malaṭī⁵⁵⁶ (d. 337 / 987) wrote a long section dedicated to the *Qadariya* and their characteristics and doctrine of *Qadar* and free will.⁵⁵⁷ According to him, the *Qadarīya* can be grouped into seven sections, some of which can be examined in relation to the doctrine of *Qadar* and free will in the forthcoming sentences.⁵⁵⁸

Initially, al-Malaṭī mentions a group who take the view that noble and good (*ḥasanāt*) action comes from God, whereas, the authors of wicked, base actions are humans. To be more precise, they argue that it is not appropriate to attribute base actions to God. Thus, they seem to sanctify the God from all misappropriate attributes.⁵⁵⁹ He further speaks of another sect, which is known as *Mufawwiḍa* among the Qadarites. They believed that they themselves are empowered and authorised (*muwakkilūn*) to act. In their view, by virtue of this delegation (*tafwīḍ*), they have a power to do good things.⁵⁶⁰

Another section of the Qadarīya, al-Malaṭī argues, believed that “God made the power for action (*al-istiṭā‘*) in them with full and complete capacity”.⁵⁶¹ In other words, human beings are created with the capacity to be able to do everything as they wish. They also take the view that they do not require any increase in their ‘power of action’ as they have the ability of believing and disbelieving. According to them, men are competent in believing. They claim that, if this were not this way, they would be responsible for what they are not capable of and that the righteousness and justice of

⁵⁵⁵ Please see for the Qadarīya in the section on the Khawārij in: Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, 110; See also for the term of Qadarīya in the section on Mu‘tazila: al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 43–85.

⁵⁵⁶ It is recorded that Abu‘l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Malaṭī was born in Malatya, Turkey. His date of birth is unknown and died in 987. Please see for detailed bibliographical info on al-Malaṭī in: Oliver Leaman, ed., ‘Al-Malaṭī, Abu ‘l-Husayn (d. 337 / 987)’, *The Biographical Encyclopaedia of Islamic Philosophy* (Continuum), accessed 24 July 2014, <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199754731.001.0001/acref-9780199754731-e-261?rsk=cjFTGO&result=1>.

⁵⁵⁷ Muḥammad Ibn-Aḥmad al-Malaṭī, *Kitāb at-Tanbīh wa‘r-radd ‘alā ahl al-ahwā‘ wa‘l-bida‘*, ed. Sven Dederling (Istanbul: Staatsdruckerei, 1936).

⁵⁵⁸ Malaṭī, 91.

⁵⁵⁹ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 52.

⁵⁶⁰ Malaṭī, *Kitāb at-Tanbīh wa‘r-radd ‘alā ahl al-ahwā‘ wa‘l-bida‘*, 174.

⁵⁶¹ Malaṭī, 174.

God does not permit this. Therefore, according to them, men should have the power for action.⁵⁶²

Furthermore, al-Malaṭī was of the opinion that God creates only good things. Therefore, they deny that God creates the child of adultery or determines him or wills him or knows him. They also believe that God provides only *ḥalāl* (lawful) sustenance. For example, if someone steals during his entire life or eats unlawful food, they claim that God does not provide him this sustenance.⁵⁶³

Apart from the abovementioned groups, al-Malaṭī holds that God provided them sustenance as a means of living and set a certain period of time for their life. Whoever kills someone, he speeds up the victim's term by causing his death before the deadline and the killer stops the victim's sustenance. As a result, the remaining sustenance that has already been allotted, but not fully acquired, awaits the victim in the Hereafter.⁵⁶⁴

The underlying assumption of all of these views is “not fixing evil upon God.”⁵⁶⁵ Taken together, the central principle of Qadarīya regarding human free will and predestination can be said as follows: man is required to be capable in his desires and obliged to have the power for action. Consequently, according to them, this makes God is all-Just in punishment because the righteousness of God does not allow Him to be unjust to His subjects, i.e., human beings. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Qadarites were forced to affirm human free will to affirm God's justice. The following section will discuss the Mu'tazili doctrine of Qadar and free will.

4.2.1.3 The Mu'tazila

The Mu'tazilites were considered to be one of the most important schools of theology in early Islam. The Mu'tazila have been studied extensively by the Western scholars because they seem to hold similar ideas to those of “the liberal thought of the nineteenth century”.⁵⁶⁶ It might not be wrong to say that the Qadarites were followed by the Mu'tazilites due to similarities in their doctrine of Qadar and free will.⁵⁶⁷ Al-

⁵⁶² Malaṭī, 174; please see also: Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 52.

⁵⁶³ Malaṭī, *Kitāb at-Tanbīh wa'r-radd 'alā ahl al-ahwā' wa'l-bida'*, 176.

⁵⁶⁴ Malaṭī, 177.

⁵⁶⁵ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*

⁵⁶⁶ Watt, 61.

⁵⁶⁷ Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 58.

Shahristānī mentions them as “upholders of justice and unity of God”. Therefore, he also named them as ‘The Qadariya and al-‘Adliyya’.⁵⁶⁸

According to traditional accounts, this school of thought was founded in early eighth century by Wāṣil bin ‘Aṭā.⁵⁶⁹ The name of ‘Mu‘tazila’ appeared after a discussion to find out if the grave sinner is believer or unbeliever in the Ḥasan al-Baṣrī’s (642–728) study circles where Wāṣil bin ‘Aṭā used to be an attendee. The Murji’ites took the view that the grave sinner was a believer. On the contrary, most of the Khawārij argued that the grave sinner was an unbeliever. Al-Baṣrī wanted to reply to this question, but Wāṣil intervened in the dispute and asserted that the grave sinner was in an “intermediate position (*manzil bayna manzilatayn*)” and withdrew from the circle. Thereupon, al-Ḥasan said that “He has withdrawn (*i‘tazala*) from us”. After this event, followers of Wāṣil were called the Mu‘tazila.⁵⁷⁰ However, according to Watt, Mu‘ammar (Ma‘mar) (d. 830.), Abū‘l Hudayl (d. 841) and al-Nazzām (d. 846) from Basra and Bishr ibn al-Mu‘tamir (d. 825) from Baghdad were considered to be the main founders of the Mu‘tazili theological position.⁵⁷¹

As far as the main ideas of the Mu‘tazili position on the doctrine of Qadar and free will are concerned, the following points can be highlighted:

It seems that all-theological schools in Islam have engaged in the task of reconciling the idea of an omnipotent God who creates everything, including human acts, with the idea of righteous God who cannot hold humans responsible for the deeds which are beyond their capacity.⁵⁷² To be more precise, it is believed that divine justice does not permit the imposition of unbearable tasks on humans. Hence, God Himself states in the Qur’an 2:286 as follows: “Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity”.

⁵⁶⁸ al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 43.

⁵⁶⁹ Groff and Leaman, *Islamic Philosophy A-Z*, 152.

⁵⁷⁰ W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1962), 60.

⁵⁷¹ Watt, 59.

⁵⁷² Maria De Cillis, *Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought: Theoretical Compromises in the Works of Avicenna, Al-Ghāzālī and Ibn ‘Arabī* (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), 10.

According to De Cillis, the Mu‘tazilites solved this problem in a remarkable way: (a) they maintained that divine justice requires that “God only do what is salutary (*aṣlah*) to man”⁵⁷³; and (b) God can only order what is good or commendable (*ma‘rūf*) by forbidding what is blameworthy (*munkar*). Apart from this, as al-‘Asha‘arī notes, they were also of the opinion that God cannot create disbelief (*kufr*) and evil acts or sins (*ma‘āṣī*). They also asserted that God cannot create any other deeds of humans.⁵⁷⁴ This means that God cannot be held responsible for the evil actions which are performed by humans. In other words, humans act freely and they will be responsible for their deeds and, therefore, they will be punished or rewarded according to their actions in the hereafter.⁵⁷⁵

In general, the abovementioned conceptions of the Mu‘tazilite have been developed in accordance with the principle of ‘*adl* (justice) and righteousness of God. Therefore, Watt likens them to the Khawārij and considers them to be their successors. He also claims that this point is the beginning of rationalism in the Mu‘tazilite School of theology. Furthermore, he also argues that they held that evil or bad deeds cannot be attributed to God in order to safeguard God’s ethical nature from evil and sins. They also asserted that God is a supreme magistrate or administrator. For them, punishment of wrongdoers is certainly just due to their own doings.

This idea of divine justice, as Watt claims, led them to refute the idea that God is in control of human affairs.⁵⁷⁶ These analyses of the Mu‘tazilites raise another discussion on the problem of human freedom in relation to ‘power of origination’ (or human capacity to act- *istiṭā‘a*). These debates seem to concentrate on whether or not a man has capacity to originate his own acts (*mustaṭī‘un binafsihi*).⁵⁷⁷ In brief, the Mu‘tazilites focused their views on the notion of *qudra* (power) or power of efficient causality in order to consider human beings as the real *fā‘il* (doer), ‘*ālim* (knower), *qāsit* (a being able to act consciously) and *murīd* (a willing being).⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷³ De Cillis, 11.

⁵⁷⁴ Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, 227.

⁵⁷⁵ De Cillis, *Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought*, 11.

⁵⁷⁶ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 68.

⁵⁷⁷ Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, 229.

⁵⁷⁸ De Cillis, *Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought*, 11.

Taken together, it can be said that both the Mu‘tazilites and the Qadarites took the view that evil deeds and sins of humans were not created by God. For them, God has divine name of *al-‘adl* (Just). Therefore, humans are in charge of their deeds and works and they are also charged with capacity (*istiṭā‘a*) to create their own destinies. Their position led to the belief that humans can create their actions themselves through power (*qudra*) which God entrusted in them.⁵⁷⁹

Now let us have a look at the position of the Jabarites on free will and divine determination.

4.2.2 Upholders of Qadar (Divine Determining)

4.2.2.1. The Jabriyya

The Jabarīya is a theological group which hold the doctrine of *jabr* (divine compulsion) in early Islam.⁵⁸⁰ The views of this movement was first introduced and supported by Jahm b. Ṣafwān (d.745) and Ḍirār b. Amr.⁵⁸¹ This theological movement argues that humans are not free in their actions. In another words, they took the view that humans do not have real power over their choices. Only God determines their actions. In general, as Wensinck notes, this movement held that “the activity of man is not real, but only a metaphorical expression”.⁵⁸² To be more precise, they believed that humans have only metaphorical power to act. Therefore, they hold that all events are eventually determined God’s will. It means they defended the *qadar* or predestination in its absolute sense.⁵⁸³

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the Jabarīya’s position on the Qadar and human freedom. This study tried to examine the Jabarīya in relation to its position on the *qadar* in classical Islamic scholarship such as al-Ash‘arī’s *Maqālātī*

⁵⁷⁹ G.F Haddad, ‘The Qadariyya, Mu‘tazila, and Shī‘A’, 8 April 2014, http://www.sunnah.org/aqida/Main_Sects.htm.

⁵⁸⁰ P.J Bearman et al., eds., ‘Djabr’, *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition, Glossary and Index of Terms* (Brill online, 2014), <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2-Glossary-and-Index-of-Terms/djabr-SIM_gi_00891>.

⁵⁸¹ Tubanur Yesilhark, ‘Theodicy and the Problem of Evil in Islam: The Risale-i Nur as Case Study.’ (University of Durham, 2013), 85, <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/9416/>.

⁵⁸² Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 156.

⁵⁸³ Groff and Leaman, *Islamic Philosophy A-Z*, 117.

(d. 937), Malaṭī’s *Tanbīh* (d. 988), al-Baghdādī’s *al-Farq bayna al-Furuq* (d.1038) and al-Shahristānī’s *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (d. 1154).

The term Jabarīya is derived from the root *j-b-r*. It appears in different formats such as *jabrī* (forced) and *mujbirah* in the abovementioned literature. The literal meaning is ‘to compel’ or ‘force’.⁵⁸⁴ The term Mujbira also was used to mean the Jabarīya and this name has been given to them by their opponents, the Qadarites.⁵⁸⁵

Interestingly, the Qadarīs were discussed extensively in *Maqālāt*, but not much was written about the Jabarīya. In *Maqālāt*, the root of *j-b-r* appears seven times. The word Jabarīya does not appear in it at all. According to Watt, the word *jabr* in a technical sense has been employed only once and it is employed in relation to the anonymous sect of the Rāfiḍa, whose opinion was that there is no compulsion (*jabr*) as Jahmī argues and there is no entrusting (*tafwīd*) as the Mu‘tazila say.⁵⁸⁶

In addition, al-Asha‘arī makes references to another usage of the word *jabr* (compulsion) in the form of *mujbira* (active participle of *jabr*). While using this form, they mean the Jabarī point of view in the account of an anonymous sect of the Mu‘tazila who hold that it is not permissible for humans to worship God without God’s will. In other words, if God wills to create worship, humans will be able to worship God.

Al-Asha‘arī also mentions the *mujbira* as follows: “the people of truth [mainstream sunnī scholars] called them as *mujbirah*. They are more fitted to be called *qadarī* than the people of affirmation (*ahl al-ithbāt*)”.⁵⁸⁷ The Malaṭī also did not mention Jabarīya in his book, the *Tanbīh*.⁵⁸⁸ Likewise, in his book, *al-Farq bayna al-Furuq*, al-Baghdādī also did not mention any sect of the Jabarīya. However, he articulates an individual as

⁵⁸⁴ Elsaid M. Badawi, Muhammad Abdel Haleem, and Hartwig Altenmüller, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur’anic Usage* (Leiden [u.a.]: Brill, 2008), 153.

⁵⁸⁵ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 97.

⁵⁸⁶ Watt, 96; see also: Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, 51.

⁵⁸⁷ Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, 318.

⁵⁸⁸ Malaṭī, *Kitāb at-Tanbīh wa ‘r-radd ‘alā ahl al-ahwā’ wa ‘l-bida’*.

Jabarī.⁵⁸⁹ In short, these are only one or two references to the sect of *mujbirah* or *jabr* in these three classical books.

In his analyses, Watt argues that the references in these three books do not conform to al-Shahristānī’s description of the Jabarīya.⁵⁹⁰ In comparison with other scholars, al-Shahristānī gives a detailed account on the Jabarīya. For example, he puts the Jabarīya in a nutshell in his analyses: the “*Jabr*” he writes, “in reality, it is a negation that actions originate from man. [On the contrary] it is an attribution of all actions to God himself.”⁵⁹¹ Furthermore, he argues that there are three kinds of the Jabarīya, which are: a) the pure Jabarites who do not attribute any act or any power to humans;⁵⁹² b) The moderate Jabarites who maintain that men have power to act (*qudrah*) but this power does not have any influence at all; and c) the Jabarites who held that the originated power (*al-qudrah al-ḥādisah*) has an influence to act and called it “acquisition” (*kasb*).⁵⁹³

In addition to this, it is worthwhile to examine al-Ash‘arī’s account of Jahm b. Ṣafwān. According to Jahm, in reality, no one has the [power to] act except God alone. It means that God is the real agent of the acts. He further goes on writing:

Acts can be attributed to humans only by way of metaphor. For example, when it is said that ‘a tree moves’, ‘a sphere goes around’ and ‘the sun sets’, in reality, the actions in the tree, the sphere and the sun can only be attributed to God. However, God can only create power to act for humans by which act takes place. Similarly, God creates a will and power of choice for man. Owing to this, man wills. Likewise, God created height for man. Therefore, he is tall. He also created for man colour by which he is coloured.⁵⁹⁴

From the previous discussion, it can be seen that the Jabarīya held that a human being does not have free will and God determines his actions. In other words, the capacity to act, the power of action is not intrinsic to humans. Therefore, Turner justly summarised the Jabarites’ point of view as follows: “for the Jabriyya, man is ‘like a

⁵⁸⁹ ‘Abdalqāhir Ibn-Ṭāhir al-Baḡdādī, *al-Farq bayna al-Firaq* (Bairūt: Dār al-āfāq al-jadīdah, 1977), 328.

⁵⁹⁰ Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 97.

⁵⁹¹ al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 85.

⁵⁹² The translation of this category of the Jabarites is taken from the article written by William Thomson, ‘Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam I.’, *The Muslim World* 40, no. 3 (1 July 1950): 215, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-1913.1950.tb01046.x>.

⁵⁹³ al-Shahristānī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 85.

⁵⁹⁴ Ash‘arī, *Kitāb Maqālāt Al-Islāmīyīn Wa-Ikhtilāf Al-Muṣallīn*, 279.

leaf on the wind, tossed now this way, now that': he has no free will and his deeds are decreed and 'predestined' by God"⁵⁹⁵

In this section, it has been explained that the Jabarīya championed the predestination approach in relation to the Qadar and free will in early Islam. In practice, according to Hourani, followers of the Jabarīya diminished by the tenth century. Later, he argues, the more subtle and defensible Ash'arite doctrine of kasb (acquisition) emerged, viz. that "man 'acquires' his acts in a way that makes him responsible for them while leaving all power in the hands of God."⁵⁹⁶ The section that follows moves on to consider the Ash'ariti position on the Qadar and free will.

4.3 AHLI SUNNAH AND WA AL-JAMA'AH (THE PARTY OF MAINSTREAM SUNNI SCHOOL OF THOUGHT)

4.3.1 Al-Ash'arī

It has been recorded in the accounts of Klein and Watt that Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. 'Ismā'īl al-Ash'arī was born in 260/973 in Basra. He spent his youth attending the study circles of the Mu'tazilites. It is also said that he was one of the bright students of al-Jubbā'ī. Therefore, he used to substitute his master, al-Jubbā'ī, during his absence. When he reached forty, he converted from the al-Mu'tazila to the party of Book and Sunnah. He moved to Baghdad towards the end of his life and eventually died there in 324/935.⁵⁹⁷

As far as al-Ash'arī's conversion is concerned, it has been suggested by many scholars, such as Watt, that it was a result of his dissatisfaction with the views of al-Jubbā'ī on the ultimate fate of three brothers.⁵⁹⁸ On the other hand, it is also reported

⁵⁹⁵ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 364.

⁵⁹⁶ George Fadlo Hourani, *Islamic Rationalism: The Ethics of Abd Al-Jabbar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 24.

⁵⁹⁷ Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl Ash'arī, *Al-Aš'arī's Al-Ibānah 'an Uṣūl Ad-Diyānah [the Elucidation of Islām's Foundation]*, Added t.-p.: American Oriental Series, v. 19 (New Haven, Conn: American oriental society, 1940), 27; see also: Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 136.

⁵⁹⁸ Please see for detailed discussion on the story of the three brothers in: Ash'arī, *Al-Aš'arī's Al-Ibānah 'an Uṣūl Ad-Diyānah [the Elucidation of Islām's Foundation]*, 26.

that he saw the Prophet Muhammad indicating to him to turn his attention to the Traditions and the Qur’an in his dreams, three times during Ramadan.⁵⁹⁹

Before proceeding to examine al-Ash‘arī’s position on *Qadar* and human free will, it is worthwhile to consider his writings on the topic. According to Klein, the following seven books are known to have been written by al-Ash‘arī and which have survived until the present day:

- 1) The *Ibānah*;
- 2) *Risālah fī istiḥsān al-ḥawḍ fī al-kalām* or ‘Tract in Favour of the Free Use of kalām’;
- 3) The *Kitāb al-luma‘* or ‘Book of Aphorism’;
- 4) The *Risālat al-īmān*, a tract on faith;
- 5) The *Risālah kataba bihā ilā alh aṭ-ṭagr bi bāb al-abwāb*;
- 6) The *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyūn*; and
- 7) The *Qawl jumlat aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth wa ahl al-sunnah fī al-ī‘tiqād*.⁶⁰⁰

It may not be wrong to say that, as Wensinck claims, in his book *Maqālāt* on early creeds in Islam, al-Ash‘arī discusses the position of different creeds with perfect objectivity and without a word of retort. In his *Ibāna*, he makes use of certain arguments in favour of the traditional views, i.e. *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama‘ah* (The party of mainstream Sunni school of thought) and he brings forward refutations for the positions of other creeds.⁶⁰¹

Turning our attention now to the main ideas of al-Ash‘arī on the Qadar and free will, we may consider Bawḍawī’s analyses on this topic. With regard to Ash‘arite doctrine of ‘compulsion’ in human acts, in his book *Ṭawālī‘ al-Anwār min Maṭāli‘ al-Anwār*, Bawḍawī points out that human acts originate in combination of two acts; a) by the power of God (*qudrah*); and b) by their acquisition by man. To be more precise, he goes on explaining, when man is determined in his will, God creates the act in his

⁵⁹⁹ Please see for detailed discussion on the story of dreams in: Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.*, 138.

⁶⁰⁰ Of these seven books, I regret that the *Ibānah* and the *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyūn* are accessible to me at the moment. Therefore, all references were given from these two books.

⁶⁰¹ Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 88.

will.⁶⁰² Likewise, in his commentary to Bayḍāwī’s text, with regard to human acts, al-İşfahānī writes as following:

When man has been completely firm in his will to obey, God created obedient action in him, and when man has been completely firm in his will to disobey, [God] created disobedient action in him. So in this way man has been as if he were the existential cause of his action, although he was not its existential cause of his action.⁶⁰³

In addition to this, Bayḍāwī also argues that God can be considered as an agency that wills moral phenomena of good and evil, and faith and unbelief. It means, in the view of al-Ash‘arī, that God is “the Existential Cause of the universe and is its Creator [*mūjid ul-kull wa mubd‘uhu*].”⁶⁰⁴ In the same way, al-İşfahānī also summarised the Ash‘ashite position on the Qadar and free will as follows:

[God] is the agency that wills all the moral phenomena of good and evil, faith and unbelief, obedience and disobedience. His will is subsequent to His knowledge, and everything that God Most High knows [can and] does occur, that He wills [to occur], and everything God Most High knows [cannot and] does not occur, that He does not will to occur.⁶⁰⁵

From the abovementioned discussion, one can argue that al-Ash‘arī’s position on the issue of free will and predestination was founded on the argument of God’s omnipotence, namely, as Watt puts it, “everything, good and evil, is willed by God, and He creates the acts of men by creating in men the power to do each act.”⁶⁰⁶ Besides, al-Ash‘arī also held that God creates without reason (*‘illah*). In other words, nothing makes this creation necessary for God and God is not bound to compulsion or any obligation towards humans.⁶⁰⁷ He also believed that God does not command evil. In the contrary, evil is forbidden by God, however, in his view, God commands good and God has no pleasure in evil, though He wills and creates it.⁶⁰⁸ In other words,

⁶⁰² ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar Bayḍāwī and Maḥmūd ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān İşfahānī, *Nature, Man and God in Medieval Islam ‘Abd Allah Baydawī’s Text, Tawali‘ Al-Anwar Min Matali‘ Al-Anzar, along with Mahmud İsfahani’s Commentary, Matali‘ Al-Anzar, Sharh Tawali‘ Al-Anwar*, ed. James W Pollock, trans. Edwin Elliott Calverley (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002), 929.

⁶⁰³ Bayḍāwī and İşfahānī, 930.

⁶⁰⁴ Bayḍāwī and İşfahānī, 932.

⁶⁰⁵ Bayḍāwī and İşfahānī, 933.

⁶⁰⁶ Watt, W. Montgomery. "al-Ash‘arī, Abu ‘l-Ḥasan" in: P. J Bearman et al., ‘Encyclopaedia of Islam Second Edition Online’ (Brill, 2012).

⁶⁰⁷ De Cillis, *Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought*, 13.

⁶⁰⁸ Ash‘arī, *Al-Aş‘arī’s Al-İbānah ‘an Uşūl Ad-Diyānah [the Elucidation of Islām’s Foundation]*, 33.

what God ordered was considered to be necessarily right, and what God forbidden was believed to be necessarily wrong.⁶⁰⁹

Although, in his account on the *Qadar* and free will, al-Ash'arī seems to hold the view about predestination that some form of responsibility is 'stuck' onto humans by recognizing the existence of power. Owing to this power, humans are enabled to acquire (*kasb*) actions created for them by God.⁶¹⁰ With regard to this view of al-Ash'arī, Macdonald is accurate in saying that power (*qudra*) and choice in humans is created by God. Then, with this power and choice that God created in humans, action proceeds from humans. It means, he continues, God creates the actions of creatures both as initiatives and as productions. However, those actions are acquired by humans. To be more precise, the acquisition (*kasb*) stands for the creature's power and choice both of which are previously created by God.⁶¹¹ In this way, al-Ash'arī seems to believe that humans were not regarded as agencies for the creation of actions. Though, he found a way to confer some form of responsibility on humans by recognizing the term of acquisition (*kasb*). Similarly, Wensinck also argues that al-Ash'arī acknowledges the existence of the divine qualities with the qualification of *tanzīh* (safeguarding from evil and bad things). In addition to this, al-Ash'arī's also held that "[God has] knowledge, but not like human knowledge, power, but not like human power... He denies free will as well as compulsion, saying that a person does not produce, but that acquires his act (*kasb*)."⁶¹²

Taken together, from the above-mentioned discussions, it can be said that al-Ash'arī lays his emphasis on God's omnipotence; God creates everything, including will, good and evil. Therefore, it seems that al-Ash'arī defended the predestination view and believes that God creates human acts by putting in them the power to do acts both as initiative and as production. However, these actions are acquired by humans. Therefore, he maintains, humans will be responsible for their actions.

⁶⁰⁹ De Cillis, *Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought*, 13.

⁶¹⁰ De Cillis, 14.

⁶¹¹ D. B. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory. New Ed* (Lahore: The Premier Book House, 1930), 192.

⁶¹² Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed; Its Genesis and Historical Development*, 92.

In this section, al-Ash‘arite’s position on predestination and human free will has been discussed and the section that follows moves on to consider Mātūrīdī’s points of view on predestination and free will.

4.3.2 Al-Mātūrīdī

The Mātūrīdī School of theology was founded by Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad al-Mātūrīdī. He was born in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, however, his precise date of birth remains unknown. General agreement, based on available sources, claim that he died in A.H 333/944 and was buried in Samarkand. He was listed as the one who followed Abū Ḥanīfa’s opinion in legal matters.⁶¹³ According to Yorukan, al-Mātūrīdī was known as an *imām* (master) in *aqīdah* (theology) due to his systematising of the Sunni school of theology.⁶¹⁴ To be more precise, in his *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, al-Mātūrīdī formulated the Sunnite school of theology into an organised structure in Transoxiana.

As far as al-Mātūrīdī’s position on human free will and *qadar* is concerned, he dedicated six chapters on this issue in his book. At first, he discussed the acts of human being and its attribution. Then he moved on to examine different opinions of early Islamic creeds on human free will. Later, he discusses the power of human beings as well as the capacity to act in them. Finally, he dedicates two chapters to the question of volition (*al-irādah*) and the problem of *qadar* and *qaḍā* (divine decree).⁶¹⁵

With these introductory remarks on al-Mātūrīdī’s brief biography and his writings, we may now turn to an examination of the relevant Maturidian material from his *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* on the questions of *al-irādah* (volition), *al-ikhtiyār* (free choice), *qudrah* (power), *kasb* (acquisition) and *qadar* and *qaḍā*.

As far as al-Mātūrīdī’s position on free will is concerned, it is worthwhile to mention the two important terms, *al-irādah* and *al-ikhtiyār*. In his discussions on the general question of the nature of *al-irādah*, al-Mātūrīdī argues that the question of volition can be linked to the questions of creation of actions (*khalq al-af‘āl*), since createdness

⁶¹³ J. Meric Pessagno, ‘The Uses of Evil in Maturidian Thought’, *Studia Islamica*, no. 60 (1 January 1984): 59, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1595509>.

⁶¹⁴ Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Mātūrīdī, *Islām akaidine dair eski metinler; Ebu Mansur-i Matürīdī’nin iki eseri, tevhid kitabı ve akaid risalesi.*, ed. Yusuf Ziya Yörükân (İstanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1953).

⁶¹⁵ Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Mātūrīdī, *Kitāb Al-Tawḥīd*, *Buḥūth Wa-Dirāsāt Bi-Idārat Ma‘had Al-Ādab Al-Sharqīyah* 50 (Bayrūt: Dār al-Mashriq, 1970), 221–305.

of action has been proven and it has been established that God is the one who chooses (*mukhtār*) and wills (*murīd*).⁶¹⁶ In other words, al-Māturīdī seems to believe that will is an action, which was also created by God. Furthermore, he discusses that the essence of willing (*irādah*) is a free choice and a denial of compulsion, so that no one forces one to do something or restricts his or her sovereignty, or interferes with him or her and in his or her power.⁶¹⁷ In addition to this, with respect to the relationship between these two terms, i.e. *al-irādah* and *al-ikhtiyār*, al-Māturīdī is of the opinion that volition is considered as a condition (*shart*) for whatever is done by free choice. On the other hand, it can also be said that if something is done involuntarily, it means that the agent does not will it.⁶¹⁸

In his useful analysis of al-Māturīdī’s view on volition and free choice, Pessagno found that al-Māturīdī equates *al-irādah* with *al-ikhtiyār*, although, Pessagno claims, al-Māturīdī seems to also hold that will (*al-irādah*) often refers to a wish, command, urge and satisfaction. According to Pessagno, al-Māturīdī’s equation of *al-irādah* with *al-ikhtiyār* is a key factor for understanding the terms of analysis of human acts. Furthermore, he also claims that this equation can be crucial for the proper comprehension of al-Māturīdī’s point of view on *kasb* (acquisition). With regard to al-Māturīdī’s definition for *al-irādah*, Pessagno says that will and choice are actions created by God. Pessagno suggests that, for al-Māturīdī, God is the unique Creator of everything (*Khāliq kulli shai’in*). Therefore, according to Pessagno, al-Māturīdī takes the view that God creates both willing and choice since they are also considered as actions.⁶¹⁹ In other words, God creates human acts as well as human’s will and choice.

So far, we have focused on al-Māturīdī’s position on free will. Let us now discuss Maturidan approach to predestination. In his article titled ‘*The Uses of Evil in Maturidan Thought*’, Pessagno analysed al-Māturīdī’s position on predestination. According to him, al-Māturīdī offers two senses to the term *qadar* (predestination). In the first sense, *qadar* can be defined as the divine ordinance (*al-hadd*). All particles

⁶¹⁶ Māturīdī, 286.

⁶¹⁷ Māturīdī, 304.

⁶¹⁸ Māturīdī, 293.

⁶¹⁹ J. Meric Pessagno, ‘Irāda, Ikhtiyār, Qudra, Kasb the View of Abū Maṣṣūr Al-Māturīdī’, *Jameroriesoci Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104, no. 1 (1984): 180.

come into existence in accordance with this divine ordinance. In other words, God creates and makes (*ja'la*) everything as it is, such as good or evil, beauty and ugliness, wisdom and folly. The second meaning of *qadar*, he goes on to say, is the manifestation of that creation in compliance with each thing that happens. In this meaning, the time and place, truth and falsehood and the reward and punishment of every happening is also considered.⁶²⁰ To be more precise, al-Māturīdī believes that God is the unique Creator of everything (*Khāliq kulli shai'in*). It means that everything emerges into being with the divine ordinance of God. It also indicates that the assigned time and place, truth and falsehood of every happening is given by God Himself.

At this juncture, the question of “why and how human beings are held responsible for his actions” can be raised by al-Mu'tazilites as they hold the opinion that God's justice does not allow this kind of apparent or so called paradoxical injustice. In response to this, al-Māturīdī seems to have introduced the concept of '*kasb*' (acquisition). Acquisition (*kasb*) can be defined as a key theological concept. This concept is mostly concerned with the relationship between God and human action. The infinitive form of the verb *kasb* was derived from the root of *k-s-b* which may refer to infinitive verbs 'to gain' or 'to acquire'.

According to al-Māturīdī's system of *kasb*, God grants power to act and power of free choice to human beings. Consequently, this theory considers one's self-consciousness as the only basis of free choice, so that he or she is free to choose an action. Thus, he or she becomes the doer of a particular action. In other words, human beings can also be assigned as both the agents (*fā'il*) and appropriators (*kāsib*) of these actions. Therefore, it might not be wrong to say that, in al-Māturīdī's system of thought, the theory of *kasb* is used as a tool to explain the place of human action in connection with God's omnipotence.⁶²¹

⁶²⁰ Pessagno, 'The Uses of Evil in Maturidian Thought', 70.

⁶²¹ Abrahamov, Binyamin. "Acquisition." Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE. Edited by: Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson. Brill Online, 2015. Reference. Durham University Library. 13 January 2015 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/acquisition-COM_26299>

First appeared online: 2008

Taken together, al-Māturīdī held an opinion that God creates the acts of man and makes His will and decree a subject to the acts of man. To be more precise, God is the creator of actions and one’s capacity to perform them. This means that they are acts of God in one respect. In another respect, they are indeed, but not metaphorically, acts of man and his free choice (*ikhtiyār*). Besides, according to al-Māturīdī’s theory of *kasb*, a man is considered an acquisitive and active being (*fā’il kāсіб*).⁶²² Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that al-Māturīdī’s position on predestination and human free will is an intermediate position between the Qadarites and the Jabarites.

So far, this section has analysed three different schools of thought on human free will and predestination, namely the Qadarite, Jabarite and Sunnite schools. The next section of this chapter will analyse Nursi’s position on this subject.

4.4 NURSI’S POSITION ON QADAR AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

4.4.1 Introduction: Said Nursi’s understanding of ‘adl in relation to qadar

Here I would like to discuss the Nursi’s understanding of ‘adl in relation to *qadar*. As it is mentioned in Chapter 3,⁶²³ arguable, Nursi’s writings are predominantly imān centric and or teocentric. Every topic is examined by focussing on matters of belief. Therefore, his writings are *īmān* centric. Here I would like to discuss how ‘adl (justice) is used to prove the existence of divine determination which is one of the tenets of *īmān* (belief) in Islam.

Faik Yılmaz points out that Nursi elaborates the concept of justice from different perspectives such as *adalet-i mahza* (pure justice), *adalet-i izafiyā* (relative justice), *adalet-i qadariya* (divine justice), *adalet-i bashari* (human justice) etc. Here the more focus will be on *al-‘adl al-qadariyya* (divine justice)⁶²⁴

In his book *The Qur’an Revealed: a Critical Analysis of Said Nursi’s Epistles of Light*, Turner claims that Nursi has discoursed on predestination and human free will from three different angles at great length, but in different sections of his writings.

⁶²² Māturīdī, *Kitāb Al-Tawhīd*, xxxii.

⁶²³ For more details, see: Chapter 3: 3.2

⁶²⁴ Mehmet Faik Yılmaz, 'Bediüzzaman'ın Adalet Kavramına Getirdiği Açılımlar', *The Role of Justice in Building a Better World* (Istanbul: Istanbul İlim ve Kültür Vakfı, 2007), 91-100 at 91.

(a) He spent great amount of effort to explore how all beings come into existence with such an order and precise balance as if they were planned beforehand. Commenting on this subject, Turner argues:

Creation, then, is nothing more than the translation of a potential being from its supra-material state into the materiality of external existence in time and space. The fact that everything which exists is determined means, in this sense, that their forms, proportions, measurements, spatiotemporal positions and life trajectories are all foreordained or, as it is expressed traditionally, 'written' (*maktūb*)⁶²⁵

This part of the chapter tries to examine this angle and concept of Divine Determining in relation to *al-'adl* (justice) and also attempts to show how Nursi constructs his understanding of Divine Determining using the Qur'ānic point view;

(b) The second aspect that Nursi focuses is the question of compatibility of Divine Determination with human free will in his writings on the problem of *qadar* (predestination). According to Turner, Nursi was of the opinion that the idea of human free will agency may seem in irreconcilable conflict with Divine omniscience and omnipotence. On the contrary, Turner further claims that Nursi takes the view that Divine Determination is not only in complete harmony with human free will, but also they are interdependent and inextricable.

This chapter has so far examined this old-aged question of compatibility of predestination and human free will in Islamic classic scholarship. In the following parts, Nursi's position on this subject and his assessment of psycho-spiritual benefits of Divine Determining for believers are explained.

Nursi believes that Divine determination is one of the fundamental principles of belief.⁶²⁶ That is to say, belief that all things that happen and all events which occur were Divinely predetermined and planned beforehand. The final section of this chapter tries to elaborate this point by giving examples from Nursi's own life experiences.

⁶²⁵ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 365.

⁶²⁶ Turner, 366.

It is worthwhile to note that Nursi’s discourse on relationship between *adl* and *qadar* is based on the teachings of the Qur’ān.⁶²⁷ For example, in *sūrah al-Qamar*, Allah says: “Verily, all things have We created in proportion and measure”. Interestingly, it might not be wrong to say that Nursi paraphrases the sentence of ‘all things have We created in proportion and measure [*biqadar*]’ in the Qur’ān 54:49 as “everything is determined by Almighty God”.⁶²⁸ In addition to this, Nursi commences his tract on Divine Determining with following verse of the Qur’ān (15:21): “And there is not a thing but its (sources and) treasures (inexhaustible) are with Us; but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures [*biqadarin ma‘lūm*]”.

In *The Letters*, Nursi argues that there is a continual ordering and balancing in the universe and everything is measured and ordered in minute detail. He further points out that the order is being changed with regularity and the balance is renewed with measuredness by someone, i.e. God. Thus, as Nursi claims, when examining closely, it can be perceived that wisdom and a justice (*adl*) can be seen behind the Divine order and the balance. Therefore, Nursi concludes that the order and balance in all beings demonstrates a universal ordering and balancing and, thus, the ordering and balancing manifests a universal wisdom and justice.⁶²⁹

Interestingly, in *The Twenty Sixth Word* Nursi again uses the ordering and balancing which are the manifestations of the universal wisdom and justice to prove the existence of Divine Determination. According to Nursi, the belief in Divine Determination refers to everything determined, balanced and measured by God.

Nursi maintains that several verses of the Qur’ān, such as “nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered), but is (inscribed) in a clear record [*kitābin mubīn*] (to those who can read)”⁶³⁰ assert that everything is written before it comes into existence and after it passes from existence. In addition to this, Nursi argues that the order, balance, regularity and adornment in the universe show that everything is planned and written before its existence and after its existence. Furthermore, he discusses that the well-measured proportion of everything clearly indicates Divine Determining as well. In

⁶²⁷ In this regard, please see the Qur’ān (13:17, 15:21, 23:18, 42:27, 43:11, 54:49)

⁶²⁸ Nursi, Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlükler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar, 207.

⁶²⁹ Ibid., 452.

⁶³⁰ *The Qur’ān*. (6:59)

other words, he highlights that apparently all living creatures contain such a form and measure that emerge from a wisely and skillfully wrought mould.

Thus, as Nursi claims, pre-eternal power gives the form and shape to those living creatures in accordance with a well-proportioned and scientific immaterial mould that emanates from Divine Determining. For example, Nursi illustrates this point with a motion of lifeless and unconscious particles in the growth and development of trees and animals.⁶³¹ According to Nursi, in some of the being’s intricate extremities, the particles are ceased, as if they deliberately consider and recognize the place of fruits and benefits or alter their course as though ensuing some important purpose. In this point of view, circle of action clearly implies that the particles of trees and animals move in accordance with the immaterial measured proportions, which come from Divine Determining.⁶³² More precisely, Nursi maintains that the forms into which things are shaped with the passing of time and the states obtained through the motions they make, will also be contingent upon the ordering of Divine Determination.

To sum up, we should understand from the abovementioned discussions that, according to Nursi, if God takes such care of every single detail of the lowest level of life, such as plants’ and particles’ life, He of course determines human life, which is the highest level of life in accordance with His scale and measure of Divine Determination. At this stage, Nursi concludes:

Since we understand clearly that the fruitful limits and purposeful extremities have been drawn with the pen of Divine Determining, physical and non-physical, certainly the states and stages which all living beings undergo in the course of their lives are also drawn with that pen. For their life-stories follow a course with order and balance; they change forms and receive shapes. Since the pen of Divine Determining thus rules in all living beings, surely the life-history of man, the world’s most perfect fruit and vicegerent of the earth and bearer of the Supreme Trust, is more than anything dependent on the law of Divine Determining.⁶³³

It is therefore likely that overlapped connections exist between the concept of ‘*adl* and the Divine Determining in the writings of Nursi. Thus, from the above-mentioned passages it can be assumed that Nursi elaborates the concept of justice (‘*adl*) as balance and order in connection to Divine Determining.

⁶³¹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:207.

⁶³² Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 207.

⁶³³ Nursi, *The Words*, 486.

To sum up, there is a strong relationship between *qadar* and *‘adl* in the Qur’ān. But first of all, in order to understand this relationship, we need to consider the meaning of *qadar* from the Qur’ānic perspective. Taken together, the results of the abovementioned discussions suggest two key meanings of *qadar*: (a) general meaning of *qadar* perceived commonly by the public. From this viewpoint, *qadar* is believed that everything is written and determined by Allah before its existence; and (b) the Qur’ānic understanding of *qadar*. In all verses in the Qur’ān regarding *qadar*, it has been used as measure and balance. One question that needs to be considered here is how these two different meanings relate to *‘adl*.

One possible answer to this question lies in the verse (54:49): “Verily, all things have We created in proportion and measure (*biqadar*).” This verse indicates that everything was created within a perfect balance and measure, which refers to justice and Divine Determining. In other words, existence of the Divine Determining emanates from proportional justice of Allah. More precisely, creation of everything within certain proportions and balance proves the existence of *qadar*. Therefore, it may not be wrong to say that *qadar* can be accepted as a product of Divine *‘Adl*.

4.4.2 Divine Determining: qadar, qaḍā and āḥā

The previous section examined Nursi’s understanding of *a‘dl* (justice) in connection with *qadar* (predestination). Now, we analyse the question of *qadar* (divine determining) from the Nursian point of view in more detail.

In relation to key terms in Divine determination, authors such as Turner and Akgunduz accepted the widely-held view that one of the major problems in theological debates has been the problem of definitions in every part of history.⁶³⁴ Therefore, before proceeding to the examination of Nursi’s stance on Divine Determining, it is worth elaborating some key terms we will be using in this section such as *qadar* (divine determining), *qaḍā* (decree) and *a‘ḥā* (granting relief).

⁶³⁴ Turner, *The Qur’an Revealed*, 364; see also: Ahmet Akgunduz, ‘Bediuzzaman’s View of Divine Determination (Al-Qadar) and Free Will (Al-Irâdah Al-Juz’iyyah)’ (God, Man and Morality: The Perspective of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, Durham University, 2008).

A special section in Chapter 1 has been dedicated to *qadar*'s derivation and meanings.⁶³⁵ In a nutshell, the root of *qadar* means 'to have the power over', 'to measure precisely', 'to determine', 'to arrange', 'to devise' and 'to order'.⁶³⁶ In the literature, as Akgunduz suggests, the term *qadar* tends to refer to "God's determination of all beings and events together with all their states and attributes, all the powers and abilities they possess, and the times and places they enter into the world of existence, and their beings recorded in due order".⁶³⁷

Literally, the term *qaḍā* (divine decree), which is derived from the root *qāf-dād-yā*, is the infinitive 'to decree', 'to decide on' and 'to create', 'to fashion out'.⁶³⁸ In the literature, the term *qaḍā* refers to God's creation of everything in accordance with His knowledge and will. In other words, it means origination of everything in the sphere of existence with God's creation in accord with predetermined plan.⁶³⁹

Interestingly, in connection with these two terms, i.e. *qadar* and *qaḍā*, Nursi exposes the concept of 'aṭā (gift or favour) in his writings.⁶⁴⁰ For example, in his book *al-Mathnawī al-Nūriya*, Nursi used as 'aṭāyā in the plural form.⁶⁴¹ With regard to God's ultimate will, Nursi established that God destines (*muqaddarāt*), decrees (*qaḍāyā*) and forgive ('aṭāyā) with his relief or favours and pull out from execution as He wishes.⁶⁴² It might not be wrong to say that, in the Nursian point view, Divine Determination is a kind of law making process-akin to the formulation of law in parliament, and the implementation of those laws as accepted by the law making authority is the decree (*qaḍā*). Sometimes, a higher authority in law making process - such as king or president - can make exceptions and withdraw from implementation. This process is called, in Nursian approach, as 'aṭāyā (gifts or favours). This view can be supported

⁶³⁵ More details, see: Chapter 1: 1.4.4.2

⁶³⁶ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 365.

⁶³⁷ Akgunduz, 'Bediuzzaman's View of Divine Determination (Al-Qadar) and Free Will (Al-Irādah Al-Juz'iyyah)'.
⁶³⁸ Badawi, Abdel Haleem, and Altenmüller, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage*, 763.

⁶³⁹ Mehmed Kirkinci, *Divine Determining: (Fate and Destiny) and Man's Will in Islam*, trans. Şükran Vahide (Cağaloğlu, Istanbul, Turkey: Sözler Neşriyat A.Ş., 1993), 23–25.

⁶⁴⁰ The term 'aṭā is derived from root *q-d-yā* and it refers 'to give' or 'grant'. Please see for further meanings in Badawi, Abdel Haleem, and Altenmüller, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'anic Usage*, 629.

⁶⁴¹ Nursi, *al-Mathnawī al-Nūriya [Epitomes Of Light]*, 338.

⁶⁴² Nursi, 338.

by Turner’s example on commenting Nursi’s position on Divine Determination. Turner argues that Divine Determining is a kind of plan made by an architect. Divine power, he goes on to say, will bring those plans into the realm of existence.⁶⁴³ As a matter of fact, it seems that Nursi reads this process as the *qaḍā* (implementation) of planned action by God’s knowledge.

With regard to Nursi’s understanding of Divine Determining, Turner furthermore concludes that Divine Determining is the plan drawn by God’s knowledge and Divine decree is the process of bringing all things into existence from divinely planned action. He also writes that Divine power is something which actually generates the things planned into external existence.⁶⁴⁴

4.4.2.1 Modes of Qadar: Kitāb al-mubīn (Clear Book) and Imām al-Mubīn (Clear Record)

In his book on *Divine Determining*, Nursi attempts to unveil the notion in detail by compartmentalising it. According to Nursi, Divine Determining appears in two modes or manifestations. He argues that there are two manifestations of divine determining in (a) ‘evident’; and (b) ‘theoretical’ seeds. ‘Evident’ Divine Determining is a physical order in living beings. Thus, it can be said that it specifies the physical nature, states, and parts of the tree, which the seed comprises. While ‘theoretical’ Divine Determining is a non-physical order. In another words, it indicates the stages, states, forms, motions, and glorifications, the tree will undertake and perform over the period of its life. In other words, it seems that all these stages and forms in the trees are similar to its branches and leaves, all of which depend on Theoretical Divine Determining.⁶⁴⁵

Moreover, Nursi highlights other differences between the evident and theoretical Divine Determining. According to him, Evident Divine Determining points to ‘the Clear Book’ (*al-kitāb al-mubīn*), which is the will and creational commands, whereas the theoretical one refers to ‘the Clear Record’ (*al-imām al-mubīn*).⁶⁴⁶ In order to

⁶⁴³ Turner, *The Qur’an Revealed*, 336.

⁶⁴⁴ Turner, 336.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶ Please see ‘Kader risalesi’ in: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:207.

support these ideas, Nursi’s book, “*The Flashes*”, can be referred to. In this book, Nursi writes:

For He is All-Just, All-Wise, All-Powerful, All-Knowing, One, Single, the Pre-Eternal Sovereign. All the worlds are within the grasp of His order [*nizām*] and balance [*mīzān*], and ordering [*tanẓīm*] and balancing [*tawzīn*]; of His justice [*‘adl*], and wisdom, and knowledge, and power, and under their sway. They manifest His unity and oneness, as may be surmised certainly, indeed, may be observed. For there is nothing in existence which is outside the bounds of the order [*nizām*] and balance [*mīzān*] and ordering [*tanẓīm*] and balancing [*tawzīn*]. They are the two domains of the Clear Record [*al-imām al-mubīn*] and the Clear Book [*al-kitāb al-mubīn*].⁶⁴⁷

It is worthwhile to mention here that Nursi also mentions these two terms in his book called *29th Flashes*, which was written in Arabic. With regard to these two terms, Nursi writes: “They are [*humā*] the two domains of the Clear Record [*al-imām al-mubīn*] and the Clear Book [*al-kitāb al-mubīn*]”. Here ‘*humā*’ refers to two things. From the context, it seems that ‘*humā*’ is used in relation to the order [*nizām*] and balance [*mīzān*] and ordering [*tanẓīm*] and balancing [*tawzīn*]. On the other hand, it may refer either to ‘power’ and ‘knowledge’ or to ‘Unity’ and ‘Oneness’. Further research is necessary to investigate the exact referential points of “*humā*” (they) in the text by linguists. It seems more relevant if they (*humā*) indicate to order and balance. In that case, it can be assumed that *nizām* (order) and *mizān* (balance) concern ‘the Clear Book’, whereas *tanẓīm* (ordering) and *tawzīn* (balancing) pertains to ‘the Clear Record’. Interestingly, the notion of two modes of Divine Determining in Nursi’s discourse seems to be consistent with al-Māturidī’s structural compartmentation of his concept of *qadar* (predestination).⁶⁴⁸

In his analyses on Nursi’s understanding of Divine determining, Turner also attempts to decompose these two manifestations of Divine determining. According to Turner, Divine Determining become visible in two ways, namely, (a) *badihī* (evident) as physical being as a created entity with its particular forms and measures, and (b) *nazarī* (theoretical), non-physical action of the created entity is understood as it

⁶⁴⁷ In this regard, please refer to original text in: Nursi, 1:771; please for english translation of this text in: Nursi, *The Flashes*, 2004, 393.

⁶⁴⁸ Please see p.148.

undergoes in different changes and transformations with the passing of time as it grows and develops.⁶⁴⁹

In connection with these two manifestations of divine determining, as Turner suggests, Nursi further attempts to analyse that the evident *qadar* alludes to the Clear Book, which is the will and the creational commands., whereas, theoretical *qadar* refers to the Clear Record, which is a title of Divine knowledge and Divine Command.⁶⁵⁰

Both terms, i.e. the Clear Book and the Clear Record are mentioned in the Qur'an. The first term, i.e., the Clear Book (*Kitāb al-mubīn*) appears several times in the Qur'an. For example:

A.L.R. These are the symbols (or Verses) of the perspicuous Book [*al-kitāb al-mubīn*].⁶⁵¹

As far as the Clear Record (*Imām al-mubīn*) is concerned, it appears only twice in the Qur'an. For instance:

All things We have recorded with numbers (as a record) in a Clear Book [*imāmin mubīn*].⁶⁵²

In a nutshell, the Clear Book, as Turner points out, was composed of divine knowledge on the creational plan and programme of all things which appears in the realm of external existence. Turner further endeavours to explain the notion of the Clear Book in a simple way by making man as an example instead of a seed. In his example, Turner maintains that the physical creation of a tree is planned in its seed. Likewise, man's physical creation also was planned in his or her genetic code. In other words, the colour of his eyes, his fingers and the different sizes of his organs were encoded in his genetics. To be more precise, all measurements and proportions pertaining to man's physical creation are written in his seeds, i.e. genetic code. Thus, as Turner claims, the physical order in man's creation implies 'the Clear Book'. However, it is impossible to know information from his genetic code about a man's

⁶⁴⁹ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 367.

⁶⁵⁰ Turner, 368.

⁶⁵¹ The Qur'an (12:1)

⁶⁵² the Qur'an (36:12)

future such as in which hospital he will be born or to whom he will get married or to which school he will attend.⁶⁵³ The information about man's future is connected within time and space. Therefore, it is impossible to predict clearly beforehand. Of course, according to Islamic classical thought, it was believed that this information about the future cannot be unknown to God's foreknowledge. Therefore, it can be said that this aspect of divine determining is represented in the 'Clear Record'.

Taken together, the 'Clear Book' includes information concerning the creational plan and programme of all things which become visible in the realm of external existence, whereas, the 'Clear Record' can be defined as the manifestation of Divine Determining which pertains to invisible realms such past and future rather than visible realm.⁶⁵⁴

Having discussed how Nursi constructed his position on Divine Determining and its two modes, the next section of this chapter addresses the issue of human accountability and the ways of reconciliation of Divine Determining with human free will agency.

4.4.3 Reconciliation of human free will with divine determining.

Nursi provides a number of arguments to support his claim that Divine determining and human free will are in tune with each other.

First, Nursi believes that God is All-Just and Wise as the perfect order and the precise balance in the universe refers to God's justice and wisdom. Owing to this, Nursi seems to argue that God bestowed man the "power of choice of unknown nature"⁶⁵⁵ so that the human being should be accountable for his actions and proper reward and punishment should be given in accordance with his deeds. Nursi further claims that human beings do not comprehend God's wisdom and justice fully, therefore, he argues that our lack of knowledge on how the power of choice is compatible with Divine Determining does not provide evidence for their incompatibility.⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵³ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 367.

⁶⁵⁴ Turner, 370.

⁶⁵⁵ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 480.

⁶⁵⁶ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: Sözler, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:205.

Commenting on Nursi’s first argument, Akgunduz maintains that there are two spheres of *qadar* and knowledge (*‘ilm*). First sphere pertains to the lawful will of human being. In this sphere, in his view, the human being is accountable for what he does as he or she has reasons and choices to do or not to do. Therefore, he goes on writing, anyone who does not reach to the age of adolescence is considered to be incompetent [irresponsible] and someone who is asleep or unconscious is not accountable for what he does, since they do not have proper choice of power in what they did. The second sphere of *qadar* is fully determined and controlled by God. Human beings do not have access to the circle of *qadar* and knowledge. Therefore, this sphere is often called the *ghayb* (the unseen or unknown dimension). According to the Qur’ān, only God knows the ‘unseen’ and only God may reveal some parts of unseen matters to His servants and messengers as mentioned in *sūrat al-Jinn*:

He (alone) knows the Unseen, nor does He make any one acquainted with His Mysteries. Except a messenger whom He has chosen: and then He makes a band of watchers march before him and behind him.⁶⁵⁷

Owing to this, Akgunduz concludes that, in the second sphere, human beings do not have access to and the knowledge of what is destined to them. Therefore, he claims that they do not have the right to talk about it as that dimension is fully governed by God’s supreme will.⁶⁵⁸

Second, everyone knows that he or she has an innate sense of will and choice and perceives its existence. Nursi was of the opinion that the “existence is not restricted to the number of things known to us, so our ignorance of something does not indicate its non-existence”.⁶⁵⁹ Likewise, Māturīdī also holds same view that:

It is also (evident) that everyone knows from his own consciousness of self (*min nafsihi*) that he freely chooses (*mukhtār*) what he does and that he is a (real) agent (*fā‘il*) (and) one who acquires (what he does) (*kāsib*).⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁷ The Qur’an (72: 26-27)

⁶⁵⁸ Akgunduz, ‘Bediuzzaman’s View of Divine Determination (Al-Qadar) and Free Will (Al-Irâdah Al-Juz’iyyah)’.

⁶⁵⁹ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 482.

⁶⁶⁰ Māturīdī, *Kitāb Al-Tawhīd*, 226, Pessagno’s translation of Māturīdī’s view on choice is used here and taken from: Pessagno, ‘Irāda, Ikhtiyār, Qudra, Kasb the View of Abū Manşur Al-Māturīdī’, 181–82.

According to Nursi, it is different to comprehend the nature of something rather than to know its existence. Sometimes, one may perceive the nature of something, but the true essence and nature of that particular thing can be unknown to us and their existence is self-evident. Thus, Nursi considers the existence of the power of choice among this matter.⁶⁶¹

In relation to this argument, Akgunduz argues that our free will is not visible and does not have material existence. In his view, if we assess ourselves carefully, we innately feel two things surrounding us. Firstly, we are engulfed with forces which are beyond our control; it seems that we are forced to obey certain plans that are set out by external forces. On the other hand, we also realise that we have a choice to do and not do it certain acts. Furthermore, Akgunduz maintains that human beings do have two (physical) eyes through which man can see material existence of things in this world. In addition to this, he also claims that man also has a 'spiritual eye' to see beyond events and this world. For him, free will is like spiritual eye and it may be called as 'insight'.⁶⁶²

Thirdly, Nursi understands Divine Determining as a type of Divine knowledge (*'ilm-i ilāhī*). Our free will and power of choice is connected to the Divine knowledge. It means God knows what man will do or will choose with his absolute knowledge. Therefore, Nursi claims that Divine destiny does not contradict free will and choice, rather it supports it.⁶⁶³ Nursi further goes on writing that knowledge (*'ilm*) is contingent on the known things (*ma'lūm*). The known things are not dependent on knowledge. This means, principles of knowledge are not fundamental in controlling the external existence of what is known. Because, the external existence of known things are subject to will and will is based on power.⁶⁶⁴

Commenting on this Nursian argument, Akgunduz maintains that God's knowledge is different from our knowledge as God's knowledge encompasses everything from their creation, their past to their future. In addition to this, he also writes: "God is beyond

⁶⁶¹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:205.

⁶⁶² Akgunduz, 'Bediuzzaman's View of Divine Determination (Al-Qadar) and Free Will (Al-Irâdah Al-Juz'iyah)'.
⁶⁶³ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:205.

⁶⁶⁴ Nursi, 1:205.

time and space, everything is included in His knowledge and He sees past, present and future as single undivided points".⁶⁶⁵

With regard to this argument, Nursi seems to have redefined his own understanding of 'azal' (past-eternity) in order to bring the Divine knowledge and God's timelessness to light. For this reason, Nursi writes:

Pre-eternity is not the tip of a chain reaching into the past which should be considered the end point in the existence of things and a source of compulsion. Rather, pre-eternity holds the past, the present and the future all at once, looking at them from above like a mirror. In which case, it is not right to imagine an end to past time which stretches back within the sphere of contingency and call it pre- eternity, and to suppose that things enter that knowledge of pre-eternity in sequence, and that oneself is outside it; to reason thus is not right.⁶⁶⁶

According to Turner, with this argument, Nursi tries to solve the most intricate problems of Divine Determining and human free will. In other words, divine omniscience is sometimes understood as compulsion or coercion. The argument can be summarised as follows: if God has known from pre-eternity that X will enter hell and God manages and governs everything. this may lead to the fact that X is 'foreordained' to enter to hell from the beginning. Owing to this, how can it be said for X to have free will provided that God has known X would be end up in hell even before his birth?⁶⁶⁷ If this is the case, then it can be assumed that God is not absolute and Just in his affairs. In response to this question, Nursi maintains that Divine Determining can be read as a form of knowledge. For him, the knowledge of the knower is contingent on the things which are known. To be more precise, he goes on to say, the things which are known are not subject to the knowledge of the knower.⁶⁶⁸ For example, my knowledge that London South Bank University was located in South London is dependent on my having been there and or having read about it. On the contrary, the location of this university in South London is not contingent on my knowledge. Another example can be given that if one accuses someone as a thief, he should have seen him stealing. Therefore, his knowledge that X is a thief is dependent on his having seen stealing something from someone else. In other words, his being

⁶⁶⁵ Akgunduz, 'Bediuzzaman's View of Divine Determination (Al-Qadar) and Free Will (Al-Irâdah Al-Juz'iyah)'.
⁶⁶⁶ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 481.
⁶⁶⁷ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 375.
⁶⁶⁸ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:206.

thief is not subject to my knowledge or hearing that he has stolen. As a matter of fact, that one knows someone is a thief, has no influence on his having become a thief.⁶⁶⁹ Thus, it may be irrational to say that his being a thief is dependent on my knowledge of having seen him stealing, but on the thief's bad act and intentions.

In the same way, as Turner explains, the existence of something which is known by God does not depend on God's knowledge. This means that God's knowledge neither can bring something into existence, nor exert influence on its existential status. In fact, "it is God's will in conjunction with His power" which brings something into existence and does have real effect on its existential status.⁶⁷⁰ Owing to this, Turner was of the opinion that compulsion cannot be based on knowledge. It is only the status of consciousness of a knower of something which is known already to him. Therefore, it is illogical to claim that X enters hell due to God's foreknowledge. Similarly, it is pointless to assert that my knowledge of someone as being a thief has forced him to steal something from someone and eventually his actions resulted his being in prison.⁶⁷¹

Taken everything into consideration, it is worth noting here that foreknowledge and pre eternal knowledge do not equal compulsion; therefore knowledge should not be understood as coercion.

4.4.3.1. Kasb (acquisition) and human accountability in Nursi's account

In *The Words*, Nursi cites *Sūrat al-Nisā* verse 79 where God says, "Whatever good, (O man!) happens to thee, is from Allah; but whatever evil happens to thee, is from thy (own) soul".⁶⁷² Commenting on this verse, Nursi believes that a man is fully responsible for his evil actions as he deliberately wanted to commit evil. For Nursi, evil is considered as a destructive action. Therefore, human beings can cause considerable destruction with a single evil act, such as setting fire to a house and destroying it with one match. However, he goes on to say, man has little involvement in good deeds as it is the Divine Mercy of God which brings about good deeds and it is God who creates them. In other words, the real causes of good deeds are God's

⁶⁶⁹ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 375.

⁶⁷⁰ Turner, 375.

⁶⁷¹ Turner, 375.

⁶⁷² The Qur'ān (4:79)

mercy and His power. Man can only acquire good deeds (*ḥasanāt*) through supplication, belief, consciousness and consent.⁶⁷³

Turner points out that like other Sunni theologians, such as al-Ash‘arī and al-Māturīdī, Nursi recognised ‘the component’ in man by which human beings are truly accountable before God for their evil deeds. Nursi employs the concept of *kasb* (acquisition) to make man genuinely responsible for his actions without infringing the principle of absolute Divine power and ownership.⁶⁷⁴

Source: Yesilhark, Tubanur. 2013. *Theodicy and the problem of evil in Islam: the Risale-i Nur as case study*. Thesis (Ph.D.)--Durham University, 2013. p.290 <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/9416/>.

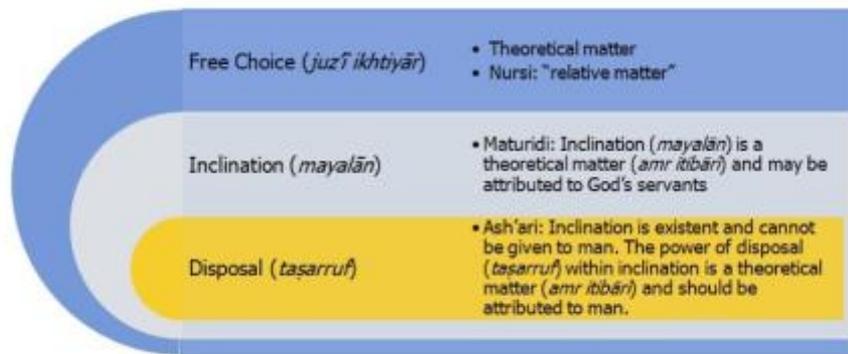


Figure 8: Human free will (*al-ikhtiyār*), *mayalān* (inclination) and *kasb* (acquisition).

As illustrated in Figure 8, in Nursi’s view, the difference between al-Māturīdī’s and al-Ash‘arī’s thoughts appears in the concept of inclination (*mayalān*), which is the essence of the conception of *al-ikhtiyār* (the power of choice). According to al-Māturīdī school of thought, in Nursi’s view, inclination (*mayalān*) is a theoretical matter (*amri ṭibārī*) whereas al-Ash‘arī regards it as to have a real existence. Therefore, neither al-Māturīdī nor al-Ash‘arī ascribe inclination (*mayalān*) to man. However, al-Ash‘arī considers the power of disposal (*taṣarruf*) within the inclination (*mayalān*) as a theoretical matter. Thus, Nursi rightly claims that both the inclination and the power of disposal are a relative matter (*amri nisbī*), which do not have

⁶⁷³ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 478.

⁶⁷⁴ Turner, *The Qur’an Revealed*, 379.

external existence.⁶⁷⁵ In other words, the inclination or the power of disposal within the inclination together constitutes a mental entity. A mental entity has no external existence and, therefore, could not be attributed to man since they do not require causes for their existence.⁶⁷⁶ In connection to this matter, Turner argues that the inclination, in al-Māturīdī's view, and power of disposal, in al-Ash'arī's view, or the inclination and the power of disposal combined make a 'mental entity'. It does not make any considerable difference in the description of that mental entity. Thus, Turner appropriately claims that it is possible to attribute this mental entity to man. In fact, whatever that theoretical or relative matter actually is, the essential thing is that it is a mental entity. It does not have any real existence. Therefore, it is neither caused nor created by God. On the other hand, if it were created by God, as Nursi argues, its existence would become required by the Divine will and power. One cannot, therefore, attribute this to man himself.⁶⁷⁷

Nursi further asserts that man cannot be a 'real creator' of his actions. He, argues:

If God's servants had been the creators of their actions and had had the power to create, then their wills would have been removed. For an established rule in the sciences of religion and philosophy is: "If a thing is not necessary, it may not come into existence of itself." That is, there has to be a cause for a thing to come into existence. The cause necessarily requires the effect. Then no power of choice would remain.

In light of the above discussions, it may not be wrong to say that whether human free will is a theoretical or relative matter, in either case, it is a mental entity and it does not have any real external existence. Thus, it can be assumed that it is not a thing (*shay'*). Therefore, it can be given to man (the agent) and one cannot claim that the creation of anything externally exists in this case.

Given that God is the unique Creator of everything (*Khāliq kulli shai'in*) and All-Just; and human beings do not create their actions, why does God hold them accountable for their actions? In *The Words*, Nursi asks the following question, "Since God creates the act of murder, why is one who kills called a murderer?"⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁵ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 482.

⁶⁷⁶ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:206.

⁶⁷⁷ Turner, *The Qur'an Revealed*, 380.

⁶⁷⁸ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 484.

To answer the questions above, the following figure may be useful for a reader to understand Nursi's argument. Yesilhark uses this figure to illustrate her analysis of nature of free will in Nursi's account.

Source: Yesilhark, Tubanur. 2013. Theodicy and the problem of evil in Islam: the Risale-i Nur as case study. Thesis (Ph.D.)--Durham University, 2013. p.295

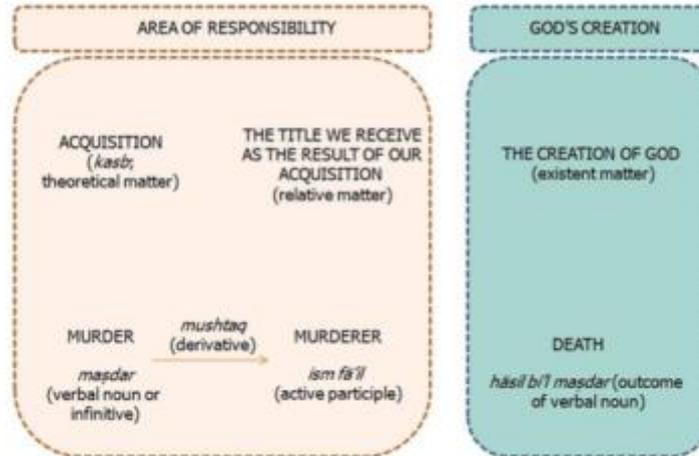


Figure 9: Explanation of the relation between theoretical matter and external existence

As it can be seen in Figure 9, Nursi often uses the linguistic structure of the Arabic grammar rules to answer this question. According to the principles of Arabic grammar and syntax, an active participle (*ismi fā'il*) is derived from a verbal noun or the infinitive form (*maşdar*) of the verb. The infinitive form of the verb is a theoretical matter and subjective and it is something one acquires through his inclination or power of disposal. It means that it is something that has no external existence and, therefore, one can attribute to man. To be more precise, as a result of this acquisition, one can acquire the title of the active particle or become an acquisitive and active being (*fā'il kāsib*). The responsibility of man is generated due to his acquisition that is the verbal noun. In fact, Nursi further elucidates, the active participle is not derived from the outcome of verbal noun (*hāsil-i bilmaşdar*).⁶⁷⁹ On the other hand, the outcome of the verbal noun is God's creation. It is ascribed to God because it is something fixed, created and concrete. For example, death is the outcome of murder (*qatl*). The active particle of murder (*qātil*) is not derived from the outcome of verbal

⁶⁷⁹ Nursi, 484.

noun. On the other hand, murder is subjective and theoretical matter. An active participle which is *qātil* (murderer) is derived from the *qatl* (murder), which is the *maṣḍar* (a verbal noun). Therefore, *qatl* (murder) - action of *qātil* (murderer) - can be attributable to man by his acquisition of this act. However, man cannot be creator of the death since it has an external existence. Therefore, it is God who creates it.

In relation to this matter, Turner concludes that good is “the default setting in the creation”: man, cannot do good; but he can only acquire good through his inclination or power of disposal. He can only choose the good; not the bad.⁶⁸⁰

In fact, as far as Nursi is concerned, man cannot do bad either, but he can desire it. If his soul inclines far enough towards evil, God will – if He so decrees - create the outcome of that desire. Man proposes and God disposes; man desires evil and God creates the determined outcome of that desire.

In light of this discussion, it can be said that God is the creator of all things including the actions of man and God is All-Just. Man is accountable for his actions because of his *kasb* (acquisition).

Taken together, it can be summarised that human free will (*ikhtiyār*) and acquisition (*kasb*) have no external existence. They are a theoretical or relative matter (*amr ‘itibārī* or *amr nisbī*). Their existence does not require causes. Therefore, they are subjective.

Like al-Māturidī and al-Ash‘arī, Nursi seems to have introduced the concept of *kasb* (acquisition) to overcome the challenges posed by the upholders of free will and *qadar* (predestination).

4.4. CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the aim was to assess the concept of justice (*al-‘adl*) in relation to the problem of *qadar* (predestination) in Nursi’s account. One of the important disputes in Islamic theology among religious intellectuals has been the concept of ‘free will and predestination’ throughout the history of Islam. At first, this chapter attempted to give general background information about Muslims’ perspectives on the relationship between free will and predestination in the literature. It has attempted to find answers

⁶⁸⁰ Turner, *The Qur’an Revealed*, 384.

to the following questions: What are the main premises behind the discussion of free will and predestination? How did this discussion start in the history of Islamic creeds? Where did Nursi position himself on the issue of human free will and predestination among other Islamic scholars? How was divine determining perceived and how can it be compatible with the notion of human free will? Why does God hold human being responsible for their actions even though they cannot create their actions?

At first, the chapter analysed the classical Islamic scholarship on Divine Determination and human accountability into three main groups: (a) schools of thoughts who are believe in human free will and who support the notion of human responsibility for their actions, such as the Qadarīya and some sects of Khawārij and the Mu‘tazila; (b) schools of thoughts who claim that human beings have no free will and works are decreed and predestined by the will of God such as Jabarīya; and (c) schools of thoughts who believe the issue of compatibility of Divine power and human free will such as al-‘Ash‘arī and al-Māturidī.

The second section located Nursi’s account of free will and Divine Determination among those abovementioned three groups. The present study found that Nursi’s position is clearly in line with that of al-Māturidī and al-Ash‘arī’s point of view with regards to human free will and predestination.

The chapter also found that some overlapping connections exist between concept of ‘adl and the Divine Determining in the writings of Nursi. For Nursi, the creation of everything within certain proportions and balance indicates the existence of *qadar* (divine determining). Therefore, he claims that *qadar* (divine determining) is a product of Divine ‘Adl (All-Just).

Thirdly, the present study attempted to make several noteworthy contributions to reveal the meaning of key concepts such as *qaḍā* (divine decree) and *‘atā* (favour) in connection to *qadar* (divine determining) from the Nursian perspective. Another important finding was that Nursi examines the concept of *qadar* (divine determining) within two different domains, namely, *al-Kitāb al-Mubīn* (the Clear Book) and *al-Imām al-Mubīn* (the Clear Record); the former contains information regarding to the creational plan and programme of all things which appear in the realm of external existence, and the latter indicates the Divine Determining which concerns invisible

realms such past and future rather than visible realm. Nursi is arguably the first scholar who gives this meaning to the *al-Kitāb al-Mubīn* (the Clear Book) and *al-Imām al-Mubīn* (the Clear Record) in the literature.

Finally, it examined the reconciliation of human free will with Divine Determining from Nursi’s perspective. In this famous discussion, Nursi located himself with *al-Ash‘arī* and *al-Māturīdī* and opposed the *Mu‘tazila* and the *Jabriyya*, claiming that they are perfectly compatible. Nursi introduced the concept of *kasb* (acquisition) in his theory of human free will and the Divine Determination.

To sum up, for Nursi, the inclination and the power of disposal within the inclination are theoretical and relative matters. In his view, human free will has no external existence. God is the creator of all things and human beings are held responsible for their actions because of acquisition, inclination and power of disposal.

The next chapter will discuss Nursi’s perspective on concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) as doctrine of mean.

Chapter 5

THE CONCEPT OF AL-‘ADL (JUSTICE) AS THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN: NURSIAN DISCOURSE OF THE NOTION OF ‘BALANCE’ IN HUMAN LIFE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This current chapter will discuss the doctrine of mean, or state of *al-‘adl*, in a man and its manifestation in society as a foundation for social justice from Nursi’s perspective. In this chapter, the focus will be on Nursi’s analysis of the doctrine of mean in the faculties of the soul and the ramifications that six extreme states which can arise in these faculties can have on man’s personal life.

Nursi’s description of the doctrine of mean or moderation seems to be in line with Aristotle’s view of this term. For instance, in Aristotle’s view, the mean is primarily referred to as a settled character. In his *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics*, Urmson maintains that excellence of character is a settled state in a mean. It refers to a person who is ethically sound and righteous, whose character, emotions and actions, reveal “proper balance” or proportion.⁶⁸¹ Therefore, one could summarise this point by saying that, according to Aristotle, excellence of character denotes a mean or intermediate disposition in emotions and actions.

Chapter 2 has shown the concept of *wasat* was analysed in the sense of the doctrine of mean or moderation in the Qur’ān, and the concept *wasat* along with *ṣirāt al-mustaqīm* (the Straight Path) was further examined as one of the relational meanings of *al-‘adl*. In the light those examinations, the current chapter will clarify Nursi’s description of the doctrine of mean and moderation in man. This chapter will also reveal Nursi’s coherence with the Qur’ān in his analysis of the concepts of *‘adl* (justice) and *wasat* (moderation).

The current chapter will seek to find answers in Nursi’s writings to the following questions: What, according to Nursi, is the doctrine of the mean and how it can be

⁶⁸¹ J. O Urmson, *Aristotle’s Ethics* (Oxford, U.K.; Malden, Mass.: B. Blackwell, 1988), 161.

realised? How can prayer (*ṣalāh*) be the foundation for order and balance (*‘adl*) in a person? How can it have social implications for society? How does worship (*‘ibādah*) become the foundation for producing personal attainment and perfection in man’s personal life and how can this person contribute to social justice in the society? What is the definition of *fisq* (sinfulness) according to the Qur’ān and how does Nursi interpret the concept of *fisq*? How is *fisq* examined as an antithesis of the concept of *al-a‘dl* (justice) in Nursi’s writings? How does the institution of *zakāt* (almsgiving) lay the groundwork for the attainment of social justice in society in Nursi’s account?

Nursi attempts to approach the issue of the doctrine of mean or moderation and how it can be the foundation for social justice from different angles. First of all, Nursi presents various faculties of humankind. He examines the issue in connection with the Qur’ānic concepts such as *wasat* (middle way),⁶⁸² *al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (the Straight Path)⁶⁸³ and *fisq* (debauchery and immorality).⁶⁸⁴

Secondly, Nursi offers practical guidelines for his readers on how to attain excellent character and moderation in personal life by means of worship (*‘ibādah*) and prayer (*ṣalāh*). He claims that worship in general and specifically prayer are the two main causes for order and balance in both man’s personal life and in society.

Thirdly, Nursi contends that the failure to observe the natural law and order and transgression of God’s law appear when the faculties of man are either in excess (*ifrāt*) or deficiency (*tafrīt*). As a consequence, imbalance may lead an individual to deviate from the Straight Path, which may result in injustice (*jawr*).

For Nursi, *fisq* (sinfulness) is a result of *ifrāt* (excess) or *tafrīt* (deficiency) of human faculties within the soul. As a matter of fact, *fisq* alludes to six extreme levels of human faculties in his description. Therefore, it may not be wrong to say that the *fisq* brings about a disorder and a disturbance in man’s life. Thus, this person causes harm to fellow man and infringes the order of the earth by going against both the natural order and the law.

⁶⁸² The Qur’ān (2:143)

⁶⁸³ The Qur’ān (1:6)

⁶⁸⁴ The Qur’ān (2:27)

Finally, in this chapter, after having shown through Nursi’s analysis of the faculties of human being that, in his view, *fiṣq* is the main obstacle and hindrance for the realization of social justice in society. In addition to this, he claims that the *fiṣq* cuts through the boundaries between the people which are against social order and community cohesion. In response to this problem, Nursi offers some pragmatic solutions for the rehabilitation. Nursi believed the institution of *al-zakāh* (almsgiving) may function as an antidote to repair the lines of communication between the poor and the rich. This also enhances people's community cohesion. Thus, the rich can stay close to the poor so that lines of communication can be maintained, which may eventually create the foundations of social justice.

5.2 THE STATE OF ‘ADL AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN: NURSIAN APPROACH

According to Nursi, there are three faculties in the human soul that are given by God: (a) the power of animal passion (*al-quwwa al-shahawiyya al-bahīmiyya*), the purpose of which is to attract benefit for the individual; (b) the power of anger or repulsion (*al-quwwa al-ghaḍabiyya*) which is to repel harm; and (c) the power of intellect or reason (*al-quwwa al-‘aqliyya*) which enables the human to differentiate between benefit and harm. Nursi was of the opinion that man’s body is subject to constant changes, is always exposed to dangers and his needs are continually fluctuating. These faculties, he goes on to say, are given to the soul (*rūḥ*) in order to live in the human body and the religion sets restrictions on how the human being must behave.⁶⁸⁵ However, he claims that these faculties are not restricted by any constraint due to their nature and innate ability and excellence of character can be attained through their completion. Therefore, these three faculties may appear in three possible degrees: 1) deficiency (*tafrīt*); 2) mean (*wasat*); and 3) excess (*ifrāt*). To Nursi, both *al-ṣirāt al-mustaqīm* (the Straight Path) and *al-wasat* (middle way) refer to *al-‘adl* which is a summary of the wisdom, courage and chastity. A faculty that is in a mean state is sound and can be said to have achieved ‘*adl* or a balanced state. When the above mentioned faculties remain sound, moderate and harmonious, then the right mean (*al-wasat al-ḥaqīqī* or ‘*adl*) is obtained. Nursi seems to examine these concepts

⁶⁸⁵ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur‘anic Conciseness]*, 33.

within the context of an individual at a personal level, whilst emphasising the importance for the human soul to be balanced, or at the degree of *al-wasaṭ* (middle way) so that its effect can manifest at the societal level.⁶⁸⁶

Nursi further clarifies the sound states of the faculties and identifies the limits to which they should be bound by suggesting his ‘conception of the mean’ (*wasaṭ*). At first, Nursi elucidates the degrees of animal passion (*shahawiyya*). For example, if the faculty of animal desire is at the extreme deficiency (*tafrīt*), the vice of annihilation of desire (*khumūd*) is effectuated. This is a state of apathy or lack of interest. If the faculty of animal passion or desire is at its excess (*ifrāt*), the vice of greed or profligacy (*fujūr*) will appear in that individual.⁶⁸⁷ In other words, at this level, reckless wastefulness in the use of resources and licentious behaviour will manifest.⁶⁸⁸ When the soul is at the state of mean (*wasaṭ*), the virtue of temperance (*‘iffa*) is attained. In this state, man only wants what is lawful and therefore, abstains from the forbidden.⁶⁸⁹

Nursi, then, comments on the three respective levels of the faculty of anger. If this faculty is extremely deficient, the vice of cowardice (*al-jabānah*) prevails in the soul. In this state, an individual fears that which should not cause fear to arise. As a result, they develop a delusive imagination. If it is at an extreme level of excess, Nursi continues, the vice of rashness (*tahawwur*) appears. Tyranny, despotism and oppression, in his view, are a result of this imbalance. On the contrary, if the faculty of anger is at the mean state, courage (*shaja‘ah*) comes into view. In this state, a person is disposed to lay down his life, with love and eagerness, for the protection of the world’s order and the rights of others. As a matter of fact, at this stage, refraining from all illegal activities will be the result.⁶⁹⁰

Finally, three states of the faculty of intellect or reason are discussed by Nursi. He suggests that the main aim of this faculty is to differentiate between what is true and false in statements, right and wrong in beliefs and good and evil in actions. If this

⁶⁸⁶ Nursi, 33.

⁶⁸⁷ Nursi, 31.

⁶⁸⁸ Yesilhark, ‘Theodicy and the Problem of Evil in Islam’, 240.

⁶⁸⁹ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur‘anic Conciseness]*, 31.

⁶⁹⁰ Nursi, 31.

faculty is at an extreme level of deficiency, the vice of stupidity (*ghabāwah*) is generated. If it is at the extreme excess, the vice of wickedness (*jarbazah*) is produced. At this stage, man tends towards becoming wily, tricky and deceitful. In other words, this level leads to the state of readiness of wit facile expression and presence of mind and tact. If the faculty is in the mean state, then the virtue of wisdom (*hikmah*) is achieved.

Interestingly, Nursi appears to have employed these three stages in many places. For example, in connection with the concept of human free will (*juzz-i irade*) and Allah’s creation of actions; Nursi considers the view of the *Jabriyya* to be an extreme excess (*ifrāt*) because the Jabarites deny that man has a freedom of choice, and they believe in absolute predestination as fashioned by God. On the other hand, Nursi sees extreme deficiency in the *Mu‘tazilī’s* point of view as they attribute all effect to man. He regards the view of the *ahl al-sunnah*, i.e al-Māturidīya and al-‘Ash‘arīya, as being the state of mean (*wasat*) in that, for Nursi, the latter groups are positioned in between the two extremes by attributing the initiation of actions to humans’ free will and the end of it to the divine will.⁶⁹¹

With regards to Nursi’s theory of the faculties of the soul, in his article on Nursi’s analysis of justice and order, Kushpinar also argues that these faculties and powers in human being’s disposition were created by God without any limit. Therefore, they are the main trigger, in Kushpinar’s view, that brings about disequilibrium and imbalance in man’s actions and emotions ‘unless they are regulated and balanced by the Divine Law, which always enjoins the principle of moderation and the middle path (*al-wasat*) and forbids ‘excess’ (*ifrāt*) and ‘deficiency’ (*tafrīt*).’

Similarly, Yesilhark in her thesis on Nursian theory of theodicy notes that Nursi tries to define what is the right course in any given situation and, therefore, righteous action as being the middle path. According to Yesilhark, Nursi’s classification of faculties into three groups is aimed at the preservation and care of the body: the kingdom of soul.⁶⁹² In her analysis, Yesilhark seems to be of the opinion that Nursi agrees with al-Ghazzālī in his theory of the faculties of the soul.⁶⁹³ However, her

⁶⁹¹ Nursi, 31.

⁶⁹² Yesilhark, ‘Theodicy and the Problem of Evil in Islam’, 239.

⁶⁹³ Yesilhark, 239.

conclusions would have been much more convincing if she considered al-Ghazzālī’s classification of the faculties of soul in detail. For example, on the question of the number of faculties, the Ancient Greeks were not in complete agreement. Plato identifies three faculties and the majority of Muslim scholars take this opinion, such as Ibn Miskawayh. Al-Ghazzālī, however, mentions the four faculties in his categorization of the faculties of soul. They are (1) the faculty of desire; (2) the faculty of anger; (3) the faculty of knowledge, i.e. reason; and (4) the faculty of justice.⁶⁹⁴ Al-Ghazzālī also argues that there are three possible states of these faculties. In that respect, Nursi’s view appears to be in accord with Plato and al-Ghazzālī. However, al-Ghazzālī holds that the faculty of justice does not have two extremes, i.e. excess and deficiency. In his view, it has only the opposite which is injustice (*jawr*). Commenting on al-Ghazzālī’s ethics, Quasem argues that if the faculty of justice ceases to function properly and control the faculties of desire and anger, the vice of injustice is produced in the soul. If it operates well, then the virtue of justice is obtained. This means that virtue of justice is not a mean between two extremes.⁶⁹⁵ To be more precise, in the case of justice and injustice, al-Ghazzālī does not mention the sub-divisions. From this angle, Nursi’s analysis of the faculties of soul differs from that of al-Ghazzālī. Unlike al-Ghazzālī, Nursi does not consider justice as a faculty. In fact, it seems that justice (*al-‘adl*) is the product of the doctrine of mean (*wasat*). To be more precise, justice is predicated on the notion that all human faculties have achieved the mean in any situation. Taken together, it seems that Nursi regards justice (*‘adl*) not as a faculty, but as a virtue which is a synthesis of the virtues produced from the mean state of the faculties of reason, desire and anger.⁶⁹⁶

Interestingly, Nursi seems to have derived ethical ideas from philosophical works on morals. According to his official biography, Nursi was given access to the library of Tahir Pasha, Governor of Van of the time.⁶⁹⁷ Therefore, it can be assumed that for him, two kinds of works were available in that library. One was the Arabic

⁶⁹⁴ Muhammad Abul Quasem, *The Ethics of Al-Ghazālī: A Composite Ethics in Islam* (Selangor: published by the author, 1975), 51.

⁶⁹⁵ Abul Quasem, 81.

⁶⁹⁶ Abul Quasem, 50.

⁶⁹⁷ Please see ‘Tarihçe-i hayat’ in: Nursi, *Kaynaklı, İndeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü’l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:2131.

translations of Greek works on moral philosophy and the other was the works of the Muslim philosophers.⁶⁹⁸ Thus, as Ozdemir claims, Nursi had direct acquaintance with the ethical works of Plato and Aristotle for in his book entitled *Sözler (The Words)*, he speaks of Plato and Aristotle.⁶⁹⁹ In fact, Nursi’s analyses of vices and virtues and the faculties of soul have their parallels in the works of Aristotle.⁷⁰⁰ Nursi’s theory of faculties of soul and sub-divisions of virtues and vices are visualised in the Table 6 as below.

Table 6: Nursi’s Ethics: Table of Virtues and Vices

| Faculties of Soul | States or Levels | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | <i>Ifrāt (Excess)</i> | <i>Wasat (Mean)</i> | <i>Tafriṭ (Deficiency)</i> |
| <i>‘Aql (Reason or Intellect)</i> | <i>Jarbazah</i> (the vice of wickedness) | <i>Ḥikmah</i> (the virtue of wisdom) | <i>Ghabāwah</i> (the vice of stupidity) |
| <i>Shahwah (Animal passion)</i> | <i>Fujūr</i> (the vice of greed or profligacy) | <i>‘Iffah</i> (the virtue of temperance) | <i>Khumūd</i> (vice of annihilation of desire) |
| <i>Ghaḍab (Anger)</i> | <i>Tahawwur</i> (the vice of rashness) | <i>Shaja‘ah</i> (the virtue of courage) | <i>Jabānah</i> (the vice of cowardice) |
| | Sphere of action or Outcome and Effect | | |
| | <i>Ẓulm</i> (tyranny and despotism) | <i>al-‘Adl (balance and order)</i> | <i>Ẓulm (imbalance)</i> |

As for the ethical works of Muslim philosophers, it seems that he studied most of them.⁷⁰¹ For example, he himself said that he studied the works of al-Fārābī and Ibn-Sīnā critically.⁷⁰²

Nursi further argues that the six extreme states of the soul are tyranny and injustice, and three mean states are justice (‘*adl*). Nursi was of the opinion that these three states, i.e. virtue of justice (‘*adl*) is the Straight Path (*ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*) which is mentioned in *sūrat al-Fātiḥa*.⁷⁰³ As matter of fact, this research analyses the Straight Path and the concept of mean as relational meaning of the concept *al-‘adl* in Chapter 1.⁷⁰⁴ Besides, Nursi also elaborates the meaning of the Straight Path (*al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*) in Qur’ān (1:6) and the doctrine of mean (*al-wasat*) in conjunction with *al-‘adl*. Therefore, it might not be wrong to say that Nursi seems to have derived his doctrine of mean from Qur’anic teachings, and that his understanding of justice is in parallel with the Quranic concept of justice.

⁶⁹⁸ Nursi, *Sözler*, 758.

⁶⁹⁹ Personal notes and interview with Dr. Ibrahim Ozdemir, June, 2013.

⁷⁰⁰ Aristotle, *The Ethics of Aristotle: The Nichomachaen Ethics*, Revised Edition (New York: Viking, 1955), 104.

⁷⁰¹ Said Nursi, *Risalei Nur müellifi Bediüzzâman Said Nursi: tarihçe-i hayatı*. (İstanbul: Envar Neşriyat, 1996), 47.

⁷⁰² Nursi, *Sözler*, 545.

⁷⁰³ The Qur’ān (1:6)

⁷⁰⁴ For details, see: Chapter 1: 1.4.6

Nursi's work on the theory of the faculties is complemented later in his own book '*Lemalar*', where Prophet Muhammad was portrayed as an example of the most moderate character and the most perfect form. According to Nursi, the Prophet Muhammad always lived with moderation (*i'tidāl*) and right mean (*istiqāmah*), and abstained from excess (*ifrāt*) and deficiency (*tafrīt*). Thus, in Nursi's view, the Prophet Muhammad upheld the teachings of the Qur'ān (11:112) where he was requested to "stand firm [in the Straight Way] as you are commanded." Commenting on this subject, Nursi argues:

Since his reasoning faculty [Prophet Muhammad] was free of wiliness and stupidity, which are excess and deficiency – resembling its corruption and darkness, it always functioned with wisdom, the middle way and means of moderation. Similarly, far from rage and cowardice, which are the corruption of the power of anger and its excess and deficiency, his power of anger was always employed with sacred courage, which is the middle way and means of moderation of that power. And so too, purified of licentiousness and frigidity, which are the excess and deficiency of the power of animal appetites and its corruption, his power of passion always took chasteness, the means of moderation of that power, as a guide, at the degree of maximum virtuousness. And so on. In all his practices, daily conduct, and in carrying out the injunctions of his religion, he chose the way of moderation and avoided excess and deficiency, and wastefulness and prodigality, which are wrongdoing and darkness. He avoided wastefulness absolutely and took frugality as his guide in his speech even, and in eating and drinking.⁷⁰⁵

In addition to this piece, Nursi attempted to draw reader's attention to the ramifications of the six extreme states of the soul in man's personal life and social life in his *Şualar (The Rays)*. Nursi envisages the Straight Path and moderation as the most comfortable, beneficial, shortest and safest way to attain human morality and conduct.⁷⁰⁶ Conversely, Nursi alerts his readers to the consequences of extreme states of the soul. For example, he proclaims that if the faculty of reason or intellect swerves from the mean state which is wisdom and deviates from the Straight Path which is beneficial for the personal and social life of man, it most likely falls into either excess and wiliness or deficiency and calamitous stupidity. As a result, it is exposed to all sort of difficulties in the long run.⁷⁰⁷ If the faculty of anger, he goes on writing, does not act in accordance with the traits of courage, which is the state of mean, later human beings may fall into excess and, as a result, injurious acts, oppressive fury and

⁷⁰⁵ Nursi, *The Flashes*, 2004, 94.

⁷⁰⁶ Nursi, *The Rays*, 587.

⁷⁰⁷ Said Nursi, *Şualar* (Istanbul: Envar Neşriyat, 2004), 616.

arrogance will appear in their personal and social life. Similarly, if he descends into deficiency, then painful cowardice and timidity are generated in man’s life as the punishment for the mistake of deviating from the Straight Path. Eventually, he will be subjected to non-material torments and sufferings. Furthermore, Nursi maintains that if the animal faculty deviates from temperance (‘*iffa*’), which is the safe and middle way, it may fall into either an excess that produces calamitous and shameful debauchery and immorality, or into deficiency. As a result of this state, man may lose his ability to experience pleasure, and eventually, he will be afflicted with the torments of this spiritual sickness.⁷⁰⁸

Given the above, it may be right to say that, in Nursi’s view, the virtue of justice is prescribed as a state of mean in which the faculties of the soul should remain in order that sound character can be attained and that a righteous path is achieved.

So far, this section has focussed on Nursi’s analysis of the doctrine of mean in the faculties of the soul and the ramifications of the six extreme states of those faculties in man’s personal life. The following section will discuss the method that Nursi posits in order to attain the mean state in personal and social life.

5.3 JIHĀD OF WORD AS POSITIVE ACTION AND IT’S SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

According to Markham, a religious foundation has great impact on Nursi’s spirituality and ethics. For Nursi, the Qur’an and Prophetic traditions were always main sources of his ethical reflections.⁷⁰⁹

In *Emirdag Lahikasi*, Nursi summarised his reflections on distress, difficulty and injustices caused him by government officials of the time. He argues that sometimes justice is manifested as a result of injustice. For example, a man is treated with unfair and unjust behaviour by someone. As a result, he encounters calamities and distress. Eventually, he is sent to prison not because of the actual crime. But for different reasons such as a being deficient in religion and in sincerity. Therefore, Divine

⁷⁰⁸ Nursi, *The Rays*, 587.

⁷⁰⁹ Ian S Markham, *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: A Model of Interfaith Dialogue* (London: Routledge, 2016), 12.

Determining punishes him through oppressor's hand. This is how Divine Justice is manifested.⁷¹⁰

In the same way, in *Letters*, with regard to above argument, Nursi writes:

The distress and difficulty the worldly have caused me has not been due to politics, because they know I do not meddle in politics but flee from them. Rather, knowingly or unknowingly, they torment me on account of aggressive atheism because I adhere to religion. In which case, to apply to them infers regretting religion and flattering the cause of aggressive atheism.

Moreover, divine determining, which is just, would punish me through their tyrannical hand if I applied to them and had recourse to them, for they oppress me because I am religious. As for divine determining, from time to time it represses me due to my hypocrisy before the worldly, because I am deficient in religion and in sincerity.⁷¹¹

A possible explanation for this type of Nursi's discourse might be that Nursi wanted to teach his students how to response to unfair and unjust treatment from government officials of the time with peaceful means and "positive action". Nursi always invites his followers to maintain public order, security by positive action and non-violent response, despite all the provocations.⁷¹² This conclusion seems to be consistent with Vahide's finding about Nursi's method of positive action. In her biography of Said Nursi, Vahide describes Nursi's method of serving to Islam with positive action as follows:

The way of the Risale-i Nur was peaceful *cihad* or "*cihad* of the word" (*şal*), in the struggle against atheism and irreligion. By working solely for the spread and strengthening of belief, it was to work also for the preservation of internal order and peace and stability in society in the face of moral and spiritual destruction of communism and the forces of irreligion which aimed to destabilize society and create anarchy, and to form "barrier" against them.⁷¹³

Nursi's conception of "*jihād of word*" or nonmaterial *jihād* seems to be consistent with concept of "greater *jihād*" which was depicted as an obligatory duty of every muslim in a prophetic tradition. Upon return from battle, Prophet Muhammad said, "We have returned from the lesser *jihād* to the greater *jihād*".⁷¹⁴ From this tradition, it

⁷¹⁰ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1841–42.

⁷¹¹ Nursi, *The Letters*, 94.

⁷¹² Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1912–13.

⁷¹³ Vahide, *Bedüzzaman Said Nursi : The Author of the Risale-i Nur*, 352.

⁷¹⁴ Baydāwī, *Tafsīr Al-Baydāwī Al-Musamm'a Anwār Al-Tanzīl Wa-Asrār Al-Ta'wīl*, 2:92.

may not be wrong to conclude that “greater *jihād*” means an inward, spiritual struggle. It means the struggle against the evil of one's soul or purify one's spirituality from malicious activities. Thus, the *jihād* of word may instil certain belief or a culture of peaceful struggle in hearts and minds.

In his analyses of Nursi's concept of *jihād* of word, Markham likens Nursi's method of struggle to Dr Martin Luther King and Mahatma Ghandhi's nonviolent resistance. According to Markham, Nursi holds that only weak person uses violence to settle his problems. Conversely, person who holds strong confidence in his faith also has the knowledge and sources to resolve a dispute peacefully and without using any violence. Markham further elaborates that this is a *jihād of word* and real Islamic renewal in Nursi's writings. Nursi was of the opinion that, as Markham notes, committed muslims who are imbued with *jihād* of word in their heart and minds will make ideal citizens to establish social order in society. In fact, they are not threat for the political order.⁷¹⁵

Therefore, it can be said that when a person keeps internal order in his personal life as it is required by his faith, then it has a stabilising effect on society.⁷¹⁶

5.4 THE ŞALĀT (PRAYER) AND THE ‘IBĀDAH (WORSHIP) AS A FOUNDATION FOR THE AL-A‘DL (JUSTICE)

Much of Nursi's writings call for a deeper personal morality and to become righteous citizens of society. A public square without moral considerations has been always threat for social order in society. Therefore, Markham points out that social discourse necessitates religious and moral dimension. Comparing Neuhaus and Nursi's stance on religious participation in public sphere, it seems that Markham argues that a participatory model of religious involvement is essential to maintain public order in the state. Since individual transformation and morality should have an effect in society.⁷¹⁷

Similarly, in his article, Law argues that prayer is not inclusively concerned with an individual's private affairs. It is not, he goes on writing, one individual's internal

⁷¹⁵ Markham, *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 99.

⁷¹⁶ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İ̇şarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, 2:1912.

⁷¹⁷ Markham, *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 45–47.

effort to uplift his spirituality in private in his own free time. In contract, genuine prayer should influence the individual in constructing relationships with his fellow human being.⁷¹⁸ That is not to say that the prayer does not play a key role in strengthening an individual’s relationship with God, but genuine prayer must have its social dimension. According to Law, this social dimension of the prayer should not be separated from an individual’s relationship with God. Social action and prayer should coexist in a believer’s life. For him, genuine prayer should have an introspective dimension and, when prayer is real, the believer contemplates that he is always in the presence of God.⁷¹⁹

5.4.1 The prayer (Ṣalāh) as base for order and balance (‘adala)

Commenting on the phrase of ‘Are steadfast (*wa yuqīmūna*) in prayer’ from the Qur’ān,⁷²⁰ Said Nursi holds that the prayer (*ṣalāh*) has a peculiar place among other physical good works, such as going to pilgrimage and fasting, in the Qur’ān. In Nursi’s view, this special position of the prayer (*ṣalāh*) connotes that it is an index of all meritorious and praiseworthy acts, and it contains a sample of those deeds.⁷²¹ Nursi regards the opening chapter of the Qur’ān (*ṣūrat al-Fātiḥah*) as the index of the Qur’ān, and that man is the index of the universe. Similarly, he asserts that the prayer (*ṣalāh*) is the index of all good deeds (*ḥasanāt*).⁷²²

It seems that Nursi may have developed his outlook about the prayer (*ṣalāh*) in the light of verse from *ṣurat Ṭāha* where God says as: “Perform the Prayer to remember me”.⁷²³ As a matter of fact, Nursi believes that the prayer instils the presence of God in the heart of human being. The prayer generates a strong relationship and connection between man and God because, in the prayer, man is summoned into presence of God.⁷²⁴ In fact, Nursi further argues that genuine prayer aims at steadying and preserving God’s presence and sublimity in the heart. In his view, it also produces

⁷¹⁸ Ibrahim M. Abu Rabi’, ed., ‘Reflections on Prayer and Social Justice in the Thought of Thomas Merton and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’, in *Theodicy and Justice in Modern Islamic Thought : The Case of Said Nursi*, 2010, 198.

⁷¹⁹ Abu Rabi’, 108.

⁷²⁰ The Qur’ān (2:03)

⁷²¹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İṣarat ü’l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1172.

⁷²² Nursi, 2:1172.

⁷²³ The Qur’ān (20:14)

⁷²⁴ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İṣarat ü’l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1172.

a consciousness of God's sublimity in man's mind. Therefore, Nursi was of the opinion that genuine prayer can instigate obedience to the divine laws of justice and observance of God's order in the universe.⁷²⁵ Furthermore, in his view, man is civilised and is a social human being. Therefore, he argues that man is in need of this order and laws of justice in order to attain a balance and an order in his personal and social life.⁷²⁶

So far, how the golden mean is attained through the prayer (*ṣalāh*) has been examined. The next section will analyse the role of worship and its social dimensions in man's personal and public life.

5.4.2 Worship as the cause of personal attainment and perfection and social justice

In his book *Ishārāt al-'ijāz fī mīzān al-ījāz*, Nursi has developed broader perspective on how worship instils the mean state in the mind and brings out social order and balance in personal and social life. He starts his argument by commenting on verse of the *sūrat al-Baqarah* of the Qur'ān where God order as "O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you." Nursi clarifies that worship is a set of actions, which consist of carrying out God's commands and refraining from God's prohibitions. In his view, it ensures the tenets of faith in the believers. As a consequence, the tenets of belief become part of their very character. Conversely, if matters concerning the reason and belief are not brought up properly and strengthened well enough, their influence and effect remain weak and inadequate in man's personal and social life.⁷²⁷ Furthermore, Nursi goes on to say that worship conduces to happiness in man's life in this world and hereafter. It also means to put personal and social matters in order in this world and hereafter. In other words, it may not be wrong to say that worship helps to bring about a social order in man's personal and social life. In addition to this, in Nursi's view, human beings, individually and

⁷²⁵ Nursi, 2:1173.

⁷²⁶ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-'ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur'anic Conciseness]*, 51.

⁷²⁷ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1215.

collectively, attain perfection through genuine worship as it is a true connection and link between man and God.⁷²⁸

Nursi further examines how genuine worship could be a cause of personal attainment and perfection and the foundation for happiness and prosperity in this world.⁷²⁹ Initially, the ways of obtaining the state of mean and moderation, i.e. the justice (*al-‘adl*) in personal life were examined. Later, he sets our groundwork for the means of gaining social order and balance in man’s social life. Precisely, how personal worship and prayer could have effect on bringing social order in the society was thoroughly studied.

5.4.2.1 Worship (‘Ibādah) as a generator of the state of mean (wasat) in man’s personal life

In *Ishārāt al-‘Ijāz*, Nursi begins his exposition of worship as a cause of attainment and realisation of sound character by describing the essence of the human being in general. According to Nursi, man, as an ‘animal creature’, is weak and impotent in his abilities to do something and is also physically small. On the other hand, he stresses that man possesses an exalted spirit in his body. Unlike animals, man is created with a capacity to learn and discern things. This means that his ability is vast in potential; his desires are infinite, and he has unlimited inclinations and ideas. Apart from this, as discussed above, his faculties, i.e. reason, anger and animal passion, are innately unrestricted.⁷³⁰ Nursi further notes that God created a man with a strange nature; he is an index of all the species and all the worlds.⁷³¹ In response to the question of how a man with the above-mentioned character traits and creational features can realize his potential abilities, Nursi explains that genuine worship can encourage man’s soul to attain the mean state and moderation. For example, in Nursi’s opinion, real worship (‘*ibādah*) can result in the following:

1. It expands man’s exalted soul;

⁷²⁸ Nursi, 2:1215.

⁷²⁹ Nursi writes about the role of worship and its social dimension in many parts of the *Risale-i Nur*, the detailed study has been carried out in *Ishārāt al-‘Ijāz*, please see: Nursi, 2:1215–16.

⁷³⁰ Please see: p.1.

⁷³¹ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘Ijāz Fī Miẓān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 146.

2. It uncovers his abilities and develops his soul so that man can become worthy of eternal happiness;
3. It rectifies man’s inclinations and purifies them;
4. It brings man’s aspirations into existence;
5. It broadens man’s ideas and marshals them towards excellency.
6. It restricts man’s faculties of reason, anger and animal passion in the soul.⁷³²

As already stated, Nursi argues that genuine worship is a real connection and link between man and God.⁷³³ For him, excellence of character can only be established through this connection. Therefore, man cultivates this relationship with God through true worship.

With respect to this topic, it is interesting to highlight that Nursi often juxtaposes the prayer (*ṣalāh*) with worship (*‘ibādah*). He sometimes uses these two terms as a substitute for each other. For instance, this type of application can be seen in *The Third* and *The Fourth Words* in his book titled ‘*Sözler*’.⁷³⁴ In fact, the prayer (*ṣalāh*) is one type of worship (*‘ibādah*).⁷³⁵ And worship encompasses all types of devotion, such as supplication (*du‘ā*), prayer (*ṣalāh*), almsgiving and charity (*zakāh*).

In his useful analysis on Nursi’s concept of prayer, Law found that Nursi did not offer structured plans of social action on the basis of the prayer. From his reading of Nursi, Law presumes that Nursi often touches upon issues such as prayer and worship directly. Sometimes, an issue is implied in his writings by the thrust of his argument as he examines other issues.⁷³⁶ In fact, at first glance, Nursi’s writing on worship and prayer and their effect on society may appear disorganised. However, it is arguable that Nursi’s concepts of worship and prayer are consistent with each other if all his works in the Old Said and New Said period are synthesized thoroughly. For example, in his book called *Sözler*, Nursi touches upon the concept of worship and prayer as a cause for attainment of happiness in man’s personal life and social life by presenting a

⁷³² Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1216.

⁷³³ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Miẓān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur‘anic Conciseness]*, 146.

⁷³⁴ Nursi, *Sözler*, 18–22.

⁷³⁵ Yasaroglu, ‘*Namaz*’, 350–57.

⁷³⁶ Abu Rabi’, ‘*Reflections on Prayer and Social Justice in the Thought of Thomas Merton and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*’, 120.

very simple allegorical story.⁷³⁷ In his view, worship is apparently a heavy task for man’s body. However, it has numerous spiritual benefits for man’s heart and soul and assists in the acquirement of a sound character, which as we have already seen is a moderate and mean state of the faculties of the soul. He also writes that worship is an action of compliance with the order set out by authorities. Nursi furthermore regards worship as an act of obedience to the divine laws of the universe.⁷³⁸ On the other hand, genuine prayer prevents man from doing mischief and covetous actions, as God speaks of prayer thus: “[it] restrains from shameful (*fahshā*) and unjust deeds” in the Qur’ān (45:29). It is relevant to mention that the term *fahshā* (excessive or immoderate action) has been studied as one of the semantic opposite concepts of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the Qur’ān in Chapter 1.⁷³⁹

5.4.2.2 Worship as a means of ordering life and the cause for balance in this world: Social ‘adala

In *Ishārāt al-‘ijāz fī Mizān al-‘ijāz*, Nursi provides his readers with five aspects of worship: (1) worship as trainer of faculties of human being; (2) worship as reminder of God’s existence; (3) worship as saviour from vileness; (4) worship makes a man an example for whole community; and (5) worship as infuser of cohesion in the community. These aspects serve as the foundation for maintaining order and balance in both man’s life in personal level and in a society.

At first, Nursi writes that, unlike animals, man is created with a subtle and specific disposition. This, in his view, makes man an exceptional and privileged being. This unique creation of man resulted in various aspirations and diverse inclinations in it. Therefore, man wants to have the most beautiful things in this life and is in a constant search for the most perfect lifestyle and conditions to suits his comfort and dignity. In order to meet his needs and to attain the desired level of lifestyle, Nursi goes on to say, man needs multiple arts and crafts. As matter of fact, a man on his own is unable to learn all of the techniques and means due to his limited capacity. For that reason, man is obliged to work together with fellow human beings.⁷⁴⁰ That is to say, humans

⁷³⁷ Nursi, *Sözler*, 18.

⁷³⁸ Nursi, 18.

⁷³⁹ More details, see: Chapter 1: 1.3.2.2

⁷⁴⁰ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1215.

are in need of collaboration and cooperation with each other so that everybody can fulfil their needs.

However, Nursi posits that the faculties of the soul (intellect, anger and animal passion) are not innately restricted due to his unique disposition. Owing to this, injustices and transgressions or excess may appear in his commercial and business transactions with his fellow men. Therefore, according to Nursi, justice is required in a society to prevent those people who go beyond limits in conducting business with others.⁷⁴¹ However, in Nursi’s view, not every individual is able to discern justice. Because of this, Nursi claims that “the human race as a whole needs a general or universal intellect to establish justice from which all may benefit, and that intellect is the universal law.” A strong and authoritative law maker is required to provide implementation of this universal law and to preserve its real effect upon society. In order to obey the orders of this universal law and refrain from its prohibitions, it is essential to secure eminence and greatness of the Law Maker in man’s mind. To Nursi, this can merely be accomplished, through the manifestation of tenets of belief. In other words, he concludes that the tenets of belief can only be strengthened and uncovered by constant and repeated reminders and renewed acts, which are genuine worship.⁷⁴²

Secondly, Nursi believes that worship is aimed at diverting man’s attention to God so that man becomes obedient to the orders of God. To be more precise, the effect of worship is to subjugate man’s action to the commands of God. As a matter of fact, Nursi cites obedience and observance of God’s command and prohibitions as putting man into real order and balance in his personal and social life. The excellency character appears if man enters into a moderate and mean state (*intizām*) and abides by the rules of the universal law and order.⁷⁴³ In other words, an individual’s actions affect the social order in society. Therefore, it can be said that, in Nursi’s view, the doctrine of mean is the result of performing genuine worship in man’s personal life. Then, arguably, this constitutes a foundation for social justice in this world.

⁷⁴¹ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 114.

⁷⁴² Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1215.

⁷⁴³ Nursi, 2:1215.

Thirdly, Nursi starts the description of his next argument by giving allegorical illustration as follows:

Man resembles a pole to the top of which are joined electric cables, for attached to his head are the tips of all the laws of creation; the natural laws extend to him, and the rays of the divine laws and principles in the universe are reflected and centred on him. So man has to complete them and adhere to them and cling on to them to facilitate the general current lest his foot slips and he falls and is crushed under the wheels of the machinery turning in the levels of the world.⁷⁴⁴

In the light of above quotation, it can be said that man is innately composed in harmony with the natural order of creation. This fact can be inferred from the Qur’ān where God says that “We have indeed created man in the best of moulds [order or balance]”.⁷⁴⁵ In addition to this, it is probable that natural laws and divine laws and principles are somehow linked to man’s individual actions and deeds in this life. Therefore, Nursi claims that man is urged to adhere to and obey those natural and divinely ordained principles so that general order and balance are ensured in this life. For Nursi, this can be achieved by worship, which consists of obedience to the commands and staying away from prohibitions of God. Likewise, he further asserts that if a man does an act in accordance with the natural laws, the order of creation and divinely ordained principles, then the six extreme states of the faculties in the soul are produced in man’s personal life. As a consequence of his actions, the social ‘*adala* is not maintained in the society. This argument is further developed and studied extensively in Nursi’s writings which were written in his New Said period such as *Sözler*, *Lemalar* and *Mektubat*. For example, in *The Tenth Word*, Nursi writes:

Is it at all possible that the Lord of Glory, Who demonstrates His dominical sovereignty in the wisdom and order, the justice and equilibrium that pervade all things, from the atom to the sun, should not bestow favour on those believers ... who believe in His Wisdom and Justice, and whose acts are for the purpose of worshipping Him? ... Again, is it possible that He should not

⁷⁴⁴ This quotation has taken from English translation of *Ishārāt al-‘ijāz fī Mizān al-ijāz* by Şukran Vahide. It seems that above quotation has been translated from Turkish version of this book. However, she might have consulted with Arabic version of the book as Turkish version of this text is translated very literally from its original Arabic. Because of that translation, the text used in this passage appears ambiguous. Please see for the text: Said Nursi, *Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Quran’s Conciseness* (Istanbul: Sozler Publication, 2007), 162.

⁷⁴⁵ The Qur’ān (95:4)

chastise those rude and discourteous men who disbelieve in His wisdom and justice, and rebel against Him in insolence?⁷⁴⁶

In arguing this claim, it seems that Nursi used very unique sentence in Turkish which is '*hikmet ve adalete iman ve ubudiyetle tevfik-i hareket eden müminler.*'⁷⁴⁷ It means that worship is to act with obedience to or in compliance (*tevfik-i hareket*) with the wisdom and justice of God. Therefore, in the light of the translation of this particular sentence, it might not be wrong to say that in Nursi's view, 'the believers' are those who carry out their actions in compliance with wisdom and justice; who both believe and worship.

In respect to 'acting in compliance with', in his '*Muhakemat*', Nursi suggests that "we also did not confirm to creational order, which is natural law. Therefore, we have been imposed a punishment in the form of backwardness and ignorance [by God]."⁷⁴⁸ In addition to this, he also states, "no one can be pardoned if he commits a crime against natural law and order in the universe." In other words, in light of both of these quotes, it can be inferred that, for Nursi, man is required to act in compliance with natural law and order of the universe in order to be successful and to obtain prosperity and social justice in the world. To be more precise, in Nursi's opinion, this action of obedience with natural law is a type of worship. Therefore, worship is considered to be a cause and foundation for prosperity and social justice in this world.

Nursi's next two points can be examined as one aspect as they complement each other. According to Nursi, man as an individual has links and strong relations with others in the society owing to his obedience to commands and abstaining from prohibitions of universal law. Nursi goes on to say that, due to worship, man also feels a robust connection to other members of society. As a consequence, strong brotherhood and team spirit are generated.⁷⁴⁹ With regards to this issue, as Law points out, Nursi believes that, in congregational prayer, believers come together in order to create mutual support in the community.⁷⁵⁰ For example, in his book *al-Mathnawī al-*

⁷⁴⁶ Nursi, *The Words*, 2005, 77.

⁷⁴⁷ Nursi, *Sözler*, 66.

⁷⁴⁸ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdağ Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1992.

⁷⁴⁹ Nursi, 2:1215.

⁷⁵⁰ Abu Rabi', 'Reflections on Prayer and Social Justice in the Thought of Thomas Merton and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', 120.

Nuriya, Nursi draws an analogy between the solidarity of prayer with the solidarity of building:

Each believer resembles a brick in a firm building benefiting from the multiplied strength of innumerable fellow believers in their worship and supplication. When belief brings them together, each works for the whole, becomes an intercessor and supplicant for them, and asks mercy for them while declaring their innocence.... Every believer takes pleasure in others’ happiness, just as a mother, although hungry, takes pleasure in satisfying her children, or like a compassionate brother who takes pleasure in his brother’s happiness.⁷⁵¹

In other words, genuine worship contributes to the creation of solidarity and community cohesion between believers and other members of the society, leading to the appearance of public order and justice appear in society. Therefore, it can be assumed that worship and prayer i.e. acting in obedience of the natural law of disposition (*fiṭrah*) with justice and wisdom in the universe are the foundation and are a cause for the social justice.

5.5 THE QUESTION OF THE FISQ (SINFULNESS)

The root *f-s-q* appears 54 times in five forms in the Qur’ān. According to Badawi, the word *fisq* in the Qur’ān refers to the concept of acting outside of moral and social norms in general and breaching Islamic teachings in particular. In the Islamic literature, the term *fisq* tends to be used to refer to very different actions ranging from those as drastic as denying the existence of God, to much lesser ones, such as looking at a woman lecherously. In addition to this, secondary meanings of this word suggest disobedience, breaking away from social norms and deserting the community.⁷⁵²

In his book *Ishārāt al-i‘jāz*, Nursi defines the term ‘*fisq*’ (sinfulness and debauchery) in the light of verse 27 from *sūrah al-Baqarah*. In this verse, God describes the *fāsiqūn* (active participle of *fisq*) as “those who break Allah’s Covenant after it is ratified, and who sunder what Allah has ordered to be joined, and do on earth: These cause loss (only) themselves [losers]”.⁷⁵³ According to Nursi, *fisq* (debauchery) means

⁷⁵¹ Said Nursi, *Al-Mathnawi Al-Nuri : Seedbed of the Light*, trans. Huseyin Akarsu (Somerset, N.J.: The Light, 2007), 353.

⁷⁵² Badawi, Abdel Haleem, and Altenmüller, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur’anic Usage*, 710.

⁷⁵³ The Qur’ān (2:27)

to deviate from righteousness, to go beyond bounds and to quit the hard shell of right-guidance. *Fisq* also refers to levels of excess (*ifrāt*) and deficiency (*tafrīt*) in the three faculties of soul, i.e. reason, animal passion and anger.⁷⁵⁴ In fact, the excess and deficiency induce a rebellion in the face of evidence that is identical to the divine covenant (*al-‘uhūd al-ilāhiyyah*) in creation.⁷⁵⁵ As a result, as Nursi added in his translation of *Ishārāt al-‘ijāz* into Turkish, man violates his covenant with God with his disposition by going against those evidences.⁷⁵⁶ Nursi further maintains that excess and deficiency in the faculties of the soul cause a sickness in an individual’s personal life. For Nursi, this meaning can be traced from the phrase of “Who break Allah’s covenant (*yanquḍūna ‘ahd al-Allāhi*)”. This is first attribute of *fisq* (debauchery) in the Qur’ān.⁷⁵⁷

Furthermore, with regards to the ramifications of excess and deficiency, Nursi argues that either state can be a stimulus for transgression and infringement in social life. They also curtail social bonds and laws within the society.⁷⁵⁸ In his translation of *Ishārāt al-‘ijāz*, Nursi added that if the level of excess in the faculties of animal appetite and anger appears in the society, innocent people’s rights are violated, and honour and dignity are degraded.⁷⁵⁹ In Nursi’s view, this point is inferred from the second attribute of the *fisq* which was mentioned in the phrase of “and cut asunder what Allah has bidden to be joined” from the verse mentioned above.⁷⁶⁰

Lastly, Nursi discusses the expression of “[they] do mischief [corruption] on earth” as being the third attribute of the *fisq* (debauchery). According to him, this phrase means that excess and deficiency in the faculties cause corruption and disturbance, which spoil the order of the earth.⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵⁴ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 208.

⁷⁵⁵ Nursi, 208.

⁷⁵⁶ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1252.

⁷⁵⁷ Nursi, *Signs of Miraculousness : The Inimitability of the Quran’s Conciseness*, 232.

⁷⁵⁸ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 208.

⁷⁵⁹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1252.

⁷⁶⁰ Nursi, 2:1252.

⁷⁶¹ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 208.

Nursi further elaborates negative repercussions of the level of excess of those three faculties, i.e. intellect, anger and animal appetite. At first, he argues that when the excess state appears in the faculty of the intellect of a depraved person, he breaks the bonds of the tenets of belief and disintegrates the strong shell of his belief that is eternal life.⁷⁶² In other words, it can be said that for Nursi, if man’s intellect does not function within the bounds of moderation, his life will be corrupted, and eventually he may lose his belief in God and the hereafter. Later, he mentions the negative implications of the excess state of the faculty of anger in man. Here, Nursi claims that if the excess state of the faculty of anger appears in man, it leads to the shell of social life being smashed by disobedience and disturbance. Lastly, when his faculty of animal appetites exceeds the limits, and he follows his carnal desires, his compassion towards to his fellow man ceases to exist. This leads man to induce disorder and disturbance. Thus, he becomes embroiled with his fellow men. Consequently, this man causes harm to the human race and infringes the order on the earth.⁷⁶³

In his book *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, Markham analyses the social implications of corrupting factors and its effects on society. According to Markham, Nursi’s lifetime struggle was with atheist civilisation and his major concern was secularism. Although, he acknowledges technical achievements of modernity, he rejects the philosophical scepticism. Nursi holds that if sense of God disappears in human beings, as result, it may corrupt a virtuous person.⁷⁶⁴ It seems that Markham’s understanding of corrupting factors in Nursi’s discourse alludes to denial of the existence of God which is one of the meanings of *fisq* in Islamic classic literature. Because, *fisq* is ultimately the degeneration of civilisation.

In *Flashes*, Nursi claims that it is very difficult to govern those people who are corrupted and degenerated. He writes:

You should be certain that if your intention in forcibly driving the people of belief to degenerate civilization in this way is the country’s law and order and easy administration, you are mistaken and you are driving them down the wrong path. For it is more difficult to govern a hundred degenerates whose belief is shaken and morals corrupted, and to maintain public security among them, than to govern thousands of the righteous.⁷⁶⁵

⁷⁶² Nursi, 208.

⁷⁶³ Nursi, *Signs of Miraculousness : The Inimitability of the Quran’s Conciseness*, 233.

⁷⁶⁴ Markham, *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 20.

⁷⁶⁵ Nursi, *The Flashes*, 169.

Commenting on the above quote from Nursi, Markham notes that Nursi was of the opinion that faith is essential for social harmony. A culture without faith is always prone to degeneration.⁷⁶⁶

Taken together, it seems that Nursi takes the *fiṣq* (sin and debauchery) as an antithesis of *al-‘adl* (justice) and the concept of mean in his discourse.

5.6 ‘AL-ZAKĀT AS MEANS TO ATTAIN TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

The lexical meaning of *zakāt* is both ‘to increase’ and ‘to be pure’.⁷⁶⁷ This term has derived from the root *zakā* and has been mentioned thirty-two times in the Qur’ān.⁷⁶⁸ In the Islamic literature, the term ‘*al-zakāt*’ is considered to be one of the Five Pillars of Islam. It is the specified portion of certain types of one’s possessions, which are given annually. It is regarded as an obligatory duty to God in order that the givers may purify their wealth and themselves.⁷⁶⁹ Therefore, it is the prescribed alms for Muslims and a type of worship. In many verses of the Qur’ān, the order of giving *al-zakāt* is often joined with the order of offering of *ṣalāh* (prayer). Such as “and be steadfast in prayer [*al-ṣalāh*] and practise regular charity [*al-zakāh*]” (Qurān, 2:43). Therefore, the term of *al-zakāt* is sometimes referred to as ‘companion’ (*qarīna*) of the prayer.⁷⁷⁰ In the same vein, in his book ‘*Ishārāt al-‘ijāz fī mīzān al-‘ijāz*’, Nursi dealt with the concept of *al-zakāh* in relation to the concept of *al-ṣalāh* (prayer). Nursi believed *ṣalāt* (prayer) to be the pillar of religion, which provides consistency and consciences for the observants of the religion. In other words, *ṣalāt* is the backbone of the religion of Islam. Similarly, he goes on by citing the *ḥadīth* that *zakat* is ‘the bridge of Islam’.⁷⁷¹ For Nursi, *zakāt* is a means by which people assist one another.⁷⁷²

⁷⁶⁶ Markham, *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 21.

⁷⁶⁷ Edward William Lane and Stanley Lane-Poole, *An Arabic-English Lexicon, Derived from the Best and the Most Copious Eastern Sources*, vol. 2011 (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1863), 1240, <http://www.tyndalearchive.com/TABS/Lane/index.htm>.

⁷⁶⁸ Zysow, A., “*Zakāt*”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 15 November 2016 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1377

⁷⁶⁹ Badawi, Abdel Haleem, and Altenmüller, *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur’anic Usage*, 400.

⁷⁷⁰ Zysow, A., “*Zakāt*”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 15 November 2016 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1377

⁷⁷¹ Bayhaqī, *Sh‘ab al-īmān*, *ḥadīth* number: 3036 (Consulted online on 18 November 2016 http://library.islamweb.net/hadith/display_hbook.php?bk_no=682&hid=3036&pid=335469)

In the light of this *ḥadīth*, Nursi further argues that balance and righteousness within society can be achieved by mutual help and assistance by the members of that society. The wealthy people within it must have a feeling of mercy and compassion towards the poor and the indigent people should have respect and be obedient towards the rich. Thus, social balance or social justice can be maintained within society. In Nursi’s view, the institution of *zakāt* is a way to produce this social balance. In fact, he sees *zakāt* as an antidote to the real problems of human progress.⁷⁷³ Then, Nursi argues that there is a vast wisdom and mercy to be found in the obligation for the rich section of the society to give *zakāt*. Furthermore, there is a great mercy and benefit behind the prohibitions of usury and interest. Nursi claims that if the reasons for corruption and revolution and the evils of the human society were examined thoroughly from a historical perspective, the sources of immorality can be summarised in these two sayings:

The First: “Once I am full, what is to me if others die out of hunger?” The Second: “You work so that I can eat, and you toil so that I can rest.” As for the cruel, rapacious, vile, first saying, it has shaken the world of humanity and brought it to the brink of ruin. It is only *zakāt* that will cut it at the root. While the tyrannical, greedy, perverted second saying has imperilled human progress, taking it tottering to the verge of conflagration of anarchy. And the only way to eradicate it, the only remedy for it, is the prohibition of usury and interest.⁷⁷⁴

In relation to above quotation, Markham in his book *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* notes “this is an excellent summary of Nursi’s social teaching”. Markham maintains that Nursi’s social teaching includes the whole structure of society. For him, Nursi believes that all revolutions and corruptions can be found in certain dispositions. For Nursi, task of renewal and revitalisation of personal belief should not prevent him to contribute to social dimensions of Islam. It is essential that Muslims should be involved in the assessment of society and make the leaders aware that society ought to be rightly ordered. Nursi was of the opinion that selfishness and exploitation are two corrupting dispositions. Nursi’s solution to the former is “compulsory social redistribution” by implementing *zakāt*. The problem of exploitation can be solved by prohibiting of usury or interest. According to Markham,

⁷⁷² Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 53.

⁷⁷³ Nursi, 54.

⁷⁷⁴ Nursi, *Signs of Miraculousness : The Inimitability of the Quran’s Conciseness*, 53.

Nursi’s solution for the former is very helpful. However, he found that Nursi’s second solution for exploitation is less practical and convincing.⁷⁷⁵

Nursi further maintains that the gap between the respective sections of society should be eradicated to secure social balance and social order within the society.⁷⁷⁶ It means the upper classes should not stay distant from the lower classes; the rich should stay close to the poor so that lines of communication can be assured. These two groups (the rich and poor – the upper classes and the lower classes) can only maintain these close communications by the establishment of the institution of *zakāt* and their mutual help of each other. In addition, Nursi goes on to say that if the obligation of *zakāt* is not performed and usury becomes prevalent, the gap between sections of the society will be widened, and the relationship between people will be deteriorated. Consequently, the lower classes of society will likely rise up against the upper classes instead of having respect for them. The lower classes will envy the lifestyle of the upper classes and hate them. Eventually, instead of obedience and love, the lower classes will try to take revenge on the upper classes. Likewise, the upper classes will maltreat the lower classes and oppress and insult them, instead of showing kindness, generosity and favour. Finally, Nursi writes:

Alas! While the qualities of the elite should be the cause of modesty and compassion, unfortunately they give rise to pride and arrogance. And while the powerlessness and poverty of the poor necessitate kindness and benevolence, they lead to slavery and degradation. If you want a witness for what I say, take a look at the civilized world; there you will find as many witnesses as you could wish for. The only means of reconciliation between the classes, which will bring them closer together, is the payment of *zakāt*, one of the pillars of Islam, and an elevated, far-reaching rule in the administration of society.⁷⁷⁷

In the same vein, Nursi in his book ‘*The Letters*’ notes that only remedy for social problems is to implement *zakāt* and to forbid usury. He believes that *zakāt* is the most essential means of achieving happiness for both individuals and societies, but also for all of humanity. The two broad classes of the society, (upper and lower) will attain social cohesion and reconciliation by means of them supporting each other. According to Nursi, *zakāt* instigates kindness, generosity and favour in the hearts of

⁷⁷⁵ Markham, *Engaging with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, 20.

⁷⁷⁶ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 54.

⁷⁷⁷ Nursi, 55.

the rich towards poorer sections of society. As a response to this, the lower classes feel respect, obedience and love towards upper classes. When the *zakāt* is not institutionalised properly, there will be a constant struggle and long lasting opposition between the two classes. Thus, he claims that the confrontation of capital and labour may occur as happened in Russia in the past.⁷⁷⁸ This view is supported by Zukas who writes that the Czarist regime’s oppression of the peasantry and working class aspirations resulted in the Russian Revolution.⁷⁷⁹ In Zukas’s view, one of the main social causes for the Russian Revolution was the dissatisfaction of the Russian peasants, workers and middle classes with the elite sections of their society.⁷⁸⁰

In relation to *zakāt*, Nursi further asserts that Islam has always been a protector of the poor within societies and seekers of knowledge through the organisation and establishment of the institution of *zakāt*.

Therefore, it may not be wrong to say that, in Nursi’s opinion, help and assistance by the institution of zakat is a way of building bridges between poor and rich sections of the society.

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed to illustrate the concept of *a’dala* (justice) from the perspective of Nursi’s writings. It has put Nursi and al-Gazzālī, as mentioned before in this study, into a discourse on three faculties in the human soul, including the doctrine of the mean and how human beings can attain the mean state, i.e. *al-‘adalah al-ḥaqīqiyya* and its implication in the society from the Nursian perspective. It has endeavoured to find answers to the following questions: What, according to Nursi, is the doctrine of the mean and how it can be achieved? How can the prayer (*ṣalāh*) bring about a foundation for order and balance (*‘adl*) in a man and how can it have social implication in the society? How does worship (*‘ibādah*) become the basis for generating personal attainment and perfection in man’s personal life? How does this person contribute toward social justice in society? What is the Qur’ānic definition of

⁷⁷⁸ Nursi, *The Letters*, 319.

⁷⁷⁹ Alexander M Zukas, ‘Russian Revolution (1917-1921)’, *Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice* (Sage Publications), accessed 13 December 2016, http://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/russian_revolution?searchId=5c5d7e23-c164-11e6-9a39-0e58d2201a4d.

⁷⁸⁰ Zukas.

fiṣq (sinfulness) and how Nursi articulated the concept of *fiṣq* and how *fiṣq* becomes antithesis of the concept of *al-a‘dl* (justice)? How does the institution of *zakāt* (almsgiving) cause the groundwork to attain social justice in the society?

While in some aspects, it appears as if Nursi’s interpretation of the question about human free will and its compatibility with Divine Determining was line for line duplication or reproduction of the opinions of the scholars before him, it has been demonstrated to be an advantage to the hitherto widely analysed and accepted conceptions among Muslim scholars. This chapter has also attempted to highlight Nursi’s examination and interpretation of the doctrine of mean or ‘golden mean’ with substantial elaborations and novel additions. Some of his views with an original asset to the topic were also studied here.

Considering the Nursian account of the doctrine of the mean, i.e. the state of *al-‘adl* in a man and its social implication in society as covering mainly the moral aspect of it, Nursi’s analysis of the right course, the *ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* taken from *sūrat al-Fātiḥa* of the Qur’ān, served as a pattern for the ‘golden mean’ or optimal moral behaviour in a man. It has demonstrated through the analyses of three faculties of the human soul (animal passion, reason and anger) and their three levels (mean/*wasat*, excess/*ifrāt* and deficiency/*tafrīt*). That is what is meant by ‘the state of mean’ and ethical moral behaviour. Nursi posited that excess and deficiency in the soul’s faculties are considered to be the main cause for disequilibrium and imbalance in man’s actions and emotions, if they are not regulated and balanced by the divine law, which always orders principles of moderation and the middle path (*wasat*) and prohibits ‘excess’ (*ifrāt*) and ‘deficiency’ (*tafrīt*).

Interestingly, Nursi’s view on three faculties of a human being appear to be consistent with those of Plato and *al-Gazzālī*. However, as discussed, *al-Gazzālī* believed that the faculty of justice does not have two extremes, i.e. excess and deficiency. According to him, the faculty of justice can have only an opposite which is an injustice (*jawr*).

Unlike *al-Gazzālī*, it has been proven that the justice was not deemed as a faculty in Nursi’s account. In fact, it appears that in Nursi’s view, justice (*al-a‘dl*) is the doctrine of mean (*wasat*) itself. It means that the doctrine of mean in a man is

predicated on the notion that the state of ‘*adl* (justice), i.e. *wasat*, is maintained in all human faculties. In general, therefore, it seems that Nursi does not find justice (‘*adl*) to be one of the faculties in a man. For him, justice was regarded as a nexus of the virtues produced from the mean state of the faculties of reason, desire and anger. The most obvious finding to emerge from the above-mentioned analysis is that, in Nursi’s view, the virtue of justice is prescribed as a state of mean in which the faculties of the soul should remain in order so that sound character is produced. Nursi believes that sound character in a man constitutes a foundation for social justice.

In connection with the doctrine of mean and wisdom in the creation of the human being and the social order in the society, Nursi believes that genuine prayer (*ṣalāt*) can implant the notion of obedience to the divine laws of justice and adherence to God’s order in the universe. It is interesting to note that Nursi studies prayer (*ṣalāh*) in conjunction with worship (‘*ibādah*) and these two terms are used interchangeable in his narratives.

Another significant finding was that Nursi defines the believers (*mu‘minūn*) as being those who perform their actions in compliance with wisdom, justice and belief and worship (‘*ubūdiyyah*). In other words, men who pray and worship God are obliged to act in accord with the natural law and order so that he they can be successful in this life, and this obedience to the natural law is a type of worship of God. Thus, worship was found to be the cause and foundation of prosperity and social justice in this world.

It is, therefore, likely that such connections exist between a man who does worship and prays to God and social order in Nursi’s account. To be more precise, Nursi believes that genuine worship induces the state of mean (*wasat* or state of *al-‘adl*) in the conscience of man. Thus, balance and order are achieved in the personal life of man and social justice in the society.

In fact, genuine worship contributes to the creation of solidarity and community cohesion between members of the society. Consequently, public order and justice are ensured in society. Therefore, it may not be wrong to assume that worship and prayer, i.e. ‘acting in obedience to the natural law of disposition with justice and wisdom in the universe’ is the very foundation and grounds for social justice.

Additionally, Nursi’s interpretation on the Qur’anic narrative of the attributes of *fiṣq* (sinfulness) has shed further light on the origin of tyranny and oppression in man’s personal life and injustice, corruption and social imbalance in the society. According to him, the *fiṣq* can be broadly defined as the state of excess (*ifrāt*) or deficiency (*tafrīt*) of the soul’s faculties. As a matter of fact, it can be said that disorder and disturbance in man’s life is activated by *fiṣq* which comes from the six extreme states of these faculties. Thus, this person harms fellow men and violates order on the earth. Another interesting point is that the *fiṣq* (sin and debauchery) is analysed as being the antithesis of *al-‘adl* (justice) and the concept of mean in the Nursian discourse.

Additionally, in the Islamic literature, the term of *al-zakāt* is regarded as ‘companion’ (*qarīna*) of prayer (*ṣalāh*). Likewise, it appears that Nursi also studied the concept of *al-zakāh* in connection with *al-ṣalāh* (prayer). According to Nursi, one of the attributes of *fiṣq* (sinfulness) is to cut lines of communication between relatives and members of the society. He believes that solidarity between the poor and rich sections of society should be established. Thus, social justice is realised. Therefore, Nursi offered some practical aspects of how the institution of *al-zakāh* serves as an antidote for repairing the lines of communication between the rich and the poor. It will eventually enrich community cohesion. Therefore, the rich should stay close to the poor so that lines of communication can be assured. In other words, the implementation of *zakāt* builds bridges between the poor and the rich sections within a society, and consequently bring about social justice, because community cohesion and solidarity among members of the society are its foundations.

In the light of all that has been said, man is urged to ensure that all of his faculties (reason, animal desires and anger) should stay in the mean state through faith in God and obedience to divinely ordained laws and natural laws.

CONCLUSION

“He has set up the Balance (of Justice), In order that ye may not transgress (due) balance. So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance”⁷⁸¹

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The aim of this research was to examine the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) from the view of the contemporary Muslim theologian Said Nursi and his magnum opus, the *Risale-i Nur Collection*, which consists of approximately six thousand pages of exegesis of the Qur’ān. This study has shown the Qur’anic understanding of *al-‘adl* (justice) may have multiple meanings. Firstly, as acting with equity, the meaning of *al-adl* can be defined as creating balance and proportion. Secondly, it has also identified the meaning of *al-‘adl* (justice) to be moderation in the moral, personal and social level of society and being in tune in every aspect of life in the Qur’anic worldview. In the light of this Qur’anic understanding of *al-‘adl* (justice), this research has investigated an outlook and a definition for the nature of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the view of Nursi. The study has further explored Nursi’s interpretation of *al-‘adl* (justice) as balance and order in the creation of the universe by taking into account his ‘design argument’ for the existence of God’. Additionally, this study has completely or partially provided answers to the question on the reconciliation of human free will with the Divine Determining. The final part of the study was designed to examine ‘the doctrine of the mean’ from Nursian perspective.

In general, therefore, it seems that justice always remains a central problem of everyday life. The fairness of individual, interpersonal and institutional acts and behaviours are often evaluated on a scale of justice.⁷⁸² Men first became preoccupied with the meaning of justice when they began to contemplate their relationship and connections with each other in their daily life. In the literature, the theme of justice is a core subject of the most philosophical discussions. The evidence from this study

⁷⁸¹ The Qur’ān (5:7, 8, 9)

⁷⁸² Barbara A Mellers and Jonathan Baron, *Psychological Perspectives on Justice: Theory and Applications* (Cambridge [England]; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 3.

suggests that the discussion of justice has accessed into every sphere of human life and contemplation, in the temporal and spiritual life. It has been examined, assessed and classified, in both the ancient and the modern world, into many different forms, including justice as pure virtue, natural justice, justice as social virtue and justice as equilibrium etc.⁷⁸³ In the following, the main findings of this thesis will be introduced chapter by chapter.

Findings of Chapter 1

One interesting observation made in this thesis is that the concept *al-‘adl* (justice) or *al-‘adālah* (justice) used by Nursi seems to be different from modern/contemporary usage and the meaning that has been attached to it, because, Nursi’s analysis of the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) centred around creational justice and the relationship between God and man and the mean state of faculties of man which is the foundation for the social order in the society. To be more precise, this investigation has found that Nursi examined the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in line with the Qur’ān. According to him, the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) is one of the central and essential teachings of the Qur’ān among the other three themes; *tawhīd* (monotheism), *al-nubuwwah* (prophethood) and *al-ḥashr* (hereafter). The results of this investigation show that according to Nursi, these four themes prevail and permeate the whole content of the Qur’ān.⁷⁸⁴

Initially, in order to identify Qur’ānic perception of the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice), a combination of semantic and thematic approaches was utilised in this study. In the Qur’ān, each verse and the key concept cannot be taken into account separately from the whole message. For example, at first, the semantic and thematic approaches were taken to key concepts of the Qur’ān, such as *al-‘adl* (justice) *al-wasat* (middle way), involving all the verses that refer to the concept itself, then its derivatives, its parallels, and its relational and connected concepts were considered in order to portray a more complete picture of the meaning. Therefore, the methodology of this study was founded on the Izutsian semantic analysis of the Qur’ānic key concepts. One of the fundamental assumptions of his methodology is that culture and language convey *Weltanschauung* (worldview). In order to understand the Qur’ānic worldview

⁷⁸³ Carleton Kemp Allen, *Aspects of Justice* (London: Stevens, 1958), 3–15.

⁷⁸⁴ Nursi, *Ishārāt Al-‘ijāz Fī Mizān Al-Ījāz [Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’anic Conciseness]*, 19.

of the meaning of *al-‘adl* (justice), Chapter 1 used Izutsian approach to the semantics of the Qur’ān to expose the semantic field of *al-‘adl* (justice). To achieve this objective, the current study has examined the lexical meanings of *al-‘adl* (justice) in *al-wujūh wa al-naẓāir* (sing. *wajh* ‘face’ or ‘aspect’ and sing. *naẓīr*, likeness or classical Qur’ān dictionary) the literature and classical Arabic literature. As a result of this analysis, this study found that the notions of *al-‘adl* (justice) can be listed as follows; (1) ransom and compensation; (2) act with equity and to observe fairness and justice; (3) create with balance and proportion; (4) swerve from the right path; and (5) associate partners to God.⁷⁸⁵

Chapter 1 also identified and analysed the relational meaning of *al-‘adl* (justice) within two groups; (a) semantically connected concepts to *al-‘adl* (justice); and (b) semantically opposite concepts to *al-‘adl* (justice). The results of this investigation show that, *al-adl* (justice) has a strong correlation with some other connected concepts, such as *al-qisṭ* (justice), *al-ḥaqq* (truth), *al-mīzān* (balance), *al-mikyāl* (just measure), *qadara* (to form fashion), *al-iḥsān* (performance of good deeds), *al-istiqāmah* (to be balanced moderate) and *al-wasaṭ* (middle way). In addition, *al-adl* (justice) has also a direct link to the opposite concepts, such as *ẓulm* (injustice), *‘udūl* (deviation from the right path), *jawr* (oppression), *fasād* (to destroy with injustice), *khusrān* (to go astray), *fahshā* (to be excessive or immoderate), *fuṭūr* (futura) and *tafāwut* (imperfection). It is interesting to highlight that these semantic fields of *al-‘adl* can be also observed in the Qur’ānic worldview. In this respect, the main aim of Chapter 1 is to present a linguistic investigation.

The results of Chapter 1 indicate that the Arabs of the Jahilī period were familiar with the meanings *al-‘adl* that found in the Qur’ānic worldview. However, the concept of *al-‘adl* with its connected concepts such as *al-mīzān* and *al-ḥaqq* obtained an eschatological dimension with the introduction of the Qur’ān.⁷⁸⁶ In general, therefore, it seems that the findings of this research have showed that the Qur’ān brought a new dimension and colouring to the meanings of *al-‘adl*.

⁷⁸⁵ For details see: 1.4 Inner Structure of the concept of *al-‘adl* on page 8.

⁷⁸⁶ For details see: 1.5.3 *Al-ḥaqq*, *al-qisṭ* and *al-‘adl* and their overlapping relationships on page 33, also see: 1.5.4 *Al-mīzān* on page 43.

Another interesting observation made in Chapter 1 is that there seems to be no any consensus between the scholars in terms of the meaning of *al-qist* and *al-‘adl*. Both terms are used by many scholars to mean justice, although they have different implications. For example, Turner argues that *al-qist* does not give the same nuances of meaning as *al-adl* with regard to the concepts of “balance, equilibrium and equanimity”, rather, it refers to justice and fairness on a societal level instead of on a creational level.⁷⁸⁷ In addition to this, Abu ‘Udah suggests that *al-qist* is used to connote justice and fairness in social and economical life. According to him, it also refers observing fairness and justice in treaties and agreements among the people.⁷⁸⁸ With regard to the difference between *al-‘adl* and *al-qist*, the present study came up with the idea of examination of these two concepts according to their grammatical point of reference⁷⁸⁹ and context as well as emotive meanings, particularly with regard to Allah and the hereafter.⁷⁹⁰ This observation may support the hypothesis that *al-‘adl* can be accepted as more comprehensive in a sense than *al-qist*, which can be seen as specific and concerned with social and economic life in the Qur’ānic context. These findings also suggest that *al-qist* can be considered an ethical terms, which is used when focussing on relations between Allah and man; on the other hand, *al-‘adl* appears to be a legal term, which alludes to relations between man and his fellow man.⁷⁹¹

Furthermore, Chapter 1 explored three key concepts that are semantically connected to *al-‘adl* in the Qur’ānic worldview:

First, *al-mīzān* (balance and order), and *al-mikyāl* (just measure) as semantically connected concepts to *al-‘adl* refer to balance and order in both the creation of nature and animate beings in the Qur’ānic perception. This connection between the concept of *al-mīzān* (balance), *al-mikyāl* (just measure) and *al-‘adl* form the base for Nursi’s design argument, in more details, his argument for necessity of the hereafter from the point of justice and his argument for the existence of God from the names of God.

⁷⁸⁷ Turner, ‘Bediuzzaman and the Concept of Adl’, 560.

⁷⁸⁸ Abu ‘Udah, *Al-Tatawwur Al-Dalali Bayna Lughat Al-Shi’r Al-Jahili Wa-Lughat Al-Qurān Al-Karim : Dirasah Dalaliyah Muqaranah*, 378.

⁷⁸⁹ ‘grammatical point of reference can be broadly defined as *isnad* in arabic language. *Isnād* is used to indicate the grammatical part of sentence such as subject and predicator

⁷⁹⁰ For more detailed discussion, see: 1.5.2 Al-Qist as a synonym of al-‘Adl on page 23.

⁷⁹¹ For illustrative explanation of difference between these terms, see: Figure 3 on page 23.

These issues were discussed in Chapter 3 regarding the concept of *al-‘adl* in creation according to Said Nursi.

Second, as a concept which is semantically connected to *al-‘adl*, the term *qadara* refers to a very wide cluster of meanings which cover either measures of sustenance that is given to all creations, or order in the creation of all universes in the Qur’ān.⁷⁹² This overlapping relation between the concept *qadar* (divine determining) and *al-‘adl* served as a starting point for Chapter 4 of the current thesis on the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in relation to *qadar* (divine determining) in the view of Nursi.

Third, terms such as *al-istiqāmah* (to be balanced, moderate) and *al-wasaʿ* (middle way) are examined with the juxtaposition of the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice) in the Qur’ān.⁷⁹³ The interconnected relations between the above terms and the Qur’ānic outlook constitute the foundation for Nursi’s doctrine of the mean. This topic was discussed as the basis for bringing social order and justice to society from the Nursian perspective in Chapter 5.

The abovementioned consistence and correlation among the chapters of this thesis show that Nursi, for whom the Qur’ān was always the main source of study, analysed the concept of *al-‘adl* in the same way as the Qur’ān.

Findings of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 of this thesis related the intellectual life story of Said Nursi. The aim of this chapter was not only to give a chronological biography of Said Nursi, but also to highlight the distinctive aspects between the writings of the Old Said and the New Said. This research identified that the brevity and conciseness (*al-ījāz*) predominately found in the writings of the Old Said, such as *Muḥākamāt* and *al-Ishārāt al-‘Ijāz* and *Munāẓarāt*. In his new Said period, on the other hand, he believed that he attained and understanding of life and the universe through his spiritual inspiration of the heart (*shuhūd-i qalb*) and the light of conscience (*nūr-i wijdān*).⁷⁹⁴ It is worth noting that as a whole, the Old Said was greatly involved in politics, whereas, the New Said seemed apolitical in social life. Therefore, this chapter assessed the thematic evolution of the

⁷⁹² See: 1.5.4 Al-mīzān on page 43.

⁷⁹³ See: 1.5.6 Al-istiqāmah and al-qawām on page 50.

⁷⁹⁴ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-Icâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikasi, Kastamonu Lahikasi, Emirdag Lahikasi, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Digerleri.*, 2:1517.

notion of *al-‘adl* in Nursi’s writings, using diachronic analysis which is mentioned in the methodology of thesis.⁷⁹⁵ As a result, the findings of this chapter suggested that in general, in the Old Said period, the themes of *al-‘adl* were studied largely in relation to justice between man and his fellow man, whereas in the New Said period the concept of *al-‘adl* centred on the relationship between God and Cosmos and between God and Man. Taken together, the findings of this chapter suggest that the themes of *al-‘adl* in relation to different contexts were not complete changes or evolutions in his discourse, but a series of developments in his ideas.

Findings of Chapter 3

The aim of Chapter 3 was to elaborate Nursi’s understanding of *al-‘adl* on the creational level of the universe. This chapter found that the notion of *‘adl* is the manifestation of the Divine Name All-Just (*‘Adl*). For Nursi, the balanced order and the harmonious relations between living beings and the natural world are maintained by God’s Divine Name All-Just.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this chapter was that Nursi was set into discourse with William Paley’s design argument and Bertrand Russell’s Analysis of ‘The Argument for the Remedy of Justice’.⁷⁹⁶ Nursi’s argument for the existence of God from design, is based on *al-‘adl* (order and balance), which is a manifestation of the Divine Name All-Just. This chapter summarised the basic encapsulation of Nursi’s argument from design as follows:

1. The natural world contains amazing balance, order and equilibrium. (Premise)
2. This fact is explained if the balance, order and equilibrium in the universe and the world, as well as within our creation, are regulated and administered by God’s Divine Name All-Just. (Premise)
3. If observable balance, order and equilibrium do not stem from the justice of a monotheistic God, all this apparent balance and order in the universe would have turned into total chaos. (Premise)

⁷⁹⁵ See: Semantics of the Qur’ān: Izutsu’s method on page 17.

⁷⁹⁶ Please see p.127.

4. Hence, certainly, this balance, order and equilibrium in the universe and beings are being measured and weighed every moment on the scales of an orthodoxly conceived monotheistic God who sees and supervises the whole universe.⁷⁹⁷

Another interesting finding of this chapter is that Nursi uses the concept of *al-‘adl* as a tool to substantiate his arguments for the existence of God and the hereafter. Accordingly, this chapter investigated three different and interconnected arguments put forward by Nursi for the existence of God and the hereafter: (a) Nursi’s argument from the point of view of design; (b) Nursi’s argument from the point of justice for the hereafter; and (c) Nursi’s argument from the Divine Names for the resurrection and the hereafter.

While in some aspects, it appears as if Nursi’s account of the issues mentioned above were a verbatim duplication or reproduction of the opinions of William Paley and Bernard Russell, the results of this chapter show that Nursi’s analysis of this matter was a fresh examination of widely discussed and accepted notions among Muslim and Western Intellectuals, because it identified novel additions to the issues of the design argument, based on his examination and interpretation of the Qur’ān. Nursi’s design argument for the existence of God, and his argument for the hereafter and resurrection centred on the Divine Names of God and their manifestation in the universe and that this seems to be what makes Nursi different from William Paley and Bernard Russell.

The general finding of this chapter is that Nursi examined *al-‘adl* in the creational sense as the balance and order in two realms; Macrocosm (*Kitāb-i Kabīr-i Kāināt*) and Microcosm: (*Kitāb-i Şagīr* or *Insān*). This chapter introduced a brief discussion on how *al-‘adl* can be manifested as an order and a balance in the human body and faculties which is on the micro level. This section of the chapter formed another starting point for Chapter 5 of this research which is on the doctrine of the mean from Nursian perspective.⁷⁹⁸

Findings of Chapter 4

As mentioned in Chapter 1 of this study, there is strong semantic connection between the term *al-‘adl* (justice) and *al-qadar* (Divine Determining) in the Qur’ānic

⁷⁹⁷ For details, see: on page 101.

⁷⁹⁸ See: on page 112.

worldview. This relation between these two terms became the foundation for the formulation of the arguments in Chapter 4. This chapter aimed to investigate the concept of justice (*al-‘adl*) in relation to the problem of *qadar* (predestination) in Nursi’s writings on Divine Determining.

This chapter began by examining divine determining and human accountability in classical Islamic scholarship, in three main groups: (1) upholders of free will; (2) upholders of *qadar* (predestination); and (3) thoughts of scholars who believe in the issue of compatibility of Divine power and human free will. The results of this chapter reveal that Nursi’s position was clearly in line with those scholars such as al-Ash‘arī and al-Māturidī who support the reconciliation of human free will and predestination.

The findings of this chapter suggest that human free will (*ikhtiyār*) and acquisition (*kasb*) have no external existence; they are theoretical or relative (*amr ‘itibārī* or *amr nisbī*) and their existence does not require causes. Man is accountable for his actions because of his *kasb* (acquisition). In this way, Nursi was able to provide an answer as to why God holds human beings responsible for their actions, by stating that it is because God is the Unique Creator of everything (*Khāliq kulli shai‘in*) and All-Just.

Findings of Chapter 5

The purpose of Chapter 5 was to determine the doctrine of the mean, or *state of al-‘adl*, in man and its manifestation in society as a foundation for social justice, from Nursi’s perspective. The results of Chapter 1 of this research reveal that he examined the concept of *wasat* in the sense of the doctrine of the mean or moderation in the Qur’ān, and the concept *wasat* along with *ṣirāt al-mustaqīm* (straight path) as a relational meaning of *al-‘adl*.⁷⁹⁹ In the light of those examinations, the current chapter will clarify Nursi’s description of the doctrine of the mean and moderation in man.

In addition to this, Chapter 5 identified Nursi’s coherence with the Qur’ān in his analysis of the concepts of *‘adl* (justice) and *wasat* (moderation). In this regard, Nursi believed that the human soul is endowed with three powers: (1) the power of animal passion; (2) the power of anger or repulsion; and (3) the power of intellect or reason. He maintained that these faculties are not restricted by any constraint due to their

⁷⁹⁹ For more details, see: on page 50.

nature and innate ability and excellence of character can be attained through their completion. Therefore, these three faculties may appear in three possible degrees: 1) deficiency (*tafrīt*); 2) mean (*wasat*); and 3) excess (*ifrāt*). To Nursi, both *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* (straight path) and *al-wasat* (middle way) refer to *al-‘adl* which is a summary of wisdom, courage and chastity. This is the metaphysical dimension of order and balance in human beings. In other words, order and balance in the faculties in man. To be more precise, according to the Islamic teachings, human beings are ordered to maintain the principle of moderation and the middle path in their lives.

The results of the findings of this chapter indicate that the state of mean or *al-‘adl* brings about balance and order both in man’s faculties and in his body. If the mean state is produced in man, then he or she is programmed to be righteous in all his dealings by being good and fair, to be just and to have an outward commitment for the betterment of society as a whole and to be a responsible and conscious person to all of humanity. It can thus be suggested that the virtue of justice is prescribed as a state of mean in which the faculties of the soul should remain in order so that sound character can be attained and, as a result, social order and balance is achieved in the society. As a matter of fact, this study does not argue that there is social justice present in Nursi’s writings. Rather it claims that Nursi mentions foundations or means for social justice in society and certain qualities that man possesses have social implications.

MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

For the most important part, this research contributed to the academic discourse by evaluating Said Nursi’s understanding of justice, thought and writings as well as Qur’ānic studies, Islam and religion.

Above all, it contributes to filling the void in the research on Said Nursi studies, in particular, on Nursi’s view of the concept of *al-‘adl* (justice), providing Qur’ānic *Weltanschauung* on the meaning of justice using Izutsian method of semantics and in doing so it developed its own position. The main analysis by researchers on Nursi’s

work, including Hakan Gok⁸⁰⁰ and Tubanur Yesilhark,⁸⁰¹ in the literature were critically examined.

For example, in a theoretical context, this research aimed to provide a holistic examination of *al-asmā al-ḥusnā* (Names of God) as a lens for Nursi's approach to every single theme that he covered in his writings. In his thesis on Nursi's theism, Gok argues that the originality of Nursi's design argument lies in his method of employing *al-asmā al-ḥusnā* (Names of God) as additional proof.⁸⁰² Gok's thesis makes no attempt to address the question of how Divine Names are used to support Nursi's design argument. Similarly, in her thesis on Nursi's theodicy, Yesilhark found that Nursi employed the Names and Attributes of God to elaborate his understanding of theodicy. In her view, 'Divine Names Theology' serves as a yardstick to substantiate her analyses of Nursi's theodicy.⁸⁰³ According to this theory, everything in this universe come into existence as a manifestation and mirror of the Divine Names and Attributes.⁸⁰⁴ She found that Nursi explains how different names can manifest on one single thing in the following way: God creates one thing with the name Creator (*Khāliq*), then he gives determined proportions and shapes to this thing with the names *Muqaddir* (Determiner), *Munazzim* (Orderer) and *Muṣawwir* (Giver of Form). She was also of the opinion that the *al-asmā al-ḥusnā* (Names of God) are a fundamental tool in analysing Nursi's writings. Her findings would have been more useful if she had considered the degrees of manifestations of Divine Names interacting with each other in the creation of one single thing.

Subsequently, in order to fill the gap in the elaboration on this topic, this thesis introduced a new angle from which to examine the manifestation of the Divine Names. For example, one important finding of this research was that from Nursi's perspective on degrees of manifestation of *al-Asmā al-Ḥusnā* (Divine Names) interacting with each other (*girift tajalli*), manifestations of Divine Names in the universe penetrate each other and assist one another and adorn one another's work of

⁸⁰⁰ Hakan Gok, 'Saīd Nursi's Arguments for the Existence of God in Risāle-i Nur' (Durham University, 2015), <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/10994/>.

⁸⁰¹ Yesilhark, 'Theodicy and the Problem of Evil in Islam'.

⁸⁰² Gok, 'Saīd Nursi's Arguments for the Existence of God in Risāle-i Nur', 280.

⁸⁰³ Yesilhark, 'Theodicy and the Problem of Evil in Islam', 318.

⁸⁰⁴ As cited in: Yesilhark, 138; from: I. Coban, 'Nursi on Theodicy: A New Theological Perspective', *ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND OCCIDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGY IN DIALOGUE* 4 (2010): 116.

art. This means that once God creates something, his name the Giver of Life (*al-Muhyī*) manifests on it. The Name All-Wise (*al-Ḥakīm*) also becomes visible and the body of that conscious being is organised in a wise manner with the Name All-Wise. At the same time, the manifestation of the name Munificent (*al-Rahīm*) adorns the body. Concurrently, the Names All-Compassionate (*al-Rahmān*) and the Provider (*al-Razzāq*) are also manifested. Therefore, as Nursi suggests, in order to understand the manifestation of All-Just (*al-ʿĀdil*) one needs to examine other Divine Names such as *Al-Qādir* (the Omnipotent), *al-Ḥakīm* (the Wise), *al-Rahmān* (the Most Gracious), and *al-Muzayyin* (the Beautifier) because, according to Nursi, these names of God are visible and interacting with each other.⁸⁰⁵ This observation may support the hypothesis that Nursi developed original *Weltanschauung* about Divine names and attributes, which was employed in every aspect of his entire work.

The study has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of the usage of the term ‘equilibrium’ in the translations of Nursi’s writings into English. For example, in most cases, both Huseyin Akarsu and Şukran Vahide use the term ‘equilibrium’ to refer to “*muwāzanah*” in their translations. For instance, in *The Seventh Ray*, Vahide used equilibrium to translate the word *muwāzanah* (balanced order).⁸⁰⁶ However, the results of this study found that, the term equilibrium refers to an inner worldly and self-regulative state of balance due to the equal action of opposing forces. In other words, it appears that equilibrium can be maintained by the polarity of equal forces without the intervention of the Boundless, i.e. God.⁸⁰⁷ Contrary to this, measured order and balanced harmony is maintained with mutual assistance (*taʿāwun* and *muwāzanah*) rather than opposing forces. According to Nursi, mutual assistance (*taʿāwun*) and balanced order (*muwāzanah*) within an intricate web of relationships between animate and inanimate beings are assured by the divine utilization of God’s mercy (*taskhir*) and the employment of God’s compassion (*istikhdām*).⁸⁰⁸ Therefore, the translations of Nursi’s writings into English might have been more useful if the translators had considered the actual meaning of the term equilibrium and made some explanatory notes about the real meaning of equilibrium

⁸⁰⁵ See: on page 98.

⁸⁰⁶ Please see for the word equilibrium in: Nursi, *The Flashes*, 2004, 134; see also: Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:899.

⁸⁰⁷ For more details, see: on page 108.

⁸⁰⁸ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: Sözlür, Mektubat, Lemalar, Şualar*, 1:915.

in the Western philosophical context. Overall, this research will serve as a base for future studies on Nursi's work.

LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present research aimed to explore critically the notion of *al-'adl* in the view of Nursi by using the Qur'ānic worldview on the concept of justice. This study, as well as the outline above, has shown that the debate is very comprehensive and multifaceted. Considering this fact, a few important limitations need to be considered.

First, this research covers the contextual analysis of Nursi's understanding of *al-'adl* (justice) and how his account is in parallel with the Qur'ānic worldview. Therefore, it did not attempt to examine the theory of justice in modern context. It also ignored Nursi's classification of concept justice such as *al-'adalah al-mahḍà* (pure justice) and *al-'adalah al-idāfiyya* (relative justice).

Secondly, some of Nursi's answers and explanations have been partially given in this study. For example, Nursi's understanding of free will and divine determining were not thoroughly investigated in Chapter 4.

Thirdly, the present study attempted to examine 'the doctrine of mean' from Nursi's perspective and how the mean state in human faculties can be achieved through worship and prayer. It also found that Nursi claims that the mean state in human beings and the implementation of *zakāt* (charity) serve as a foundation for bringing about social justice in society. However, this study was unable to answer how social justice is achieved in practice from Nursi's perspective.

In the light of the abovementioned limitations, this research has indicated that there are many questions in need of further investigation. In this respect, it is suggested that there are two main aspects of Nursi's understanding of *al-'adl* (justice) need for further exploration.

The first aspect is the concept of positive action (*musbat ḥarakat*) which is Nursi's understanding of *Qadar* (Divine Determining). For example, in *Kastamonu Lahikası*, Nursi states that whatever happens to man can have two causes: (1) Apparent: mans'

actions which are apparent and often bring about injustice; (2) Real; this is Divine Determining by its results. This dual side of Nursi's understanding of the binary nature of justice needs further research.⁸⁰⁹ This dual side of Nursi's understanding of binary nature of justice needs for further research.

The second aspect on which a more detailed study could be undertaken is social justice in Nursi's writings.

⁸⁰⁹ Nursi, *Kaynakli, Indeksli Risale-i Nur Külliyyati: İşarat ü'l-İcâz, Mesnevî-i Nuriya, Barla Lahikası, Kastamonu Lahikası, Emirdag Lahikası, Tarihçe Hayat ... ve Diğerleri.*, 2:1643.

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Appendix

APPENDIX 1: NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD IN ISLĀM

| Names in Transliterations | Meaning | Names in Transliterations | Meaning |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Allāh</i> | The God. The only one Almighty. He alone is worthy of worship. | <i>Al-Mubdī</i> | The Originator. He who creates all creatures initially without matter or model. |
| <i>Al-ʿAdl</i> | The Just. He who is Equitable. | <i>Al-Mughnī</i> | The Enricher. The Sufficer. |
| <i>Al-Ākhir</i> | The Last. | <i>Al-Muhaymīn</i> | The Guardian. He who watches over and protects all things. (Helper in Peril) |
| <i>Al-ʿAfū</i> | The Pardoner. He who pardons all who sincerely repents. | <i>Al-Muhsī</i> | The Appraiser. He who knows the number of every single thing in existence, even to infinity. |
| <i>Al-ʿAlīm</i> | The Knower of All. He who has full knowledge of all things. | <i>Al-Muʿīd</i> | The Restorer. He who recreates His creatures after He has annihilated them. |
| <i>Al-Aḥad</i> | The One. The only one. | <i>Al-Muʿizz</i> | The Bestower of Honours. He who confers honour and dignity. |
| <i>Al-Awwal</i> | The First. | <i>Al-Mujīb</i> | The Responder to Prayer. He who grants |

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| | | | the wishes who appeals to him. |
| <i>Al- 'Azīz</i> | The Mighty & Strong. | <i>Al-Muqīt</i> | The Nourisher. He who gives every creature its sustenance. |
| <i>Al- 'Azīm</i> | The Magnificent. The Most High. He who is Most Splendid. | <i>Al-Muqaddim</i> | The Expediter. He who brings forward whatever He wills (Forewarner). |
| <i>Al-Badī'</i> | The Incomparable. He who is without model or match, and who brings into being worlds of amazing wonder. | <i>Al-Muqsīt</i> | The Equitable One. He who does everything with proper balance and harmony. |
| <i>Al-Bā'ith</i> | The Resurrector. He who brings the dead to life, and raises them from their tombs. | <i>Al-Muqtadir</i> | The Creator of All Power. He who disposes at His will even of the strongest and mightiest of His creatures. |
| <i>Al-Bāqī</i> | The Everlasting One. Eternal (in the future). | <i>Al-Mumīt</i> | The Taker of Life. He who creates the death of a living creature. |
| <i>Al-Bāri'</i> | The Maker of Order (Skilled Worker). O Evolver who created all things so that each whole and its parts are in perfect conformity and harmony. | <i>Al-Muntaqīm</i> | The Avenger. He who justly inflicts upon wrongdoers the punishment they deserve. |
| <i>Al-Barr</i> | Source of all Goodness. He who | <i>Al-Muṣawwir</i> | The Shaper of Beauty. He who |

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| | treats His servants tolerantly, and whose goodness and kindness are very great indeed. | | designs all things, giving each its particular form and character (Sculptor). |
| <i>Al-Baṣīr</i> | The All-Seeing. To those who invoke this Name one hundred times between the obligatory and customary prayers in Friday congregation, Allah grants esteem in the eyes of others. | <i>Al-Muta'ālī</i> | The Supreme One. He is exalted in every respect, far beyond anything the mind could possibly attribute to His creatures. |
| <i>Al-Bāsīt</i> | The Reliever (Uncloser). He who releases, letting things expand. | <i>Al-Mutakabbir</i> | The Majestic. He who demonstrates His greatness in all things and in all ways. |
| <i>Al-Bātin</i> | The Hidden One. He who is hidden, concealed. | <i>Al-Muḍill</i> | The Humiliator. He who degrades and abases. |
| <i>Al-Ḍārr</i> | The Distresser The Creator of the Harmful. He who creates things that cause pain and injury. | <i>An-Nāfi'</i> | The Creator of Good. He who creates things that yields advantages and benefit. |
| <i>Al-Fattāḥ</i> | The Opener. He who opens the solution to all problems and makes things easy. | <i>Al-Nūr</i> | The Light. He who gives light to all the worlds, who illuminates the faces, minds and hearts of His servants. |
| <i>Al-Ghaḥḥār</i> | The Forgiving. He who is always ready to forgive. | <i>Al-Qābiḍ</i> | The Constrictor. He who constricts and restricts. |
| <i>Al-Ghaḥūr</i> | The Forgiver and | <i>Al-Qādir</i> | The All Powerful. He |

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| | Hides Faults. | | who is Able to do what He wills as He wills (Providence). |
| <i>Al-Ghāni</i> | The Rich One. He who is infinitely rich and completely Independent. | <i>Al-Qahhār</i> | The Subduer. He who dominates all things, and prevails upon them to do whatever He wills (Dominant). |
| <i>Al-Hādī</i> | The Guide. He who provides guidance. | <i>Al-Qawī</i> | The Most Strong. The Possessor of All Strength. |
| <i>Al-Ḥāfīz</i> | The Preserver. He who guards all creatures in every detail. | <i>Al-Qayyūm</i> | The Self-Existing One. He who maintains the heavens, the earth, and everything that exists. |
| <i>Al-Ḥayy</i> | The Ever Living One. The living who knows all things and whose strength is sufficient for everything. | <i>Al-Quddūs</i> | The Pure One. He who is free from all errors. |
| <i>Al-Ḥakīm</i> | The Perfectly Wise. He whose every command and action is pure wisdom. | <i>Ar-Rafī</i> | The Exalter. He who raises up. |
| <i>Al-Ḥakam</i> | The Judge. He who judges and makes right prevails. | <i>Ar-Raḥīm</i> | The All Compassionate. He who acts with extreme kindness. |
| <i>Al-ʿAlī</i> | The Highest. The Exalted. | <i>Ar-Raḥmān</i> | The All Merciful. He who wills goodness and mercy for all His creatures. |
| <i>Al-Ḥalīm</i> | The Forbearing. He who is Most Clement. | <i>Al-Raqīb</i> | The Watchful One. |

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| <i>Al-Ḥamīd</i> | The Praiseworthy. All praise belongs to Him, and who alone do the tongues of all creation laud. | <i>Al-Rashīd</i> | The Righteous Teacher. He who moves all things in accordance with His eternal plan, bringing them without error and with order and wisdom to their ultimate destiny (Unerring). |
| <i>Al-Ḥaqq</i> | The Truth. He who's being endures unchangingly. | <i>Al-Ra'ūf</i> | The Kind. He who is very compassionate (Indulgent). |
| <i>Al-Ḥasīb</i> | The Accounter. He who knows every details. | <i>Al-Razzāq</i> | The Sustainer. He who provides all things useful to His creatures. |
| <i>Al-Jabbār</i> | The Compelling. He who repairs all broken thing, and completes that which is incomplete. | <i>Al-Ṣabūr</i> | The Patient One. He who is characterized by infinite patience. |
| <i>Al-Jalīl</i> | The Glorious. He who is Lord of Majesty and Grandeur. | <i>Al-Salām</i> | The Source of Peace. He who frees His servants from all danger. |
| <i>Al-Jāmi'</i> | The Gatherer. He who brings together what He wills, when He wills, where He wills. | <i>As-Ṣamad</i> | The Eternal. He who is the only recourse for the ending of need and the removal of affliction. |
| <i>Al-Kabīr</i> | The Greatest. He who supremely great. | <i>Al-Sami'</i> | The Hearer of All. Allah takes care of all the needs of those who invoke this glorious Name one hundred times. |
| <i>Al-Karīm</i> | The Generous. He | <i>Al-Shāhid</i> | The Witness. He who |

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| | whose generosity is most abundant. | | is present everywhere and observes all things. |
| <i>Al-Khabīr</i> | The All Aware. He who has the knowledge of inner & most secret aspects of all things. | <i>Al-Shakūr</i> | The Rewarder of Thankfulness. He who gratefully rewards good deeds (Appreciator). |
| <i>Al-Khāfiẓ</i> | The Abaser. He who brings down, diminishes. | <i>Al-Tawwāb</i> | The Acceptor to Repentance. He who is ever ready to accept repentance and to forgive sins (Relenting). |
| <i>Al-Khāliq</i> | The Creator. He who brings from non-being into being, creating all things in such a way that He determines their existence and the conditions and events they are to experience. | <i>Al-Wakīl</i> | The Trustee / Guardian. He who manages the affairs of those who duly commit them to His charge, and who looks after them better than they could themselves. |
| <i>Al-Laṭīf</i> | The Subtle One. He who knows the minutest subtleties of all things. | <i>Al-Wālī</i> | The Protecting Friend. He who is a nearest friend to His good servants. |
| <i>Al-Majīd</i> | The Majestic One. He whose glory is most great and most high. | <i>Al-Wahhāb</i> | The Giver of All. He who constantly bestows blessings of every kind. |
| <i>Al-Majīd</i> | The Glorious. He, whose dignity and glory are most great, and whose generosity and munificence are bountiful. | <i>Al-Wāḥid</i> | The Unique. He who is Single, absolutely without partner or equal in His Essence, Attributes, Actions, Names and Decrees. |
| <i>Al-Mālik</i> | The Absolute | <i>Al-Wājid</i> | The Finder. He who |

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| | Ruler. The Ruler of the entire universe (King of Kings). | | finds what He wishes when He wishes (Perceiving). |
| <i>Mālik-ul-Mulk</i> | The Owner of All. The King of the Kingdom. | <i>Al-Wadūd</i> | The Loving One. He who loves His good servants, and bestows his compassion upon them. |
| <i>Al-Māni‘</i> | The Preventer of Harm. The Withholder. | <i>Al-Wālī</i> | The Governor. The Protecting Friend. He who administers this vast universe and all its passing phenomena. |
| <i>Al-Mu‘min</i> | The Inspirer of Faith. He who awakes the light of faith in our hearts. | <i>Al-Wasi‘</i> | The All Comprehending. He who has limitless capacity and abundance. |
| <i>Al-Matīn</i> | The Firm. He who is very steadfast. | <i>Al-Wārith</i> | The Inheritor of All. He who is the Real Owner of all riches. |
| <i>Al-Muhyī</i> | The Giver of Life. He who confers life, gives vitality, revives. | <i>Al-Zāhir</i> | The Manifest One. He who is Evident. |
| <i>Al-Mu‘akhhir</i> | The Delayer. He who sets back or delays whatever He wills. | <i>Zal-Jalāli- Wal-Ikrām</i> | The Lord of Majesty and Bounty. He who possesses both greatness and gracious magnanimity. |