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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

BADR AL-DĪN IBN JAMĀ'AH
AND THE HIGHEST GOOD OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY

BY

OMAR QURESHI

CHICAGO, IL

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CHAPTER ONE

ISLAMIC EDUCATION: TRADITION, PRACTICES, AND CULTIVATION OF THE SOUL

As a teacher in an Islamic school in North America, I recall how often I would hear fellow teachers and parents ask the question “Are we an Islamic school or a Muslim school?” This question was often raised when encountering a situation such as the behavior of students or the lackluster practice of some dimension of the faith by a fellow teacher, administrator, or board member. In this case, the term “Islamic” signified an idealized conception of the faith and its practice. This was juxtaposed with the term “Muslim” which signified the present communal embodiment of the faith; invariably not the idealized conception. Whenever I pressed further as to what was intended by the term “Islamic,” a multitude of responses with only agreement on the broad general creedal doctrines and practices would be presented.

The questions over the use of “Islamic” and “Muslim” represent a lack of consensus amongst educators over the signification of the term. It presents one of the major challenges when developing an Islamic philosophy of education due to the very term “Islamic” being employed and conceived of in often contradictory, vague, and a multitude of ways. Without a conception of the object that the term “Islamic” signifies that goes beyond the general, broad themes that the expression “Islamic” captures, the

term does not serve as a viable, coherent analytical category of enquiry. The question arises as to why, then, do Muslims and non-Muslims use the term to begin with? In using the term, does it serve their purposes that they intend? Is there something that separates Islamic education from other conceptions of education that makes using the terms “Islamic” necessary? If so, what is or are those qualities that make Islamic education unique requiring it to be used and thereby rendering it a viable analytical category of enquiry? This study aspires to address this situation by suggesting an approach to engage the analytic category of ‘Islamic’ and addressing these questions by studying the thought of the Shāfi‘ī jurist, judge, and educationist of the Mamluk period, Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamā‘ah (d. 733/1333) and his *Tadhkirat al-sāmi‘ wa-l-mutakallim fī ādāb l-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘āllim*, a seminal work capturing mature and representative educational thought in the Islamic world. Through his work, this study will suggest answers to the questions posed above in the hope of moving the conversation forward amongst Muslim educators in the North America. It aims to achieve this by providing a framework and approach in the idea of the Islamic tradition to answer these and future questions that Muslim educators will encounter.

In Michael S. Merry’s assessment of Islamic schools, he describes Islamic schools in Western societies as currently facing a crises in (a) the “disjuncture between Islamic educational ideals (as expressed by Muslim philosophers of education), the aspirations of school administrators, and the manner in which Islamic school operate” and (b) the struggle of Islamic schools “to define what is distinctive about an Islamic education” (Merry 2007, 47). This disjuncture and lack of clarity about what is distinctive about Islamic education is manifests in the current state of Islamic studies curricula and in the

mission statements of Islamic educational institutions in North America. In recent years, there have been efforts to develop a comprehensive Islamic Studies curriculum for Islamic school in North America. Yet they are not being widely implemented while teachers and administrators remain unsatisfied. Regarding the state of the curriculum, Merry observes that, “no comprehensive set of curricular materials for Islamic school presently exists” (Merry 2007, 39). Craig Joseph and Barnaby Riedel further observe that “one of the primary difficulties of religious instruction, however, is the lack of systematized, consensual religious curriculum. Indeed, after more than a decade of operation, Universal School still finds itself without an Islamic curriculum” (Joseph and Riedel 2008, 164). This state of Islamic studies curriculum is a resultant condition of the lack of clarity of amongst Muslim educators in North America on the signification of the term “Islamic”.

When studying the mission statements of Islamic schools in North America one does observe a degree of uniformity amongst them. For example, one school describes their mission as having students “understand *tawhid*, develop a strong moral character, develop a strong sense of responsibility, interact with the community and global issues with an Islamic frame of mind, and recognize Islam as the only viable solution to life’s problems and challenges.” Another school seeks to “cultivate an Islamic spirit in each student” in addition to high academic achievement while another aims to “help Muslim children excel in learning and compete with their counterparts in passing the Standards of Learning as mandated by the Department of Education. Lastly, a New England school “guides the children to lead decent contemporary lives, enrich their families, serve their community, tolerate differences, think critically, promote collaboration and respect

others. School activities help the children develop individual talent, self-esteem and leadership characteristics and offer an outlet for demonstrating creativity” (Merry 2007, 59). One notices that the mention of Islam and Muslim either is at the level of identity, as in *Muslim* children, or are very general and not elaborated as to what specific aspect of the term is being referred to, as in the *Islamic* frame of mind. The rest of the items such as self-esteem, talent, tolerance, and thinking critically are, as Merry observes, “unsurprisingly Western in origin” (Merry 2007, 60) and are not conceived nor expressed in a manner that is distinctively Islamic or grounded in the Islamic tradition.

I identify two approaches adopted scholars and others engaged in tackling the question of the signification of the term “Islamic” in Islamic education or Islamic schools: a universalist account and a particularist account. The universalist account, in the face of the multiplicity encountered regarding conceptions of the term “Islamic”, seeks an essence or a unifying element that is common to these various conceptions. The particularist account embraces the various conceptions of “Islamic” and is not necessarily concerned with what binds all of them together. This is due to adherents of this approach holding that every instance of the term “Islamic” is constructed and determined by the context in which it was formed, thus rendering each conception as distinct from another with nothing that will bring the two together under the analytical category “Islamic”. Barnaby Riedel’s study of character education at an Islamic school in North America reveals a common approach to Islamic education conceived in terms of developing Muslim American character. Ethical character, in this conception, is universalized to be as inclusive as possible to avoid engaging the internal legal, theological, and spiritual diversity amongst Muslims. This represents what I termed a universalist approach to

Islamic education that seeks to locate a common ground to all educational activity that is termed “Islamic”. This universalist approach to Islamic education teaches students “how to be good people, good Muslims, where the concept of “good” is believed to be both universal and self-evident” (Riedel 2009, 117). Here the purpose of Islamic education is, to “be good role models, be good practicing Muslims where you follow basic values about maintaining your family, taking care of each other, contributing to the community, helping the community to grow, be an asset to society and making sure that Islam is there helping to do that” (Ibid, 118). There is little here that is substantial on the term good that provides justification to use the appendage “Islamic”. Conceived in a universalist manner, the signification of “Islam” in Islamic education in this universalist approach has ended up with the universal values being conflated with “American” or “Western” values in the minds of educators and administrators in Islamic schools. Riedel quotes the principal at the Islamic school stating, “They’re just very basic simple values that tie into the core moral and ethical standards that every human being should have” (Ibid, 124).” The universalist approach, although allowing Islamic schools to avoid having to engage the diversity present in Islam, also renders the signifier “Islamic” in Islamic education not referring to any object or category that is distinct and identifiable. An additional major drawback of this approach is that seems not to engage the historical dimensions of Muslim education. Thus “Islamic,” in this approach, ends up being an analytic term with no meaning. It is no surprise then that many educators in Islamic schools “describe their school as very much like a typical public school, only with Islamic elementary added on” and even use the same textbooks as other secular public schools (Merry 2007, 61).

Acknowledging that attempting to define Islamic education “is a contested enterprise,” Nadeem Memon presents another approach to the term “Islamic” which maintains that “there cannot be a single conception of the ‘Islamic’ without limiting the complexity and diversity among Muslims” (Memon 2009, 182). Farid Panjwani is a representative of the second approach, holding that due to the term’s obviousness, its meaning is taken for granted and conception of the term “Islam” that underpins educational discourse needs to be examined. He recommends an approach that emphasises human agency when answering this question which then brings about a shift from focusing on Islam to focusing on Muslims. He states, “An appreciation of the role of human agency could lead to the recognition that while Islam may have ideals, they were continuously formed and reformed in the interaction between the revelatory text and the concrete realities of Muslims” (Panjwani 2004, 26). This approach ushers in historical dimensions into the question of Islamic or Muslim education. What is appreciated about this approach is the acknowledging of the historical and sociological dimensions that shape how we answer what is Islamic or Muslim education. Yet this approach leaves us without any tools to generate any answers that will find acceptance among the Muslim community. On what basis should we adopt a particular conception of what constitutes Islamic education? What Panjwani’s approach provides us with is an appreciation for the multiplicity of answers to the question of Islamic education, yet it is lacking the necessary epistemological tools and any framework of authoritative standards by which one can assess which approach which allow Islamic schools to meet the goal of in being a viable alternative to secular educational programs and institutions. Thus one instantiation of the term “Islamic” is on equal footing as another instantiation. This approach suffers

from not being able to explain debates amongst Muslims regarding what doctrines, practices are Islamic, and what is not.¹ Nor does it account for the various nuances on how the term “Islamic” is used in scholarly discourse where a conception would be in logical contradiction with other conceptions.² Under this approach, “Islamic education” results in being a meaningless signifier leaving the discourse with no object of study to which the analytic category “Islamic” signifies that can contain these diverse conceptions of “Islamic”.

Memon does not favor Panjwani’s suggestion of Muslim education due to it not taking into consideration “the *sanad* (chain of transmission) through which the tradition of Islam remains intact today” (Memon 2009, 182) and that it leads to a relativistic approach to addressing educational aims and objectives.³ For Memon, the approach to answering the question of what is distinct about Islamic education ultimately rests in identifying what is common to all loci of Islamic education in the Muslim world, both present and historically. What is common in the loci of education is the “sacred presence” which constitutes the principles of the Islamic tradition and thereby constitutes the distinct quality of Islamic education regardless of any particular form. This universalist

¹ Talal Asad (2009) elaborates on this point stating that this approach “will not do, if only because there are everywhere Muslims who say that what other people take to be Islam is not really Islam at all. This paradox cannot be resolved simply by saying that the claim as to what is Islam will be admitted by the anthropologist only where it applies to the informant's own beliefs and practices, because it is generally impossible to define beliefs and practices in terms of an isolated subject. A Muslim's beliefs about the beliefs and practices of others are his own beliefs. And like all such beliefs, they animate and are sustained by his social relations with others.”

² See Marmura (1983) for his discussion on the term “Islamic” regarding Islamic philosophy. Here he distinguishes between using the term “Islamic” in two senses: as referring to belonging to the culture and civilization of Islam where even Christian philosophers are included, and as referring to adherents of the Islamic religion where the philosophers have reconciled their philosophy with the Qur’an.

³ A *sanad*, or an *isnād*, a term usually associated with hadith studies, here refers to pedigree of teachers that extends to an author of a text or back to the Prophet Muhammad. It demonstrates that the student has studied with qualified teachers of a particular science and imparts that authority to the student who will go on to be included in the *isnād*.

account of Islamic education suffers from a lack of any substantial content that is distinctly Islamic about this sacred presence. The notion of a sacred presence is shared amongst many adherents of different faiths yet the question remains as to what is distinct about this conception of a sacred presence that renders the term “Islamic” as a viable analytical category of enquiry.

The current situation of Islamic schools in North America should be viewed in the broader context of educational institutions in Muslim countries around the globe as well as in light of the secularization trajectory of educational institutions in the United States. Secularization is more of a process than an event. Scholars have identified various sources that push an educational institution that was once religious towards secularization. Additionally, there are marks of secularization that indicate that an institution is at some stage of the secularization process. William Ringerberg’s work is particularly useful on this topic. One of the marks of secularization is that the institution’s goals are less theological and more sociological in nature which is expressed in language that is equivocal and non-confessional. This is coupled with less emphasis on its church affiliation and interdenominational identification. (Ringerberg 2006)

This mark of secularization can be observed in the mission statements of educational institutions affiliated with Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. In a 1995 study of 52 Jesuit university mission statements, there was “no reference to the formation of Catholics” along with “no reference to the explicit transmission of the Catholic faith and a specific place for theology is mentioned only in ten of the documents” (Arthur 2006, 36). In general, theological grounding for any distinctiveness of the educational programs is lost while some mission statements do not even mention the Catholic Church.

Protestant institutions mission statements focused on values while a number of them did emphasize the explicit Christian distinctiveness of their educational program. For example, Northwestern College's educational program exists so their students learn how to live in the world as Christians. (Arthur 2006)

When it comes to Muslim institutions globally, one finds that “most governments in Muslim states have adopted the Western model of the university with the belief that in so doing Muslim societies would make progress. The study of religion, i.e. Islam, was largely left to the mosques, private houses and the *madrassas*” (Arthur 2006, 58). Thus what one has is an institution whose ethos may be Islamic but “the curriculum and methods remain entirely secular in orientation” (Arthur 2006, 59). In response to this phenomenon, many Islamic universities were created to ensure that this secularizing trend is avoided and in their mission statements Islam takes center place. The International Islamic University in Islamabad aims “to reconstruct human thought in all its forms on the foundations of Islam” and “to develop Islamic character and personality among the students.” Similarly, the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur intends to “integrate Islamic revealed knowledge and values in all academic disciplines and educational activities” (Arthur 2006, 60). Finally, the Aga Khan University “emphasises intellectual freedom, autonomy, distinction in scholarship and even pluralism” based in Islam. While it is to be noted that what is intended by Islam is not elaborated nor is the approach to reconstructing knowledge on the foundations of Islam stated, the more important point is the emphasis on the sociological dimensions of the institutions' goals which is a salient mark of secularization. The trends we see in Islamic schools in North

America regarding the nebulous conceptions of Islam are part of a larger challenge that all religious Islamic educational institutions have been facing.

With the universalist and particularist approaches not being able to resolve signification of “Islamic” in Islamic education, the question that arises from this impasse is: what approach can we adopt to account for the signification of the term “Islamic” in Islamic education that will allow us then to develop an identity of Islamic educational institutions that will not end up on the secularization trajectory? This approach must account for the multiple conceptions of “Islamic” amongst Muslim educators yet, in order to serve institutional identities, it must also provide standards that allow one to determine what is and is not signified by the category “Islamic”. Additionally, the approach should capture elements that constitute the term “Islamic” and render it a viable analytic category of enquiry.

Additionally, David Bakhurst notes that any educational theory and practice can “scarcely avoid commitment, explicit or implicit, to a conception of the self and its relation to the world when adopting views of knowledge, learning, and understanding, when...confronting questions of difference and cultural identity in contemporary educational institutions” (Bakhurst, 2011, 53). When composing or studying any educational institution’s mission statement, curriculum, identity, or theory of knowledge, a self is assumed in the backdrop of which educational enquiries are carried out. This rather obvious point deserves to be highlighted because in deliberating over issues in educational thought, it often happens that all parties mistakenly assume they share the same conception of the human self. In turn, it often leads to subsidiary educational issues being misconceived or being assigned a primacy that is unwarranted. This occurs usually

because of the use of common terms such as virtues, dispositions, scholastic skills, critical thinking, and other terms found in mission statements and curriculum. The presence of common terms gives the impression that the conception of the self is also shared. In recognizing that a commitment to a conception of the self underlies all educational deliberations, it is hoped that this will serve to adjust our thinking and approach in contemporary educational enquiries.

One further point about Bakhurst's observation on the fundamental role of the self in educational philosophy needs to be clarified. To identify that a conception of the self is assumed in the act of education is one thing, yet understanding education to be the act of self-cultivation seems to be a different matter.

To this end, I will make use of the idea of an 'Islamic tradition' as an analytic category of enquiry as well as reconceiving the notion of education as education of the self or cultivation of the soul as approaches that will allow us to move beyond the current impasse the discourse on Islamic education finds itself in. When looking at the mission statements of various educational institutions, the focus of the statements seems to be on the cultivation of specific social capacities a graduate of the institution will possess. Looking beyond the specific capacities such as toleration, critical thinking, and being able to interact with the community, I identify that what is actually occurring here is the type of self the institution seeks to cultivate in its students. By reconceiving education as self cultivation, I aim to locate institutional identity *primarily* in the self that it seeks to cultivate. Institutional identity is not to be located primarily in the curriculum, a theology class, the institution's architecture, a set of texts, or some strategy for communal engagement. By conceiving of education as the self cultivation, we now view that the

primary aim of every educational institution is to cultivate a particular conception of the self in its students which underlies the specific capacities of critical thinking or being able to engage the community. Thus, educational institutional identity should be examined with the understanding of education as self cultivation. By locating identity in the conception of the self, one is able to compare the Islamic tradition's conception of the self with other conceptions in order to assess whether an educational institution is Islamic or not. One of the earliest conception of education as self cultivation, where the self is identified as the soul, is found in *Alcibiades I* by Plato which we will be examining in this chapter.

In our enquiry of the conception of the self, as mentioned before, we will be employing the analytic category of the Islamic tradition to avoid the challenges posed by the universalist and particularist approaches currently employed by those addressing the question of the distinctive nature of Islamic education. The term tradition is frequently juxtaposed with modernity where the latter connotes progress and future directed thinking that entails a break from the past. I will be employing tradition as a form of rational enquiry as developed by the Thomistic philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue* and *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* which transcends common notions of a tradition that arise when used in relation to modernity. Central to MacIntyre's conception of a tradition is the idea of a practice. MacIntyre's conception of practices has embedded in it the notion of goods that are internal and external to practices which the practice aims to achieve. Education is to be conceived of as a practice which has goods that any practice aims to achieve, a *telos*. I claim that in providing an Islamic philosophy of education, which should also address what is signified by the term "Islamic", one needs

to enquire as to what are the internal goods education seeks to secure as conceived of in the Islamic tradition. This is accomplished by conceiving of teaching and learning as a practice with internal and external goods. These goods directly arise from the *telos* of the human being as developed in the Islamic tradition and are arranged in a relational manner to each other and in a manner that is also hierarchical thus culminating in the highest good of Islamic education – which is the cultivation of the soul that possesses *adab*. It is in the highest good of Islamic education where identity of any educational activity resides. Thus, when seeking the identity of an educational institution, we are presuming a conception of Islamic education to which we are really enquiring about the *internal goods* of Islamic education.

The remaining sections of this chapter will be devoted to developing MacIntyre's notion of a tradition, and conceiving of education – the act of instructing and learning – as the practice of cultivating the soul as developed in *Alcibiades I* by Plato. The concept the MacIntyrean notion of a tradition of inquiry with Asad's understanding of Islam as a discursive tradition will be employed to develop the concept of an Islamic tradition as an analytical category of enquiry. From there we will argue that the Islamic education is the practice where the cultivation of the soul that possesses *adab* is its highest good.

MacIntyre and the Concept of a Tradition

Arguably one of the major philosophers of our time, Alasdair MacIntyre summarizes his intellectual biography as a philosopher stating,

[M]y life as an academic philosopher falls into three parts. The twenty-two years from 1949, when I became a graduate student of philosopher at Manchester University, until 1971 were a period, as it now appears retrospectively, of heterogeneous, badly organized, sometimes fragmented and often frustrating and

messy enquiries, from which nonetheless in the end I learned a lot. From 1971, shortly after I emigrated to the United States, until 1977 was an interim period of sometimes painfully self-critical reflection, strengthened by coming to critical terms with such very different perspectives on moral philosophy as those afforded by Davidson in one way and by Gadamer in quite another. From 1977 onwards I have been engaged in a single project to which *After Virtue*, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* and *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* are central, a Project described by one of my colleagues as that of writing *An Interminably Long History of Ethics* (MacIntyre 1998, 268-269).

MacIntyre sets the foundations of his understanding of tradition and its role in ethics in *After Virtue* and *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* He continues to build upon these foundations in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* and *Dependent Rational Animals*, published in 1999, thus forming a quartet that represents the major features of his thought. In outlining MacIntyre's conception of a tradition for our purpose, we will focus mainly on *After Virtue* and *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* MacIntyre's life experience in the interim period grants us special insight as to the problem that his concept of a tradition serves as a solution for – the “very different perspectives on moral philosophy.” This is similar to the current state of discourse on Islamic education with rival conceptions of what constitutes Islamic education leading to curricular problems and those conceptions not being actualized in school settings.

MacIntyre develops his conception of a tradition by entering through what he terms practices, which is the central part of any tradition. A practice is, “any coherent and complex form of socially established human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended” (MacIntyre 1984, 187). We will start out analysis

of this conception of a practice by focusing on the role of goods in a practice. For MacIntyre, a practice is never to be confused for a set of technical skills. MacIntyre elaborates that bricklaying is a skill whereas architecture is a practice; throwing a football well is a technical skill whereas the game of football is a practice. Every practice has embedded in it goods and being a particular activity of human beings assumes the presence of a will and intention on part of the agent towards these goods. It is the goods embedded in a practice that a person engaged in the practice intends to acquire. Goods partly form and constitute the *telos* of a practice. Yet there are goods that are internal to a practice and goods that are external.

In clarifying the notions of goods in relation to a practice, MacIntyre takes up the example of a child who wants to play the game of chess, which he considers to be a practice. The child does not want to learn how to play the game yet does have a strong desire for candy with no money to purchase it. The child is told that if he will play once a week, he will get fifty cents and if he wins, he will get fifty cents more. Upon hearing this, the child is now motivated to play the game and aims to win as well. MacIntyre observes that “so long as it is the candy alone which provides the child with a good reason for playing chess, the child has no reason not to cheat and every reason to cheat, provided he or she can do so successfully” (MacIntyre 1984, 188). His point in this observation is that the game of chess has goods such as the development of certain analytical skills, sharpening ones strategic thinking, and in this case, candy. The certain analytical skills are particular to the game of chess and can only be acquired by playing chess. The money for candy can be acquired by winning a game of chess or by some other means having nothing to do with the game of chess. If a child decides to cheat in

the game, he or she will only acquire the good of candy and not acquire the goods that are internal to the game of chess. Internal goods belong to a certain practice and can only be acquired through that practice. External goods, on the other hand, can be acquired through the practice or by means other than that particular practice. Every practice has internal and external goods. Someone may undertake a practice and may not intend to acquire its internal goods at the initial stages of a practice. At a later stage, upon realizing the practice's internal goods, they will aim to acquire them. According to MacIntyre goods may internal for two reasons, first because "we can only specify them in terms of chess or some other game of that specific kind and by means of examples from such games," and second "because they can only be identified and recognized by the experience of participating in the practice in question. Those who lack the relevant experience are incompetent thereby as judges of internal goods" (ibid., 188-189).

In addition to a practice having goods that are specific to that practice and can only be identified by those participating in the practice, a MacIntyrean practice is constituted by standards of excellence and rules that are directed towards the acquiring of its internal goods. These standards of excellence and the goods internal to the practice constitute an authority that one entering into a practice must acknowledge and to which one must subject one's own attitudes and preferences. One of the important consequences of this aspect of a practice is that subjectivist judgements are excluded from the realm of a practice as entering into a practice inaugurates a person into a community of practitioners with a relationship with each other. There is then a unifying aspect to a practice. MacIntyre notes that these standards of excellence are susceptible for revision. Yet the one entering the practice must accept the standards as the best standards so far.

Practices have embedded in them a conception of authoritative standards of excellence and goods that form what Talal Asad identifies as authoritative discourses in discursive traditions on which more will be elaborated later.

A final aspect of the MacIntyrean practice that remains to be explored is that a practice can be carried out in successful or unsuccessful manner as determined by its standards of excellence and internal goods. To conduct a practice in an excellent manner means that it is done in accordance with its standard of excellence and to achieve the goods that are internal to the practice. In order for this to occur, MacIntyre identifies three virtues that are necessary of any practice. They are the virtues of justice, courage and honesty. In the example of the child playing chess, if he or she were to win by cheating, only the external good of fifty cents would be achieved, yet the internal goods of chess would remain unachieved. Thus in this case the practice of the game of chess would not be carried out successfully due to the absence of the virtue of honesty. The virtue of justice in a practice requires “that we treat others in respect of merit or desert according to uniform and impersonal standards” (ibid., 192) embedded in the practice. MacIntyre provides the example of a professor grading two students’ papers fairly according to the standards of the practice while grading another student’s paper based on her blue eyes. The relationship of the professor with the female student is different than his relationship to the other two students. The virtue of courage entails “the care and concern for individuals, communities and causes which is so crucial to so much in practices” (ibid., 192) in order for practices to be carried out with excellence.

Before moving on to how a practice is configured within a tradition, it is important to highlight one of the most distinctive features of a MacIntyrean practice

namely a practice's historical dimension. The historical dimension of a particular practice appears when looking at the relationship between a practice and its goods or ends. A MacIntyrean practice such as painting or physics not intrinsically possess any specific goals or ends, rather its goods or ends "are transmitted by the history of the activity" (ibid., 194). The question arises as to how the goods of a practice are determined and transmitted. It was observed before that when one enters into a practice, one enters into a relationship with other members of that practice – the community of practitioners. Yet it is not only current practitioners that one has a relationship with, "but also with those who have preceded us in the practice particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point. It is thus the achievement, and *a fortiori* the authority, of a tradition which I then confront and from which I have to learn" (ibid., 194). When entering into a practice, one enters into a community of practitioners that constitute authoritative figures, historical and current, of the practice. It is these authority figures' enquiries that contribute to determining and transmitting the standards of excellence and ends of a practice. When one enters into a practice, one learns from the authorities the standards of excellence and ends of that practice.

Yet those authority figure's roles relate to more than the standards of excellence of a practice. MacIntyre explains,

The authority of a master within a craft⁴ is both more and other than a matter of exemplifying the best standards so far. It is also and most importantly a matter of knowing how to go further and especially how to direct others towards going further, using what can be learned from the tradition afforded by the past to move towards the *telos* of fully perfected work. It is in thus knowing how to link past and future that those with authority are able to draw upon tradition, to interpret and reinterpret it so that its directedness towards the *telos* of that particular craft becomes apparent in new and characteristically unexpected ways. And it is by the

⁴ MacIntyre, in his later works such as *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* where he further develops his concept of a tradition, uses the notion of a craft as being equated with intellectual inquiry.

ability to teach others how to learn this type of knowing how that the power of the master within the community of a craft is legitimated as rational authority (MacIntyre 1990, 65-66).

The authorities of a practice play an important role towards new initiates of the practice. New initiates learn from them, not only the standards of the practice, but also the trajectory of the practice's development and continuation. The development of the practice involves engaging its history and moving the practice towards its *telos*.

In *After Virtue*, MacIntyre's conception of a tradition is in the context of the disquieting suggestion that all we have lost a unifying framework in which our moral discourse takes place. Instead, all we have are fragments from past discourses that are now lost resulting in a lack of coherence of contemporary moral discourse. In response to this condition, MacIntyre develops the tradition of virtues in which a core concept of virtues that unifies this tradition. His conception of tradition and practices in this context serve as the basis of his developments in his later works. In an important passage describing the three stages in the logical development of the core conception of a virtue MacIntyre states,

The first stage requires a background account of what I shall call a practice, the second account of what I have already characterized as the narrative order of a single human life and the third an account of a good deal fuller than I have given up to now of what constitutes a moral tradition. Each later stage presupposes the earlier, but not *vice versa*. Each earlier stage is both modified by and reinterpreted in the light of, but also provides an essential constituent of each later stage (MacIntyre 1984, 186-187).

We have already explored the first stage; that of a practice. Practices are not all essentially good; rather a MacIntyrean practice may result or be put to evil uses. A practice, "under certain conditions be a source of evil: the desire to excel and to win can

corrupt, a man may be so engrossed by his painting that he neglects his family, what was initially an honorable resort to war can issue in savage cruelty” (ibid., 200). Thus practices, its standards and goods, are subject to moral scrutiny which situates practices in a larger moral context. The larger context of a practice arises because the question the goods of practices and their authoritative basis: where do the good of practices derive their authority? One possible source of authority is to be found in individual choice. When a person is confronted with multiple rival conceptions of goods, it is the individual qua individual who has to make that choice of which conception is to be adopted. This choice, however, is being made in the absence of a criterion outside of the individual that can be invoked which does not solve the problem of arbitrariness.

Another possibility is to consider a practice and its goods in the greater context of “of an overriding conception of the *telos* of a whole human life, conceived as a unity” (ibid., 202). MacIntyre asks us to consider the virtue of justice. The Aristotelian conception of justice is the giving of each person his or her due desert in which being worthy of the desert is contingent upon contributing to the achievement of goods which constitute the foundations of a community. “But the goods internal to practices, including the goods internal to the practice of making and sustaining forms of community, need to be ordered and evaluated in some way if we are to assess relative desert. Thus any substantive application of an Aristotelian concept of justice *requires an understanding of goods and of the goods that goes beyond the multiplicity of goods which inform practices* [my italics]” (ibid., 202). In other words, the internal goods of a practice are situated in the larger context of other goods that are informed by a unified conception of the *telos* of the good life. It is the *telos* that serves as the constellation of goods which inform the

goods internal to practices by setting them in a hierarchy with the other goods. This constellation of goods serve also serves as the context in which an individual makes his or her choice when confronted with multiple rival conceptions of goods solving the problem of arbitrariness.

At this point, with the understanding of practices and how they are embedded in a larger context of a unitary conception of the *telos* of human life, we are able to attend to MacIntyre's concept of a tradition as a tradition of enquiry. Nowhere does MacIntyre provide a complete definition of a tradition. Rather, he builds the concept of a tradition in his works and he develops various dimensions of a tradition throughout. We will be bringing those various dimensions as they relate to our purpose here of developing that category of an Islamic tradition as MacIntyre initially builds the concept of a moral tradition moving on to an intellectual tradition of enquiry; thus not all of his discussion bear on our task here. In *After Virtue*, in answering the question as to what constitutes a tradition, MacIntyre starts by noting that we should avoid using a Burkean notion of tradition where it is juxtaposed to reason and conflict where tradition is conceived only in the singular and associated with conservatism. If reasoning takes place in the larger constellation of a *telos* of human life, tradition cannot be the contrary of reason. In fact, for MacIntyre, "all reasoning takes place within the context of some traditional mode of thought, transcending though criticism and invention the limitations of what had hitherto been reasoned in that tradition; this is as true of modern physics as of medieval logic." (ibid., 222). One of the major areas of what is reasoned in a tradition "are the goods the pursuit of which gives to that tradition its particular point and purpose" (ibid., 222). This argument over goods includes the goods of human life and the internal goods of

practices. MacIntyre provides the examples of a university and a hospital as institutions that bear a tradition of practices where its practitioners will be engaged in a continuous argument as to what a university is and what are the goods of medicine. Arguments of the goods are constituted by a historical dimension and an engagement with authoritative masters, both past and current, of a practice and the employment of reason. This leads to a conception of a tradition as, “an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition” (ibid., 222).

MacIntyre’s emphasis on the historical dimension of a tradition and its relation to practices is appreciated in that the history of a practice, with its standards of excellence and authority, is “embedded in and made intelligible in terms of the larger and longer history of the tradition *through which the practice in its present form was conveyed to us* [my italics]” (ibid., 222). In other words, practices are constituent elements of traditions. The goods of practices and their histories can only be understood against the backdrop the tradition. Thus in attempting to understand a practice, we must take into account its history, but also view it in light of the history of the tradition that bears that practice and embodies. Thus far we see that a MacIntyrean conception of a tradition is bearer of practices of enquiry embedded with standards of excellence, internal goods, and authorities where reasoning takes place in the framework of the goods of a practice as arranged within the goods and *telos* of the tradition in the practice belongs.

What remains to be explored are the substantive elements of a tradition of enquiry such as tradition-constituted rationality, truth, first principles, the enquiry process, authority, and how a tradition develops and changes. A central topos in MacIntyre’s works is the existence of rival claims and conceptions of the virtues such as justice,

patience, conceptions of the good life, and moral questions that are irresolvable. In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (hereafter *WJ?WR?*) the Enlightenment's solution is the focus of MacIntyre's development of the substantive elements of a tradition, the foundations of which he developed in *After Virtue*. It was a major aim of the Enlightenment project, as a solution to the irresolvable rival conceptions, to create a public realm where the rival conceptions would be debated. They would be debated with "standards and methods of rational justification by which alternative courses of action in every sphere of life could be adjudged just or unjust, rational or irrational, enlightened or unenlightened" (MacIntyre 1990, 6). The standards of rationality were understood as a measure by which all rival conceptions would be measured assuming that there was a rationality that was universal thereby transcending all local reasons. This notion of reason is a major constituent of the public realm which the Enlightenment project sought to create and any other form of reasoning that did not meet these standards was excluded from the public realm. Enlightenment thinkers understood this notion of reason as that would be acceptable to any rational person and would thereby serve as the only standard of reason that could be invoked in the public realm. Rationality was thus reconceived in this manner to serve as a solution to which all rival claims would be measured against.

This project was, in MacIntyre's estimation, not successful as there was a lack of agreement as to what this notion of reason looked like. In essence, this became another issue which rival conceptions existed where no resolution was achieved. The lack of a common understanding of reasoning in the public realm created two general responses from citizens: taking recourse to academic philosophy or resorting to communities of shared beliefs which involves circularity (in the case of academic philosophy) or

arbitrariness (in the case of the communities of shared beliefs). MacIntyre argues that the Enlightenment has made us blind to alternative conception of rationality by excluding them from view. What it made us blind to are rationalities that are tradition embedded. He states, “What the Enlightenment made us for the most part blind to and what we now need to recover is, so I shall argue, a conception of rational enquiry as embodied in a tradition, a conception according to which the standards of rational justification themselves emerge from and are part of a history in which they are vindicated by the way in which they transcend the limitations of and provide remedies for the defects of their predecessors within the history of that same tradition” (MacIntyre 1990, 7). What is being proposed here is the idea that all rational thought takes place within the context of a tradition; rationality is tradition embedded. This is the alternative that was out of the sight of Enlightenment thinkers for whom tradition was the “antithesis of rational enquiry”. In not allowing for this alternative, their approach was to discard tradition and all prior forms and conceptions of authority which was to be replaced by a universal transcendent notion of reason and it was in this notion of reason where all authority would now be located for deciding on all rival claims in the public realm.

One can naturally conclude that the concept of a tradition embedded rationality results in a type of relativism.⁵ This provides an opportunity to explore further MacIntyre’s conception of rationality and the process of rational enquiry. Regarding the laws of logic MacIntyre holds that, “the observance of the laws of logic is only a

⁵ Indeed this charge has been made against MacIntyre by more than a few critics. In the prologue to the 3rd edition of *After Virtue* he rejects relativism and maintains that those who conclude that his conception of a tradition leads to relativism are mistaken. I refer the reader to the prologue and to the relevant areas of *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* where he develops correctives to the understandings of his concept of tradition embedded rationalities that are relativistic and are deemed as mistaken understandings. My goal here is to develop his notion of tradition embedded rationality and its other substantive elements.

necessary and not a sufficient condition for rationality, whether theoretical or practical” (MacIntyre 1990, 4). Rationality is not to be conflated with being logical though there is a relationship between them. The laws of logic, such as the law of non-contradiction, the law of identity, and the law of the excluded middle, are to serve as the foundations for rationality. Enlightenment thinkers’ project of a public reason was in fact a conception of a conflation of their conception of rationality with the logic and it was the distinctness of rationality which is always embodied in a tradition, and logic which transcends traditions and the relationship between them which they did not consider. According to this conception, the term rational “is not a predicate to be applied to individuals *qua* individuals, but only to individuals *qua* participants in particular social orders embodying particular conceptions of rationality” (MacIntyre 1987, 4). The social orders MacIntyre has in mind here are practices which serve as the resources for habits of action and judgment for the community of practitioners.

Reasoning embodied in a tradition, or tradition-constituted enquiry, takes the form of a syllogism where “the individual will argue from an initial premise of the form: Such-and-such a type of action is good, or productive of good, for someone practising this particular craft at this particular level in such-and-such circumstances; and from a secondary premise of the form: Here and now are circumstances of just such a type. The conclusion will be an action falling under the action-description furnished by the major premise” (MacIntyre 1987, 5). The definition of what is good in the first premise is furnished by the standards and *telos* of that particular practice and tradition. The *telos* practice along with its goods and standards thus serve as the presuppositions of action and enquiry function as the first principles of a practice or a tradition. It is in this context

MacIntyre holds that “[i]t is characteristic of traditions of enquiry that they claim *truth* for their central theses and *soundness* for the central arguments. Were it otherwise, they would find it difficult either to characterize the aim and object of their enquiries or to give reasons for their conclusions” (MacIntyre 2007, xii).

Thus far, tradition-constituted rationality, its relationship to logic, notions of truth, and reasoning have been explored. Next, the stages of the enquiry process and how a tradition develops and is reformulated will be outlined. This will provide us with the components of a tradition which will serve as loci and artifacts by which we can identify, retrieve, and develop the practice of education in the Islamic tradition in order to identify its highest good. Community is an essential part of practices and a tradition. The process of tradition embodied enquiry consists of three stages and begins with a community which consists of elements which it has conferred authority upon. These elements consist of “certain texts and certain voices” such as “[b]ards, priests, prophets, kings, and, on occasion, fools and jesters” (MacIntyre 1988, 354). These elements, in the first stage, are accepted and deferred to without being subject to questioning by members of the community. The enquiry process moves into the second stage when the community is presented with alternative interpretations of these texts and voices. Additionally, the new situations and occurrences raise questions that “may reveal within established practices and beliefs a lack of resources for offering or for justifying answers to these new questions” (ibid., 355). It is at the third stage where the community responds to these new circumstances when a reformulation of beliefs and practices, along with the reinterpretation of texts resulting in the production of new texts. There is one category of people, texts and utterances that are exempt from this process of reinterpretation in

MacIntyre's scheme: those people or texts with whose authority in the community is due to its relationship to the divine or sacred. It would seem that this exemption is derived from the quality of infallibility which divine authority is usually conceived of possessing. Nonetheless, the utterances of authority that is sacred or due to their relationship to the divine are subject to reinterpretation yet their authority is exempt. Thus, in every tradition "some core of the shared belief, constitutive of allegiance to the tradition, has to survive every rupture" (ibid., 356). A tradition is not merely about uncritically received doctrines in the past as we can see here. Rather, a tradition connects what is received from the past with the present via continuous community engagement and, in being a form of enquiry, the community directs towards the future development of that tradition.

The concept of a tradition provides us with tools to conceive the Islamic tradition as an analytical category by which to pursue our enquiry of the highest good of Islamic education. A tradition, as we have seen, is constituted by a *telos* of human life and its good where the human life with a narrative unity. Tradition additionally provides a constellation of goods which serve as the larger context in which the goods of practices are arranged hierarchically. The goods of practices are thus subordinate to the goods and *telos* of a tradition. A tradition additionally affords us the authoritative figures, texts, and modes of reasoning specific to it that generates, what Talal Asad's calls, an authoritative discourse.⁶ What composes an authoritative discourse are the beliefs, doctrines,

⁶ For Asad, the term authority or authoritative is not being used in the sense of a hierarchy of power where there is exists a differentiation between the powerful and those without power. Rather, the term authority refers to "the internal structure of a relationship that brings into play a multiplicity of material components" (Asad 2006, 212). Here authority is what underlies various artifacts one encounters within a tradition. Here Asad is building on Hannah Arendt's insights on the nature of authority where she distinguishes between authority and authoritarianism. The later requires coercive force whereas the former does not depend on it. Thus, an authoritative discourse serves as an "inner binding" of sorts that brings coherency to various components in the Islamic tradition.

cosmologies, practices, habits, dispositions, interpretations of texts, and standards of practices which conceived in a manner that is distinctive to a tradition and define a religious tradition; in our case the Islamic tradition. These conceptions are shared amongst the members of a tradition and core elements of this authoritative discourse are not subject to preconception and remain authoritative throughout a tradition's history. This authoritative discourse along with its core elements constitutes what is Islamic in the Islamic tradition. By extension, it will also constitute what is distinct in our term Islamic education as one of many practices in the Islamic tradition.

Education as a Practice

We are now in a position to say that the term “Islamic” signifies any practice that presupposes the constitutive elements of the Islamic tradition, which are its distinctive conception of a narrative unity of the *telos* and goods of a human life and authoritative discourse. By extension then, Islamic education signifies a practice that has internal and external goods, and standards of excellence developed over time by authoritative voices in that community of practitioners. Conceiving education as a practice in the Islamic tradition, we will be in a position to enquire what constitutes the highest good of this practice as conceived in the Islamic tradition.⁷ MacIntyre's notion of a tradition allows us

⁷ Interestingly enough, MacIntyre himself claims that teaching is not a practice. For MacIntyre, teaching is “a set of skills and habits put to the service of a variety of practices. The teacher should think of her or himself as a mathematician, a reader of poetry, an historian or whatever, engaged in communicating craft and knowledge to apprentices” (MacIntyre 2004, 5). MacIntyre's conception of teaching is that all teaching can only take place in the context of a particular practice or craft. It is not that the teacher need be an actual practitioner; rather at minimum, a conception of the practice is required. Thus, there is no such thing as the act of teaching or being a teacher that is separated from a particular practice even at a conceptual level. I argue that while much of teaching is manifested in the training of initiates into a practice, MacIntyre's conception of education, which entails the act of teaching and learning, is simply too narrow to restrict it solely to the teaching of crafts. To be sure, if education is conceived solely as the initiation into a practice or craft, then perhaps teaching cannot be conceived as a separate practice outside the context of a craft. I

to identify the constitutive elements of what makes a practice Islamic. In other words, every instantiation of the practice of education that possesses these constitutive elements will be considered Islamic. This allows us to avoid the drawbacks the universalist approach brings with it where the term Islamic did not signify anything of substance that identified what is distinctive of Islamic education. Additionally, the historical dimensions the concept of a tradition, particularly the concept of a practice, along with the authoritative discourse that allows us to engage with and account for multiple rival understandings of Islamic education, which the universalist approach did not provide. The authoritative discourse embedded in traditions and practices provide the standards and frameworks, which the particularist approach did not afford, needed to assess and navigate through the multiple conceptions of Islamic education.

I arguing that by conceiving education as practice of self-cultivation, Islamic education has the cultivating of a soul that possesses *adab* as its highest good. By conceiving education as a practice, I will explore its authoritative discourse by identifying in the practice's history the authoritative masters of the practice of education

will argue that if education in the Islamic tradition, conceived as the cultivation of the soul that possesses *adab*, does constitute a MacIntyrean practice with its own internal and external goods. For all crafts and practices, which includes the practice of teaching and learning, *adab* is an essential component that all initiates are expected to cultivate for the practice to be carried out. Thus when MacIntyre states that "The life of a teacher is therefore not a specific kind of life. The life of a teacher of mathematics, whose goods are the goods of mathematics is one thing; a life of a teacher of music whose goods are the goods of music is another" (MacIntyre 2004, 8), he reaffirms that teaching is not an activity that is separate from the practice itself and its only goal is to acquire the goods specific to that craft. This restricted conception of teaching consists of a set of skills put to the service of a practice. The practice of education as conceived in the Islamic tradition is inclusive of the goods of individual crafts yet extends beyond those goods. The highest good of this inclusive view of education is the cultivation of *adab* in the soul. No doubt, this can be acquired through the means of a particular practice, but it is not necessarily the case as a practice may be carried out without *adab* on the part of a practitioner. This requires the master of the practice to attend to more than the mere goods of a practice. He or she would also be required to inculcate *adab* in the initiate. This inclusive view resembles John Dewey's concept of educative teaching that is distinct from what he terms mere training. Training focuses on the outward dimensions of a student whereas educative teaching focuses on the mental dimensions and inner dispositions of a student.

and the key principles and texts, to which the practitioners of the Islamic tradition of education have conferred authority. Although the texts of the Qur'ān and the collected statements of Prophet Muḥammad (*ḥadīth*) constitute the fundamental elements of Islamic tradition's authoritative discourse, they will be engaged via the practices of Qur'ānic exegesis (*'ilm al-tafsīr*) and *ḥadīth* commentary, which have their specific modes of rationality and authorities. The practice of education in the Islamic tradition embeds an authoritative discourse that, in addition to the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, is also constituted by certain authoritative texts which Sebastian Günther has termed the *ādāb al- 'ālim wa-l-muta 'llim* literature. This educational literature belongs to a larger genre of *adab* manuals that virtually every practice in the Islamic tradition has generated. Thus, we find *adab* manuals for judges, musicians, jurists, physicians, administrative secretaries and governors. These manuals differed in content than other resources available for the practitioners of these crafts in that these manuals are dedicated to a particular way the practice should be conducted not to any substantive and detailed knowledge of the practice. When a practice is carried out the way outlined in *adab* manuals, the practice can be said to be conducted with *adab*. These *ādāb* (plural of *adab*) constitute a praxis the practitioner undertakes by which the soul will possess *adab*. It is in this light where *adab* signifies “the disciplining of the souls” and “every praiseworthy praxis by [the employment of] which a virtue is generated” (al-Munāwī 1990, 44). Manuals of *adab* are manuals of praxis that the practitioner of a craft is required to undergo in order to cultivate a soul that possesses *adab* for that particular craft. By employing acts of *adab*, the practitioner will develop a *malaka* or habitus of *adab*, which, according to Muslim scholars of education, is a state of the soul where the practitioner's soul possesses *adab*.

Education, being a practice, has its own genre of *adab* manuals that have been written for the teacher and the student. To construct the *adab* possessing soul, the major works of this genre will be studied. To that end, this enquiry will focus primarily on the work *Tadhkirat al-sāmi‘ wa-l-mutakallim fī ādāb-i-l-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘āllim* of Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamā‘ah (d. 733/1333) who can be considered as an ‘authoritative master’ of the practice of education in the Islamic tradition. This work is one of the most influential works on educational thought in the Islamic tradition, being composed in an era of high activity in the field of education and at a time when institutionally, the state of education was mature. His work, therefore, serves as a mature and comprehensive representation of educational thought in the Islamic tradition. Studying this work will allow us to construct the self that the practice of education in the Islamic tradition aims to cultivate. This self can only be understood within the larger context of the human person and its *telos* in the Islamic tradition. Therefore, this study will first develop the conception of human person as a body-soul composite in the Islamic tradition, which informs the goods of the practice of education in the tradition. Thus far, we have developed what education as a MacIntyrean practice entails. What remains to be developed is conceiving education as the cultivation of the soul.

Education as Self-Cultivation

One of the earliest presentations of education as self-cultivation is by Plato in his *Alcibiades I*.⁸ Alcibiades son of Clinias was sought out by many people of his day due to

⁸ There has been relatively recent controversy around the attribution of *Alcibiades* to Plato. Being accepted since ancient times as one of Plato’s works, it was only in the early nineteenth century where we doubt about its authenticity. According to Nicholas Denyer, this doubt was initiated by Friedrich Schleiermacher whose position was so influential that it led *Alcibiades* from “being the one dialogue read by anyone who

his physical beauty and talents. Having ambitions to start his political career, many sought his company, yet he sought the company of only one admirer of his, namely Socrates. At this point of his life, most of Alcibiades' admirers have left him except for Socrates. Socrates' love for Alcibiades was for who he truly was, while "the other were only lovers of what you had. While your possessions are passing their prime, *you* are just beginning to bloom" he tells the young Alcibiades (131e – 132a). This Platonic dialogue centers on Socrates attempting to persuade Alcibiades to cultivate his self prior to entering into political life for despite Alcibiades, being from a noble family, having received one of the finest educations in his times, Socrates observed that his education was not complete. In this section we will examine what does Socrates intend by self-cultivation and what method(s) does he propose for this to take place.

The dialogue starts with Socrates demonstrating that Alcibiades has a need for a teacher. The approach Socrates takes is first to convince Alcibiades that he is need of further developing. All of Alcibiades' previous admirers, who held themselves in high esteem, left because, as Socrates tell Alcibiades, "you were even more arrogant" than his admirers. Socrates continues, "You say you don't need anybody for anything, since your own qualities, from your body right up to your soul, are so great there's nothing you lack" (104a). So how does Socrates deal with a person who is convinced that he has everything he needs? He presents to Alcibiades a hypothetical situation. "Supposing one of the gods asked you, "Alcibiades, would you rather live with what you now have, or would you rather die on the spot if you weren't permitted to acquire anything greater?"

had read any Plato at all" to being "passed out of the canon, and almost completely out of sight" (Denyer 2001, 15). For a detailed analysis of the claims against the authenticity of *Alcibiades* being composed by Plato along with responses to each claim, see Denyer (2001, 14-20).

(105a). Socrates answers the question for Alcibiades stating that he would rather die on the spot. By doing so, he convinces Alcibiades that there is still more that he can acquire and develop regarding his abilities.

Socrates insists that he is the only person who can assist Alcibiades in acquiring the political power he is aiming to acquire. Commenting on this, Darryl M. De Marzio highlights that, “There is a relationship between political power and pedagogy. A political leader needs the help of a teacher in order to acquire power. Presumably, a political leader requires a certain kind of teacher like Socrates. ‘Neither guardian, nor kinsman, nor anyone’ can help Alcibiades realize his ambitions – not even his own guardian, the great Pericles” (De Marzio 2006, 114). This is the first aim of Socrates when dialoguing with Alcibiades – to convince him of the need for an education before entering into politics and that this education requires a teacher. Of all the politicians in the city, it is only Pericles who is not in the state of ignorance. Socrates eventually has Alcibiades acknowledge that Pericles did not, “acquire his expertise all by himself; he kept the company with many experts like Pythoclidides and Anaxagoras” (118c). Alcibiades even agrees that an expert also has the ability to make someone else an expert. Socrates achieved this by having Alcibiades have doubt over things he was once certain of such as the nature of justice. This doubt was created by a series of questions regarding the source of Alcibiades’ knowledge of justice. Alcibiades did not learn about justice from a teacher nor did he acquire this knowledge by himself. Instead, he learned it “from people in general” (110e).

Up until this point, the exact nature of education Socrates has in mind remains unexplored. To arrive at the exact nature of education, Socrates presents Alcibiades with

two options: staying in his present state or “practice some self-cultivation” (119a). Still not completely convinced, Alcibiades is ready to rely simply on his natural abilities of his soul without any cultivation to bring his soul to perfection. Socrates takes up the task of arguing that Alcibiades cannot merely rely on his natural abilities if he wants to succeed in politics. Rather he needs to attend to his soul in order to be successful in the realm of politics. Alcibiades will not be competing against those who are on his level politically, rather Socrates points out that his real enemy will be those Spartan generals and Persian kings who are from the most respectable households that provide their children with royal tutors to train children in the four virtues of wisdom, justice, moderation and courage (121e). Alcibiades did not have such tutors, rather his tutor was, as Socrates describes, “so old as was perfectly useless” (122b). After continuing the task of finally convincing Alcibiades on the necessity of education and this education is the practice of self-cultivation, Socrates ends his argument exhorting Alcibiades to “trust in me and in the Delphic inscription, ‘Know thyself’” (124a). Nicholas Denyer glosses that “[t]he maxim was said to have started Socrates on his philosophical career (Arist. *Phil.* fr. i). He thought that the limits which we most need to know are our intellectual limits (117b2-13n); he accordingly glossed the maxim as enjoining us not to think that we know things of which we are in fact ignorant” (Plato 2001, 191). Socrates invokes this maxim multiple times throughout his dialogue with Alcibiades. In this context, he invokes it with the purpose to establish Alcibiades’ his ignorance of many matters to move onto the substantive elements the educational program Socrates has in mind for him.

Concerned that self-cultivation is not correctly understood, Socrates asks whether or not one is self-cultivation is taking place when a person cultivates what they have. The

question of enquiry here is what does 'self' in self-cultivation exactly signify? He wants to make sure that clarity on the term 'self' is first established in order to avoid cultivating something other than the self. Socrates is seeking clarification on this point. He starts his enquiry by asking when does someone cultivate or care for his feet? The main point Socrates makes here is that each object has a skill to cultivate that very object as well as a separate skill to cultivate what *belongs* to the object. One could be cultivating something that *belongs* to the self as opposed to the actual self. Thus, he introduces the distinction between taking care of shoes as opposed to taking care of one foot where shoes *belong* to the feet but are not the feet themselves. Each has their own set of skills that allow one to care of the object. Shoemaking is the set of skills that makes shoes better whereas athletics is the set of skills that allows one to care for the feet. What we understand so far is that embedded in the concept of self-cultivation, or caring for the self, is by properly caring for something one is actually making it better. Additionally, from this line of reasoning, Socrates concludes that "cultivating yourself and cultivating what belongs to you require different skills" (128d9-10).

The concept of the human person in education as self-cultivation is essential. For it is the concept of the human person that allows us to identify what the term 'self' in self-cultivation signifies. Socrates introduces this when he asks Alcibiades "how might the itself itself be discovered?" (129b). What he is looking for here is the Socratic definition of the self, that every instance of self-cultivation can be identified. Arguing from the premise that a person is different from the things that he uses, Socrates argues that a person uses his body and therefore the self must refer to something other than the body. What uses the body is a person's soul. Socrates argues that "[since] man is neither

his body, nor his body and soul together, what remains, I think, is either that he's nothing, or else, if he *is* something, he nothing other than his soul" (130c1-3). At this point Socrates reintroduces the Delphi maxim "Know thyself" not in to establish Alcibiades' limits of knowledge, rather to uncover what the term 'self' signifies. He states "the command that we should know ourselves means that we should know our souls" (129e 6-7). Man possessing his body means that the body *belongs* to something else other than the body. That something else is the soul, which possesses things and does not belong to anything else. So the Socratic conception of the human person is not a soul-body composite. The human person, itself, is the soul.

The Socratic conception of education as self-cultivation is the cultivation of the soul. Attending to a person's body or wealth would not constitute as self-cultivation, it is only caring of the soul, where caring for the soul entails knowing the soul according to the Delphic maxim, which constitutes self-cultivation. How does one know the soul? According to Socrates, this has its own skill set that differs from the set of skills required in caring for the body or others objects that belong to the soul. In explaining what the Delphic maxim means, Socrates focuses on the sense of sight. He asks "If the inscription took our eyes to be men and advised them, 'See thyself.' How would we understand such advice? Shouldn't the eye be looking at something in which it could see itself?" (132d5-8). To know oneself one must be able to see oneself and to be able to see oneself one must find an object "that allows us to see both it and ourselves when we look at it" (132d10-11). The object Socrates identifies is a mirror. One can look at the mirror and ourselves in a mirror. This is the case where the object of the maxim is an eye instead of a

man. In the case of a man, meaning a soul, the person must look at the soul in order to know oneself.

What is Socrates's method for looking at the soul? An important passage that will help us understand Socrates's method is when he discusses the looking of one man into another man's eye (133a-b). Here the analogy to a mirror appears because when one looks into another man's eyes, he can observe his own face. The Greek word for pupil refers to a doll or miniature figure and for this it is called the pupil of the eye. The looking into the eyes of another man and self-knowledge has, as Denyer notes, two points of significance: "First, the analogy with an eye that sees itself will make self-knowledge particularly attractive to one with Alcibiades' concern for the impression that he makes upon others (cf. 124a5-6n.). Second, the analogy will mean that self-knowledge is gained, not by any inward-looking self-absorption, but by casting the mind outward, to appreciate what others know about oneself" (Plato 2001, 233). Self-knowledge requires another person, a teacher who knows the person to the extent that he serves as a mirror by which one can look at his soul. This is in line with Socrates's earlier claims that self-cultivation requires a teacher. What knowing entails here on the part of the teacher is knowledge of the person's soul. Here Socrates tells Alcibiades that he was his only true lover as Alcibiades's other lovers "were only lovers of what you had" (131e) whereas Socrates loved Alcibiades for who he is because he possessed knowledge of his soul. Thus, Socrates can serve as the true mirror for Alcibiades to know himself.

Looking at a soul entails look at certain regions of the soul. Socrates tells Alcibiades that if he wants knowledge of his soul, he "must look at a soul, and especially at that region in which what makes a soul good, wisdom, occurs, and at anything else

which is similar to it” (133b). It is this part of the soul where “knowing and understanding take place” (133c1) that most resembles the divine. A person wanting to have self-knowledge would have to look at this region of his soul. Thus taking care of the self entails taking care of the region of the soul where knowledge and understanding occurs. The role of the teacher in the process of self-knowledge is to conduct philosophical conversations. It is through words that souls converse with each other where the words are not addressed to a person’s body, rather “by addressing his words to *Alcibiades*, in other words to his soul” (130e). It is by this process where Socrates was able to demonstrate to Alcibiades his own skills and limitations. He was also able to provide him the self-knowledge of areas where Alcibiades was ignorant. So education as self-cultivation is understood as cultivation of the soul. In order to care and cultivate the soul one must know one’s soul that requires a teacher who serves as a mirror by which to see one’s soul. It is by philosophical conversations where one soul addresses the other that knowledge of one’s soul is obtained.

Thus far, we have seen that education as self-cultivation in the Socratic sense requires a teacher, a concept of the human person and its *telos* and the good life, and skills required for self-cultivation. It is this last part, the skills required for self-cultivation, to which we now turn our attention. Socrates speaks of skills in regards to cultivating a thing where cultivation entails making that thing better. Making something better entails the ideal conception of that thing which the skills are employed to care for that thing – to bring it to its ideal. We have some notion of what these skills are in looking at the method to know look at a soul that Socrates employs. This method, as we have seen, was the specific type of dialogue Socrates took Alcibiades through by

someone, Socrates in this case, who knows Alcibiades's soul. The result of this dialogue was Alcibiades knowing his own skills that he possessed and his limitations. Pierre Hadot writes about the Socratic dialogue being a practice of spiritual exercise. I understand the term spiritual here as referring an activity where the soul, or the self, is the object. "In the 'Socratic' dialogue," he states, "the question truly at stake is not *what* is being talked about, but *who* is doing the talking" (Hadot 1995, 89). The importance of who is doing the talking highlights the purpose and method of the dialogue. Socrates's goal in his dialogues was to his interlocutor "to pay attention to and take care of themselves" (ibid.). The dialogue is an example of a spiritual exercise where "the interlocutors are invited to participate in such an inner spiritual exercise as examination of conscience and attention to oneself; in other words, they are urged to comply with the famous dictum, "Know thyself" (ibid., 90). Hadot identifies two aspects that constitute the dialectical exercise as a spiritual exercise. The first aspect is that the aim of the dialogue is for change to take place on the part of the interlocutor. The interlocutor must possess a real desire to know the truth. The second aspect is that because "it is an exercise of pure thought, subject to the demands of the Logos, turns the soul away from the sensible world" (ibid., 93).

In Hadot's analysis of spiritual exercises, or *askēsis*, there are multiple other examples he studies. The art of living, along with learning to die, and learning how to read are all examples of spiritual exercises as they all entail "a return to the self" (Hadot 1995, 103). Hadot employs the Greek term *askēsis* to refer to spiritual exercises which the ancient philosophers, in his view, took it to refer not to any type of asceticism involving the abstinence of sexual acts, but to "inner activities of the thought and the will" (ibid., 128). In Hadot's understanding, ascetic practices as conceived of in

Christianity do not have to do directly with thought exercises. Thus the method for self-cultivation in the Socratic sense can be captured by the term *askēsis* in its ancient philosophical understanding which refers to a practice with the objective of self-formation. In Michel Foucault's study of *askēsis*, he observes a number of characteristics of *askēsis* that shed light on the purpose of these exercises. In ancient philosophy, the purpose of *askēsis* is to form the self and to cultivate it, not self-renunciation. The purpose of an *askēsis* is to provide the soul with something it currently does not possess. Lastly, the most fundamental aspect of *askēsis* is that it is not concerned with aligning the soul to the ordinances of the law. Rather, it is to align the soul with the truth which Foucault calls the subjectivation of true discourse. (Foucault 2005, 332-33). The care of the self is the care of soul, the most essential element of the human person. Its aim is to induce change on the part of the person. The nature of this change is to perfect the human person by acquiring what it did not possess in order to acquire the truth.

Conclusion

Determining the identity of an educational institution rests on understanding the conception of education embodied in the institution and the tradition that informs its practice. In this light, I propose to identify what is distinctive of Islamic education by enquiring into its highest good at which it aims. Alasdair MacIntyre's notion of a tradition while conceiving of education as a practice with internal and external goods along with its authoritative discourse provides us with the necessary framework for this enquiry. In exploring the authoritative discourse of Islamic education, we will identify the internal and external goods of the practice of education as conceived of in the Islamic

tradition. This enquiry will be carried out using the *ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘llim* literature developed in the Islamic tradition of education, which partly consists of *adab* manuals designed for the teacher and student alike. This approach accounts for the multiplicity of voices in addition to engaging the historical dimensions of the Islamic tradition.

Conceiving education as self-cultivation requires us to develop the human person, which includes its *telos* in the Islamic tradition. This serves as the constellation of goods in which the highest good of Islamic education is embedded. Additionally, self-cultivation requires an *askēsis* or exercises, which are aimed at the self for the purposes of self-formation. Cultivating *adab*, it will be argued, is the highest good of education in the Islamic tradition. *Adab* is a quality of the soul and is considered a habitus (*malaka*) by Muslim scholars of education. To acquire *adab* as a habitus requires certain exercises that constitute *adab*, an *askēsis* of sorts. This *askēsis* exists in *adab* manuals, which the student and teacher are expected to put into practice and eventually embody. Each craft, in the Islamic tradition, has its manuals of *adab*. When a craft is practiced in a certain manner, it will be practiced with *adab*. This is what makes any craft, including education, distinctively Islamic.

CHAPTER TWO

ADAB AS HABITUS (MALAKAH)

Introduction

This chapter serves to provide a definition of the term *adab* as understood by theologians, philosophers, and writers on education in the Islamic tradition. It will provide a framework for understanding the *adab* manuals that have been written generating what Sebastian Günther termed the *adab al-‘ālim wa l-muta‘āllim* literature. (Günther 2005) This literature will be explored in the next chapter seeking to identify the self that is to be cultivated in the student and teacher as the good of education in the Islamic tradition.

The central argument of this chapter is that contemporary educational discourse on *adab* by Muslim educationalists’, such as Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (1991) and Yusuf Waghed (2011), while being rich and explore various dimensions of *adab*, does not address *adab* as a habitus or *malaka*. Not addressing *adab* as a habitus has led to challenges in the correct conceiving of *adab* in an educational context. i.e. as the highest good of the practice of education. This has resulted in difficulties regarding the cultivating of *adab* in educational institutions, thereby rendering the discourse having

little practical impact in Islamic educational projects. To that end, I will first explore Muhammad Naquib al-Attas's conception of *adab* as his work informs much of the discourse on *adab* used today in Muslim educational discourse. In arguing *adab* as a habitus, I will develop the semantic field of *adab* by surveying the major Arabic lexicons and statements of Arabic lexicographers, providing for us *adab*'s primary and secondary significations and its usage in pre-Islamic times. Early Islamic usages and developments will then be explored by looking at the Qur'ān, *Hadīth*, and statements of major figures of the early Muslim community on *adab*. It will be shown that the primary lexical signification of *adab* is a calling, more specifically a calling to a banquet or a feast. Attending a banquet requires elegant behavior and comportment on part of the guest. From this signification and usage, *adab* in the early Islamic era takes on the secondary significations of training, discipline, habits, custom while retaining the meaning of displaying fine character traits.

Through the study of dictionaries of technical vocabulary of sciences in the Islamic tradition, *adab* is treated from its philosophical and psychological dimensions. *Adab* is now being seen as a function of the soul where the soul undertakes spiritual exercises with the aim to acquire virtuous character traits. Major writers of the technical dictionaries such as Abu al-Baqā al-Kafawī and Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī have placed *adab* as a habitus (*malakah*) one of the ten categories of predication that Muslim philosophers and theologians have incorporated from Aristotle's works. Understanding *adab* as a habitus allows us to appreciate Ibn Jamā'ah's *adab* manual in relation to others writers on *adab* in the context of education. Specifically, Ibn Jamā'ah's manual serves as a manual of practices that the student and teacher undertake in order to develop the habitus of *adab*.

Additionally, the anatomy of his manual reflects the relational aspect of the self possessing *adab*. The manual's structure reflects that *adab* is always demonstrated in relation to another being or object in the created order. It is these dimensions that Ibn Jamā'ah's work captures and contemporary writers have not explored.

A Contemporary Conception of Adab

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (b. 1931) is a major contemporary contributor to the field of Muslim philosophy of education. He has written numerous works in the fields of Islamic metaphysics, philosophy, education, and theology in English and Malay.⁹ The process of Islamization of knowledge has been the central focus of al-Attas' writings and efforts throughout his life. Islamization is, "the liberation of man from first the magical, mythological, animistic, national-cultural, tradition opposed to Islam, and then from secular control over his reason and his language" (al-Attas 1993, 44). His efforts have resulted in the founding in Malaysia of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) in 1987 which is setup to achieve his project of Islamization of knowledge thus reflecting a true Islamic university as al-Attas has outlined in his works. Al-Attas's writings on *adab* inform most contemporary engagements of *adab* in the writings of educational thinkers.¹⁰ It is for this reason that I will develop al-Attas's understanding of *adab* to which I will argue that *adab* should be

⁹ For a full list of publications, see Mohd. Nor Wan Daud. 1998. *The educational philosophy and practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: an exposition of the original concept of Islamization*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, pgs. 10-15.

¹⁰ See for example Noaparast, Khosrow Bagheri. 2012. "Al-Attas Revisited on the Islamic Understanding of Education". *Journal of Shī'a Islamic Studies*. 5(2): 149-172 and Waghid, Yusef. *Conceptions of Islamic Education*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2011.

correctly viewed as a habitus. This is not meant to replace al-Attas's conception of *adab*, rather I see *adab* as a habitus as filling in unexplored dimensions of *adab*.

Although al-Attas has addressed the issue of education in many of his works, his central work on Muslim philosophy of education is *The Concept of Education in Islam: A Framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education* written in 1980. Of all the writers on *adab* that I have been able to identify, it is with al-Attas where a philosophical discussion on the essence of *adab* is given. Yet it is noteworthy that despite al-Attas' philosophical treatment of *adab* even he does not treat with *adab* as a habitus in his writings.

al-Attas, building on the pre-Islamic and early Islamic descriptions and lexical definitions of *adab*, states,

“*Adab* is recognition and acknowledgement of the reality that knowledge and being are ordered hierarchically according to their various grades and degrees of rank, and of one's proper place in relation to that reality and to one's physical, intellectual and spiritual capacities and potentials” (al-Attas 1999, 27).

This rich definition of *adab* is constituted by a heavy emphasis on cognitive dimensions. *Adab* is constituted by a recognition and an acknowledgement on the part of the person. Recognition and acknowledgement are acts of the soul, thereby identifying *adab* as an activity of the soul. al-Attas distinguishes between recognition and acknowledgement. Stemming from the verse in the Qur'ān, “And there is none of us except that he has a station (*maqām*) that is well-known” [37: 164], reality is constituted of a multitude of various beings each possessing position, station, and rank. The station each being possesses constitutes an order by which all beings have a relationship to each other. For al-Attas, meaning entails “the recognition of the place of anything in a system” and meaning is achieved when “the relation of a things has with other things becomes *clarified and understood*” (Ibid., 15). Having *adab*, at its fundamental level, involves a

certain type of recognition, which, here refers to “the recognition of the proper places of things in the order of creation, such that it leads to the recognition of the proper place of God in the order of being and existence” (Ibid., 19).

However, recognition of the hierarchical order of reality and the relationship of beings in creation is not enough to constitute *adab*. Here, al-Attas introduces the distinction between recognition and acknowledgement that is central to *adab* in his view saying “recognition alone of the proper places of things and of God does not necessarily imply concomitant *action* on the part of man to behave in accordance with the suitable requirements of what is recognized” (al-Attas 1999, 19). Action that is based on this recognition is the focus in this discussion, not mere recognition nor mere action not based on this recognition. The order and relationship of beings, in other words, entail that a person carries out action in a specific manner that reflects the position and relationship of beings in the order of creation. Recognition does not *necessarily* lead to that action. In order to pass the divide between recognition and action, acknowledgment is required on the part of the person. al-Attas elaborates what he intends by acknowledgement stating that it “consists in man making himself suitable to the requirements of the right or proper places of things or affairs. The requirements of the proper places of things and affairs entail action on the part of man, and this action is denoted by the term ‘*amal*’” (Ibid., 19). All beings in the order of creation, by virtue of their position and rank, possess certain rights. It seems to me that recognition involves the knowledge of the rank of all beings in the order of creation while acknowledgment involves the knowledge of the rights of these beings that their rank entails. It is these rights, once acknowledge, that informs a person

who possesses *adab* on the proper course of action that aligned with the hierarchical order of creation.

In closing his discussion on *adab*, al-Attas brings in another formulation of *adab* that brings together the two concepts of justice and wisdom. He states that *adab* “is the spectacle (*mashhad*) of justice as it is reflected by wisdom” (al-Attas 1999, 23). Justice and wisdom figure into *adab* in the following manner: justice (‘*adl*) is constituted by the recognition and acknowledgement of the proper places of things in the order of creation along with a person and society acting in a manner that is aligned and dictated by this order. Justice, then, is the “harmonious condition of things being in their right or proper places” (ibid., 20). This harmonious condition is created at two levels: at the individual level by a person acting along the dictates of the rights entailed by a thing’s position and at the societal level by all individuals acting along the same dictates. Justice and *adab* are thus linked when a person acts with *adab*, thereby achieving justice in himself, and when a society acts with *adab*, achieving justice at the group level. Wisdom is defined as “the knowledge given by God, by which the recipient is able to effect correct judgements as to the proper places of things” (Ibid., 20). Thus, when a person possesses *adab*, he has the knowledge of the proper places of things and their rights. When a judgment is made that is aligned with this knowledge, this is termed wisdom, where action based on this knowledge is acting with justice.

Al-Attas’s philosophical conception of *adab* is a major development in the practice of education in the Islamic tradition. His development of *adab* provides a synthesis of the lexical, philosophical, and theological streams of the Islamic tradition in the educational context. Additionally, he provides a more solid foundation to this major

Islamic theme allowing Muslim educators to retrieve *adab* to address educational issues they encounter. Yet if we examine al-Attas's discourse on *adab*, we see that he has a strong emphasis on the cognitive dimensions of *adab* by grounding it in a type of recognition and acknowledgement on part of the person. While this dimension is correct, I argue that what is missing here in the conception of *adab* is the understanding that practitioners of education saw *adab* as a habitus. Identifying *adab* as a habitus, in addition to adding to the discourse on *adab*, allows us to align educational practice in institutions with the ideal of *adab*. The notion of a habitus opens the door for exploring actual ways of cultivating *adab* in individuals which has generated a rich genre of literature called the *adab al-`ālim wa-l-muta`ālim* literature by Günther which will be explored in the later chapters. The remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to developing the notion of *adab* as a habitus establishing this as an essential dimension of the practice of education in the Islamic tradition.

The Semantic Field of *Adab*

For a term so central to Muslim philosophy of education, it is surprising that the term *adab* or any of its derivatives does not occur a single time in the Qur'ān – the foundational text of Islam. This fact, however, need not worry us once it is understood that what constitutes the Islamic Tradition in terms of texts extends beyond the Qur'ān. *Hadīth*, which are sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, along with the sayings of Muslim scholars and sages play an essential if not an equal role in forming the repository of teachings that serve as authoritative sources for in the Islamic tradition. Additionally, and for our purposes here, the Arabic language, specifically the etymology and semantic field

of words and poetry, play a vital role in assisting us to understand how the term *adab* has been conceived of and its influence on Muslim educational thought.

In his studies on the worldview of the Qur’ān, Toshihiko Izutsu lays out his methodology by examining the semantics of what he calls Qur’ānic key terms. The semantic *weltanschauung* is not a mere exercise in etymology. Rather, by studying the relational meanings of words, we can access the spirit of that culture and obtain “a most faithful reflection of the general tendency, psychology and otherwise, of the people who use the word as part of their vocabulary” (Izutsu 2002, 17). Thus we will adopt this approach to study the term *adab* and the related terms of *‘ilm* and *tarbiyah*. In analyzing the semantics of these terms we hope to reach a full understanding of how education was conceived by Muslims. This process will entail us to bring “together, compare and put in relation all the terms that resemble, oppose, and correspond with each other” (Izutsu 2002, 36) to achieve our goal.

An etymological analysis of the term *adab* will provide us with a basic structure of the early uses of the term, from where we can initiate our analysis and then trace development of the application of the term through different time periods of the Islamic tradition. We will examine entries on *adab* by Arabic lexicographers, most notably Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī’s (1732–1791) *Tāj al-‘Arūs*, his commentary on the dictionary *Qamus al-Muhīt* by al-Fīrūzābādī (1329–1415). Other major Arabic lexicographers’ works will be utilized as well throughout our analysis as well as the writings of

All Arabic words can be reduced to either trilateral or quadrilateral root letters. Trilateral roots are most common. The root letters for *adab* are *hamza – dal – ba’*. Taking the root letters as a starting point in our analysis, Ibn al-Fāris (d.395/1004) states in his

entry on the roots *hamza – dal – ba’*, “The letters hamza, dal and ba’ [denote] one meaning from which [many nouns] are derived and refer back to. [The term] *al-‘adb*, therefore, [refers to you] assembling people to [attend] your feast” (Ibn al-Fāris 2001, 50). The term *adab* primarily signifies a calling or an invitation. Ibn al-Athīr (1149-1210), Ibn Manzūr (1233-1331) and al-Zabīdī all confirm the etymology of the term as signifying a calling or an invitation. An alternative etymology has been presented by the German Arabist K. Vollers (1857 - 1909) in his *Volkssprache und Schriftsprache im alten Arabien* and later taken up by C.A. Nallino (1872-1938) in his *Tārīkh al-Ādāb al-‘Arabīyah*. “There is no doubt,” says Nallino, “that the term *al-adab*, according to the ancient Arabs, referred to customary practice (*sunnah*)” (Nallino 1970, 24). Particularly, it referred to the customary practice of one’s ancestors and was thereby constituted a necessary practice for people of later generations to observe. In *Tārīkh al-Ādāb*, Nallino then states that while reading the works of Vollers, he arrived at the conclusion that *al-adab* was derived from the *dal – hamza – ba’*, which means “habit or adhering to [something]. And this is not far from the meaning of customary practice (*sunnah*) and *al-adab*” (Ibid., 29). When deriving a word’s etymology, Arabic etymologists would refer to the singular form of the word and then identify a word’s root letters. From there, the general meaning will then be analyzed and formulated. Nallino instead starts his analysis with the plural of *al-adab*: *ādāb*. The pattern he gives us is: *ādāb* to *dal – hamza – ba’* as opposed to going from *dal – hamza – ba’* to *ādāb*. So the transformation of the word is as follows: the plural of *dal – hamza – ba’* is *adāb* and the middle long vowel transfers to the first letter which leads to *ādāb*.

There are some weaknesses in Nallino's theory that writers have pointed out. One is, which Nallino himself acknowledges, that the plural *ādāb*, which Nallino uses, has not been documented by any Arabic lexicographer as being used by ancient or pre-Islamic Arabs (Ibid., 29). Additionally, Arabic lexicographers have documented a plural for *d'b* which is *du'ub* and not *ādāb*. S. A. Bonebakker comments on Nallino's claim that *adab* is synonymous with customary practice stating, "Early sources do not yield unambiguous evidence in support of this theory. Not only is it rarely possible to date or authenticate the earliest source-material, poetry, with absolute certainty (even in authentic, datable pieces individual words may have been changed at a later period to suit contemporary taste), but, in early texts, *adab* and its derivatives seldom appear in contexts where their meaning can be accurately determined" (Bonebakker 1990, 17). Bonebakker produces the following lines of poetry from Sahn b. Hanzalah:

People do not withhold from me what I want, but I do not give them what they
want;
what good *adab* this is!

In this case, it is possible that *adab* could be referring to customs, "but the poet is probably commenting ironically on his own bad manners" (ibid., 17). Seeing the material that Nallino produces for his argument, Bonebakker concludes that "*adab* should be interpreted according to its immediate social or intellectual terms of reference" (ibid., 25).

When examining various derived words from *adab* and how they were used, the immediate connection the words have to its primary signification of being an invitation to a feast becomes obvious. The actual feast or meal is referred to as *ma'dubah*, or *ma'dabah*, a derived noun which denotes "a prepared feast which people are invited to"

(al-Zabīdī 1965, 12-13). Specific applications of the noun have been noted to refer to a wedding feast. The word *al-ādib* refers to the person inviting people to the feast. The following verses of Ṭarfah ibn al-‘Abd, a pre-Islamic poet, are produced by both Ibn al-Fāris and al-Zabīdī that support this usage of the word:

We are in our winter residence calling everyone,
You will not find an inviter (*al-ādib*) amongst us who discriminates
(Ibn al-Fāris 2001, 50; al-Zabīdī 1965, 14).

Arabic lexicographers discussions of the term *adab* explore it’s other significations which build off its primary signification. *Adab*, as used by Arabs, also means partaking of food in a beautiful and proper manner. A feast is a sign of generosity and nobility from the host and guests must recognize and display proper decorum when partaking in the feast. The term *adab* did have an ethical dimension embedded in its usage. In pre-Islamic and Islamic Arabic, primarily, it was a social ethic of how one was expected to conduct themselves in various public settings. As we will see, after the advent of Islam, this social dimension continues but takes on psychological and spiritual dimensions as well.

Having looked at *adab*’s primary signification in the pre-Islamic period, we will now focus our attention on the early Islamic period and study the usage of the term and note the developments in its usage. We will focus on early source material: the Qur’ān, statements made by the Prophet Muhammad and statements of individuals he interacted with from that time period. As mentioned previously, the term *adab* does not occur at all in the Qur’ān. Where it does come up in discussion is in material dealing with the exegesis of the Qur’ān. When Qur’ānic exegetes discuss the verse “Believers, guard yourselves and your families against a Fire fuelled by people and stones” [66:6] the comments of the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) are

usually quoted by exegetes. Commenting on the verse ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib states that the verse means to, “instill *adab* in them and teach them” (Ibn Kathīr 2001, 4:258). An important observation to make here is that learning (*ta’līm*) and the instilling of *adab* are two separate activities are seen in this statement. Based on the comments of early Qur’ānic exegetes, teaching here refers to the teaching of God’s commandments and prohibitions while the instilling of *adab* refers to the disciplining of one’s family to perform acts that are good and to refrain from acts that are evil.

In their discussions on *adab*, most Arabic lexicographers reference the Prophet Muhammad’s saying, “This Qur’ān is the feast of God (*ma’ḍabatullāhi*) on Earth. Learn from His feast!” (al-Bayhaqī 2003, 3:334). This statement has held a rather important position in educational writings in the Islamic tradition. One frequently encounters this statement in various ethical treatises that deal with the recitation of the Qur’ān and the proper internal and external qualities to possess. In this statement, we see that just as a person acquires and demonstrates proper conduct and decorum at a feast, one treats the Qur’ān in the same manner: the Qur’ān is a place of acquiring and demonstrating proper conduct and decorum. Additionally, there is the statement of the Companion, Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd, “Every host (*mu’addib*) loves that his feast be well attended. The feast of God is the Qur’ān; do not desert His feast.” On the comparison of the Qur’ān to the feast, al-Zabīdī comments, “He compared the Qur’ān to a feast, which contains what is good and beneficial for them, prepared for mankind by God to which He then invited them to [partake in].” (al-Zabīdī 1965) Thus underlying the theme of acquiring high ethical qualities and moral principles to live by from the Qur’ān.

In a lengthy *ḥadīth* where there was some tension between the Prophet Muhammad and his wives, the Companion ‘Umar b. al-Khattab stated, “We men of Quraysh would have ascendancy over our womenfolk. When we came [and resided] with the Ansar, [we found] that they were a community whose womenfolk had ascendancy over their men. Our womenfolk began to adopt the *adab* of the womenfolk of the Ansar” (al-Bukhārī #2468, 597, 2002). Commentators have glossed that *adab* refers to their mode of conduct with their husbands and their general comportment around the house. The womenfolk of the Quraysh had a particular way of being with their husbands when in Makkah that was particular to them and differed from that of womenfolk of the Ansar in Madinah. When they migrated to Madinah, they left their *adab* and adopted the *adab* of the womenfolk of the Ansar. This is an instance where *adab* is being applied to acts other than acts of religious worship. This way of being was referred to as *adab* in the words of ‘Umar b. al-Khattab.

Another *ḥadīth* states, “There is nothing superior a father can bestow to his son than good *adab*.” Here we see that *adab* is being used as habits in general, but also there is a moral and religious dimension added in the last *ḥadīth* mentioned. This is evidenced by the fact that the jurist al-Bahyaqī (d. 458/1066) has included this *ḥadīth* in the chapter on the obligation to teach others what is needed in order for a prayer to be valid in his legal work, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*. *Adab*, in this context, is being applied to the correct performance of religious obligations.

The idea of disciplining is also noted in the term *adab* from other *ḥadīth*. “Any man who possesses a female slave,” the Prophet Muhammad said, “then teaches her well and instills *adab* in her and does so well, then frees her and marries her will have two

rewards [with God].” According to commentators, the instilling of *adab* here refers to the instilling in the females slave virtuous character traits. The difference between teaching and *adab* is also brought out in this *ḥadīth* where teaching refers to the teaching of religious knowledge and could also apply to vocational and other types of knowledge. What is interesting is that the second form (*addaba*) of the verb *adab* is used in this *ḥadīth*. al-Zabīdī mentions that the second form shifts the meaning from a person exhibiting *adab* to a person putting another person through various exercises and activities that will result in the acquiring of *adab* by the person. The verb *addaba*, whose infinitive noun is *ta’dīb*, has the meaning of training, bringing up or educating *someone else*. The agent is not performing an act of *adab*, but is involved in the act of instilling *adab* in another person. An additional meaning of *ta’dīb* that is very common is punishing or physically disciplining someone due to their bad *adab* because punishing the person will result in them avoiding bad *adab* and thereby acquiring good *adab*. Based on the *ḥadīth*, *ta’dīb* taken as educating is not to be understood in the sense of providing information or content. It is something other than learning. It is in this line we have another *ḥadīth* where the Prophet Muhammad, speaking of himself, stated, “My Lord has instilled me with *adab* and how excellent is His *ta’dīb* of me.” We have seen thus far that the term *ta’dīb* has been applied to human beings, but the *ḥadīth* literature provides evidence that the term has also been applied to animals where *adab* is being used in the strict sense of training an animal to acquire certain skills. A *ḥadīth* discussing three activities that are not considered to be folly one of which is “a man instilling *adab* in his horse” (Abū Dawūd #2505 2010, 3:282-283). It will be argued in later chapters that *adab* as applied to human beings is fundamentally different when it is applied to animals. The

difference is due to an intellectual and cognitive aspect that exists in human beings that does not in animals. Thus *adab*, when applied to human beings, is not to be reduced to the mere training of a human being in certain skills.

***Adab* in Technical Dictionaries**

It is from these various contexts in which the term *adab* is used where Arabic lexicographers, Muslim theologians and Muslim philosophers of education have generated various definitions of the term *adab*. All of these definitions share the various significations of the term outlined above. We will now look at how the term *adab* has been defined in the classical period of the Islamic tradition. In addition to dictionaries, we will be looking at the *ta'rifāt* genre of dictionaries in the Islamic tradition. This genre of literature is composed of manuals on the technical definitions of terms used in all sciences in the Islamic tradition. From the early period of the Islamic tradition, numerous texts on technical terminology have been produced by Muslim scholars of various fields. The nature of these texts is different than lexicons. These texts while elaborating the lexical meaning of words at times, focus on how words are used in various disciplines of knowledge such as law, prophetic traditions, Sufism, theology (*kalām*), philosophy (*falsafā*) and other sciences. I call these understandings of these words technical nomenclature of the Islamic sciences as they have a relationship to the lexical meaning and usage of the word, yet have developed their own meanings within different sciences of the Islamic tradition. All of the definitions examined will be by major figures in each of the disciplines of the Islamic tradition.

al-Fayyūmī (d. 766/1364) stated, “*addabtuhu*: means I taught him the [means of] disciplining the soul and of attaining noble character traits.” al-Jurjanī (d. 816/1413)

simply states that “*al-adab* is a term referring to knowledge by virtue of which a person can avoid all types of errors.” ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf al-Munāwī (d. 1031/1621) says that it is, “the disciplining of the soul and [the acquiring of] fine character traits. It also refers to any sort of praiseworthy training by which a person is disciplined to acquire a virtue from amongst the virtues.” Abu al-Baqa al-Kafawī al-Hanafī (d. 1094/1683), author of *al-Kullīyyat*, has an almost identical definition as al-Munāwī does. In *Dustūr al-‘Ulamā’*, al-Aḥmadnagarī (d.1273/1856) states that, “the one who possesses *adab* (*mu’addib*) combines the [teachings of the] Prophetic Sacred Law and good character traits.” He expands on this stating, “*adab* is of two types: *adab* pertaining to one’s self (*adab al-nafs*) and *adab* pertaining to a lesson (*adab al-dars*). The first type [refers to] preventing the outer and inner members of the body from all types of mistakes. The second [type] is an expression [signifying] the knowledge of what should be avoided in all types of rhetorical modes used in the art of disputation” (al-Aḥmadnagarī 1911, 1:62). While retaining the early Islamic significations and usages of *adab*, one notices a major shift in the way the term is now being understood. *Adab* is now seen as a function of the soul, thus a psychological dimension is now being explored. Additionally, it is given a religious and ethical grounding in being equated with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and good character traits.

Perhaps the most detailed entry on *adab* is by the 12th century Indian author Muḥammad A‘lā ibn ‘Alī al-Tahānawī in his dictionary on technical nomenclature of all the sciences in the Islamic tradition, *Kashshāf Istilaḥāt al-Funūn*. al-Tahānawī’s entry captures most of what his predecessors have had to say about the term *adab*. He begins his entry stating that the term in Persian denotes knowledge, intelligence and sagacity

(*thaqafa*), being mindful of [what should be observed in conduct], proper and acceptable conduct, and observing the proper bounds in all things. (al-Tahānawī 1996, 1:127) It also refers to the science amongst the sciences of the Arabic language that deals with eloquence and rhetoric. In a similar line, Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751/1352) states that, “the science of *adab* (*‘ilm al-adab*) is the science of rectifying speech, the correct usage of speech, embellishment of words, and protection from mistakes [in speech] and missteps. It is a subset of *adab*.”¹¹ After mentioning the writers we have seen previously, al-Tahānawī treats how the term *adab* is used in legal writings. The jurists (*fuqahā’*) use the term *adab* to refer to that which is considered preferable and recommended (*mandub*) for a person to perform. In legal writings, the term is juxtaposed to what is obligatory (*wajib*) by the Sacred Law (*sharī‘ah*).

al-Tahānawī then moves on to discuss the difference noted previously between learning (*ta‘līm*) and *ta’dīb*. This distinction has been observed in statements of the Prophet Muhammad and in the statements of later writers as well. A statement by Abdullah ibn Mubārak (d. 181/797) expressed a similar understanding of the difference between *adab* and learning where he said, “We are more in need of a small amount of *adab* than a great amount of knowledge” (al-Tahānawī 1996, 2:380). A famous statement of al-Qarāfī (d. 684/1285) is often quoted regarding *adab* and spiritual works which includes learning, “Know that a small amount of *adab* is superior to a great amount of spiritual works. This [misunderstanding] is what destroyed Iblis and his many spiritual works went waste due to his lack of *adab*. We ask Allah safety from this in this world and the next. A righteous man once said to his son, “My son! Make your spiritual works

¹¹ vol. 2 p. 379

salt and your *adab* wheat. Meaning that you should seek *adab* more than you seek spiritual works.”

al-Tahānawī differentiates between learning (*ta' līm*) and *ta' dīb* stating that the former refers to learning religious teaching and doctrines whereas the later relates to the idea of a person embodying what it truly means to be a human (*murū'ah*). Another way of stating it is that learning relates to the Sacred Law and *ta' dīb* relates to custom or, he continues, learning is the sphere of religion (*dīnī*) where *ta' dīb* is the sphere of the social (*dunyawī*). (al-Tahānawī 1996, 1:128) The idea of *murū'ah* is of central importance and exploring it will help us better understand the concept of *adab*. The root letters of *murū'ah* are *mīm-rā'* - 'ain and its primary signification according to Arabic lexicographers is being complete and wholesome. The noun *murū'ah* has been explained as referring to the completeness of a person and being a complete male. This is not referring to the physical aspect of being a complete male, rather it refers to the ethical and moral aspects of functioning like a true man in society. This applies equally to a woman as well as the terms *mar'*, which refers to a man, and *mar'ah*, which refers to a woman, are both derived from the same root letters. al-Fayyūmī states, “*murū'ah* are qualities of the soul that lead a person who enacts them to noble character traits and elegant habits” (al-Fayyūmī 1996, 294). The term *murū'ah* thus connects noble character with a person embodying what it means to be fully human as the two ideas of being whole and a man or a woman are contained in the word *mar'*. In linking *adab* with *murū'ah*, al-Tahānawī highlights the fact that learning of religious teachings (*ta' līm*) is a different activity than acquiring *adab*. In some ways it is difficult to see what the difference is between *adab* and *murū'ah* as they both refer to the same ideal of how a person conducts oneself. The

difference is seen when one looks at the etymological origin of the two words. In *murū`ah* one finds the idea that possessing these qualities is what makes a person a complete and perfect human; the ideal human being is achieved. In fact, this idea is so embedded in this word that al-Kafawī (d. 1094/1683) simply defines *murū`ah* as humanness (*al-insāniyyah*). He does mention that it has been defined as the ideal of manhood, but he precedes this definition with “it has been said (*qīla*)” which denotes, in Islamic scholarly writings, that this is not the preferred definition of the word (al-Kafawī 1998, 874). In the term *adab*, the idea of humanness is not present etymologically speaking although in its primary signification it does refer to an activity solely performed by human beings. Even in its usage, as we have seen above, *adab* has been applied to humans and animals albeit with a qualified meaning of the word. By relating the two words, one can see that it is in the acquiring of *adab* a person achieves the ideal of what it means to be a human being.

Adab as Habitus (malakah)

Thus far we have seen various ways how scholars of the Islamic Tradition have discoursed on *adab*. From its primary signification lexically being a calling to a feast that requires a certain mode of conduct on the part of the participant, *adab* was extended beyond the setting of hospitality to other settings. In the early Islamic era, the *adab* takes on the meaning of training, disciplining and general custom and way of conduct as when applied to the women of the Quraysh and Ansar by the Companion ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab. Any attempt to define *adab* has not been seen in the early period. This could be due to the fact that it was a word that was common and understood by everyone and therefore did

not need to be explicitly defined. It is with later writers have attempted to provide approximate definitions of *adab*. In the treatment of *adab* in Arabic lexicons, one encounters that Muslim scholars have usually given examples of when *adab* is being demonstrated when trying to explain the term. This is seen in the general statements of *adab* where it is equated with the display of good character, the avoiding of bad character traits and blameworthy behaviors, or the taking of food in a refined manner.

The question still remains as to what is the true nature of *adab* that brings about these manifestations that *adab* is identified with. What are the psychological and philosophical understandings of *adab*? In this section we aim at exploring this question by looking at the *ta'rifat* literature as they go beyond the lexical meanings of words and provide for us how words and terms are developed and understood by scholars of the Islamic tradition. It is important to note that the definitions of terms in specific sciences are for the most part grounded in the lexical definitions of the terms. Their lexical definitions govern the technical definitions influencing the technical meaning's development. In the dictionaries of technical terminology one sees that *adab* is now being seen as a state of the soul, a disciplining of the soul, and that it requires a process on the part of the person to undertake in order to obtain the state of possessing *adab*. Additionally, the ethical dimensions have been included by the mentioning of noble character traits (*makārim al-akhlaq*) when defining *adab*.

As we have seen, one of the earliest major authors of dictionaries of technical vocabulary, al-Jurjanī, defines *adab* as “a term referring to knowledge by virtue of which a person can avoid all types of errors.” al-Kafawī defines *adab* as “every praiseworthy

training by which a person acquires a one of the virtues.” Munawī has exactly the same definition. One can see that in these works, *adab* is no longer being defined by manifestations of *adab*. Rather, it is now knowledge that one must acquire that, once acquired, will result in a person possessing *adab*.

Perhaps the most important addition to the understanding of *adab* is seen in al-Tahānawī’s entry on *adab*. To my knowledge, it is the earliest work I have been able to find that discusses this dimension of *adab*. al-Tahānawī starts his entry by listing what prior authors have mentioned on *adab*. After doing so, al-Tahānawī quotes the 9th century Mu’tazilite and scholar of the Arabic language, Abu Zaid al-Ansari’s definition of *adab* as, “a habitus (*malakah*) that protects the person in whom *adab* inheres from that [committing those acts] which disgraces one.” Then after discussing how *adab* is used according to the jurists, al-Tahānawī states, “[Of all these definitions], it is better to refer to [*adab*] as a habitus (*malakah*) because it is a quality that is firmly established in the soul.” From seeing *adab* as an activity of a person’s soul, the discussion on what *adab* is further extended to being seen as a *malakah*, what I have translated here as a habitus. More will be discussed on the term *malakah* to understand what this development of the discussion of the term *adab* fully entails.

About six centuries later, in the 18th century, we see *adab* as a habitus continue with al-Zabīdī in his *Tāj al-‘arūs*. In listing several definitions in his entry on the root letters ‘ – d – b al-Zabīdī states,

“al-Adab (whose middle letter) is vowelled...The primary signification of *adab* is a calling (*du‘a*). Our Shaykh said quoting from what his shaykhs have reported that, ‘*al-adab* [is a term referring to] a habitus (*malakah*) that protects the individual in whom *adab* inheres from that [committing those acts] which disgraces one.’ And in *al-Miṣbah* it states, ‘it (*adab*) is the learning of what disciplines the soul and [the acquiring of] virtuous traits of character.’ Abu Zaid

al-Anṣarī states, ‘*Adab* applies to every praiseworthy spiritual exercise by which a person can acquire one of the virtues.’ A similar statement occurs in *al-Tahdhīb*. And in *al-Tawshīh* it states, ‘[*Adab*] is the employment of speech or acts that are considered praiseworthy, or it is adopting or abiding by those things that are deemed good, or it (*adab*) is venerating those [socially] above you and dealing gently with those [socially] below you.’ Khafajī transmitted in *al-‘Inayah* from al-Jawālīqī in *Sharh adab al-katib*, ‘Lexically, *adab* is good character and the performance of noble acts.’ It being applied to sciences of the Arabic language is *muwallad*¹²; originating after the early period of Islam. Ibn al-Sayyid al-Baṭalyausī said, ‘*adab* is the *adab* of the soul and *adab* of the lesson.’ ***al-adab* is beauty (*al-ẓarf*) and refinement in the taking of food.** And this statement is inclusive of most of what has already been mentioned. For this reason the author restricted himself to this” (al-Zabīdī 1965, 2:12).

I quote this passage in full because of the important place this text holds. al-Zabīdī is considered to be late in the Islamic intellectual tradition and his lexicon, *Tāj al-‘Arūs*, is considered to be one of the major achievements in the Arabic sciences and is the major authority in Arabic lexicography. This work being late in the Islamic tradition means that it is comprehensive representation of the discourse generated historically on the term *adab*. If we look at this passage, we find al-Zabīdī first defining *adab* in terms of its technical definition, meaning as a habitus (*malakah*). Then after surveying the various lexical definitions and descriptions on *adab* we have seen from the early period up to his own era, he sums up the various definitions given stating that, “*Al- Adab* is beauty (*al-ẓarf*) and refinement in the taking of food.” Stating afterwards that this sums up the essence of what has been mentioned by different lexicographers on the matter. All of the other statements on *adab* as seen as attempts to describe *adab* by providing examples and

¹² The term is used to denote as ‘post-classical’ certain linguistic items, such as words, derivations, and even proverbs. ‘Post-classical’ means: not belonging to the classical language of pre- and early Islamic texts.” *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, Volume 2 edited by Julie Scott Meisami, Paul Starkey.

manifestations of *adab* and with different areas emphasized depending on the person describing the term.

What does it mean to say that *adab* is a habitus (*malakah*)? By analyzing the Arabic term *malakah*, we hope to locate *adab* as part of a greater discourse in the Islamic theological and philosophical tradition that assigns *adab* as a quality of the soul. *Malakah* is a technical term that is used when Muslim philosophers and theologians discuss the *maqūlat al-‘ashar* or the ten categories. The Categories of Aristotle had made its way into the Islamic Tradition along with the rest of Aristotle’s writings. Muslim philosophers and theologians actively and selectively engaged Aristotle’s Categories with each philosopher or theological school incorporating what they felt to be in agreement with the Islamic tradition. A *maqūlah* literally translates to what is said or a statement. In the area Islamic theology and philosophy, the concern is what is being said of subject. A *maqūlah* then is what can be predicated of a subject. Its technical signification is that it applies to the major categories (*al-ajnas al-‘āliyyah*) or every universal term that can be predicated of all possible existents. (Makhlūf 1971)

In the Islamic tradition, standard texts that a student encounters when studying philosophy and theology put in verse the ten categories for students to memorize. The translation of the verses is:

Zaid [who is] tall, blue eyed, the son of Malik
who was in his house yesterday reclining,
In his hand was a sword, which he turned so it turned.
These then are the ten categories.

Zaid is the name of a person and is the subject or the possible existent about which things will be predicated. Zaid refers to the substance (*jawhar*), the first of the ten categories. A

substance is that which takes up space and the substrate in which accidents (*a'rāḍ*) inhere, accidents being in need of a locus of substrate to exist. The rest of the nine categories are classified as accidents. Tall is an example of the second category of quantity (*kamm*). Quantity is divided into two major categories: quantities that are continuous (*al-kamm al-muttaṣil*) and quantities that are discrete (*al-kamm al-munfaṣil*). Continuous quantities are those quantities that are measurable and are composite such as time, depth, thickness, thinness, length, width and height. Discrete quantities are simple quantities such as numbers. If one were to divide the number ten into two parts one would get two separate discrete units of five.

Blue-eyed is an example of the third category of quality (*kayf*). Qualities are non-divisible accidents and are of four types: sensible qualities (*al-kayfiyyat al-maḥsusah*), psychic qualities (*al-kayfiyyat al-naḥsaniyyah*) or qualities that relate to the soul not merely to the mind, qualities of predisposition (*al-kayfiyyat al-'isti'dadiyyah*), and qualities specific to quantities (*al-kayfiyyat mukhtaṣṣah bil kamiyyat*). Sensible qualities are those accidents that are perceptible to one of the five external senses. Examples of sensible qualities given are heat, cold, colors, sounds, odors, and tastes. Psychic qualities are specific only to beings that possess a soul (*dhawāt al-'anfus*), excluding inanimate objects such as stones and plants from this category of qualities. Examples given of these qualities are life, sickness, power, will, and perception. Qualities of predisposition are qualities that allow a substance to be predisposed to resist or receive other qualities. Qualities specific to quantities are accidental qualities to quantities such as a number being odd or even, and a line being crooked or straight.

The ‘son of Malik’ in the verses serves as an example of the fourth category of relation (*al-idāfah*). This category refers to those accidents that describe an object in relation to another such as a person being a father to another person, a son of someone, or one object being larger than another object. ‘In his house yesterday reclining’ are examples of the categories of place (*al-ʿayn*), time (*mata*), and position (*al-waḍʿ*), whereas ‘in his hand was a sword, which he turned so it turned’ are examples of the categories of having or possession (*milk* or *al-jidah*), action (*ʿan-yafʿalu*), and affection (*ʿan-yanfaʿilu*). Where the person, in this case Zaid, possesses a sword and acts upon it by turning the sword, and the sword is affected by being turned by Zaid.

The categories allow us to understand what it means when Muslim writers identify *adab* as a *malakah* and why I translate it as a habitus. We have previously covered that there are four types of qualities that Muslim theologians and philosophers have identified, thereby agreeing with and accepting Aristotle’s formulation of this category. In *al-Jawahir al-Muntazimat fī ʿUqūd maqūlāt*, a well known text on the categories, Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad al-Sujāʿī expands on the psychic qualities mentioning that of the four, psychic qualities are those that are specific to beings that possess a soul (*nafs*) thereby excluding plants and other inanimate objects. al-Sujāʿī then states, “If [the psychic quality] is not established, then it is termed a condition (*ḥal*). However, if it is firmly established, then it is termed a *malakah* such as writing. This is so because in the initial stage [of the quality being acquired] it is a condition (*ḥal*) which, if ingrained and firmly, becomes a *malakah*” (Makhlūf 1971, 43). In the process of a person acquiring a psychic quality, there are two stages: the stage where it is a condition and the stage where it is a *malakah*.

What are the differences between the two stages and what activity or activities on the part of the person are required for a psychic quality to become a *malakah*? When a person performs an act that results in the person acquiring a psychic quality such as activities that make up a healthy life style like eating healthy foods, exercising, and sleeping well, in the beginning stages the person may eat healthy for 3-4 days and exercise for the same amount of time and then revert back to their previous manner of living. The quality of being healthy was a temporary condition that a person could easily lose after some short duration of time, being only there for the time the person was performing those acts that are considered to compose a healthy lifestyle. Once the person stopped performing them, the quality of being healthy no longer can be predicated of the person and no longer existed. This stage is referred to as a condition (*hal*) where being healthy is not a quality that is firmly established in the person's soul. At this stage the quality appears on the soul but then leaves the soul due to lack of continuous performance of those activities that result in the quality being formed.

If a person continues to perform those activities that result in a particular psychic quality, in our case here the quality of being healthy, then the quality will take hold on the soul. Once the quality takes hold and becomes firmly fixed on the soul, the psychic quality now enters the stage where it is a *malakah*. At this stage, the psychic quality will not leave the soul due to it being firmly established. This stage is reached by a person consistently performing those acts that result in the psychic quality intended to where it becomes a habit of the person. This habit results in the person possessing a disposition towards those acts. The term *malakah* in Arabic is etymologically derived from the root letters of *mīm-lam-kaf* which signify possession and acquiring of something. Hence it is

appropriate to translate *malakah* as a habitus where acts that result in a person being healthy now proceed with ease from a person who acquires the habitus (*malakah*) of health.

Muslim theologians point out that it is not that the psychic quality changes from the stage of it being a condition to the stage of the quality being a habitus. Meaning that it is not that the quality of being healthy is different at the stage of it being a condition from the quality of being healthy at the habitus stage. The difference between the two stages is of the accidental quality of being firmly established (*tamakkun*) in the soul which is related to the factor of time. “The difference between a condition and a habitus is not that of a difference between two species of the same genus,” Avicenna states, “the differentiating between them both is their relation to a factor that has changed. That factor that has changed is time. This differentiation is by virtue of an accidental quality, not the result of a differentia in the true nature of the object” (Makhlūf 1971, 43). Thus every habitus is a condition but not every condition is a habitus.

Once the habitus is achieved, acts that resulted in the habitus were performed with effort and deliberation in the stage of condition, now issue forth with ease and no deliberation. In an important passage on the role of deliberation and the ends of an act, Avicenna makes the case that when performing an act towards some end, deliberation is not a component. He asks us to consider the case of art, “for undoubtedly, it is for the sake of some end. Once it becomes a habit, however, doing it no longer requires deliberation, and it even becomes such that when deliberation is present, it is nigh on impossible to do” (Avicenna 2009, 98). When art is at the habitus stage, it issues forth from the person without much effort or deliberation as it is now a firmly fixed quality of

the person's soul. Only at the stage of condition (*hāl*) is effort and deliberation required due to the quality not being firmly established. One observes this same distinction in al-Ghazālī's discussion on what character is in his *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. al-Ghazālī defines character as, "a firmly established disposition (*hay'ah*) of the soul by virtue of which acts proceed [from the soul] with ease, not requiring reflection and deliberation [on part the person]" (al-Ghazālī 2010, 3:605). In defining a character trait as a fixed disposition of the soul, al-Ghazālī identifies that a person can only truly possess a character trait, good or bad, at the habitus stage. Prior to that, in relation to that character trait, the person is in the state where it is a condition and not a fixed part of the person's disposition. al-Ghazālī later discusses why he has qualified his definition with it being a fixed disposition by providing the example of a person who only on certain occasions performs acts of generosity and gives money due to certain circumstances. Such a person cannot be described as a generous person or as possessing the quality of generosity because an act of generosity only proceeds from them due to external factors. Only when acts of generosity proceed from a person easily and without deliberation can generosity be said to be a firmly fixed quality of a person's soul. To the extent, al-Ghazālī states, that, "a person could possess the quality of generosity and not give anything due to an impediment such as the lack of wealth or some other factor [that prevents the generous person from acting generously]. [Likewise] it may be the case that a person possesses the quality of stinginess and gives out wealth due to motivating factors such as ostentation or to establish a reputation [of being generous]" (ibid., 3:606). Only when a psychic quality has gone through the stage of condition onto the habitus stage can it be said to be firmly

fixed in a person's soul. Once the quality is firmly fixed (*rāsikhah*) and very difficult for a person to lose can that psychic quality be predicated of the person.

When a person is said to possess *adab* it is to be understood as a habitus (*malakah*) which is a firmly established psychic quality of the soul. This is achieved by a person consistently performing acts that reflect that disposition resulting in the condition (*ḥāl*) of *adab* with effort and deliberation. The consistent performance of acts of *adab* result in the soul possessing *adab* and acquiring the disposition of *adab*. After which acts of *adab* proceed from the person without deliberation and effort. This understanding of a psychic quality going through the stage of being a condition (*ḥāl*) and then to the stage of being a habitus (*malakah*) is demonstrated in the statement of the Prophet Muhammad where he said, “O people! [Know] that knowledge is acquired through acts of learning (*ta'allum*) and deep understanding of the religion is acquired by undertaking acts that generate understanding of the religion (*tafaqquh*)” (al-Bayhaqī 1999, 1:314). In another statement made by the Companion of the Prophet, Abu Dardā', we find the same statement made about learning with the addition of the virtue of forbearance. Abu Dardā' says, “Knowledge is acquired through acts of learning (*ta'allum*) and forbearance is acquired by performing acts of forbearance (*tahallum*)” (Ibid., 1:348). In these statements, the qualities of religious knowledge, deep understanding, and the virtue of forbearance all have the same way of being acquired which is the performing of those acts that are dictated of that quality. One notices that the verb form being used in each case is the form V. According to Arabic grammarians, one of the primary meanings of the form V verb is to put in effort (*takalluf*) to perform the verb in form I. So *tahallum* means to put effort to perform acts of forbearance (*ḥilm*). Similarly is the case with the

other verbs. Muslim theologians and writers on education have cited this *ḥadīth* as a proof text for the process of acquiring a psychic quality comprised of the stage of being a condition (*ḥal*) then, upon constant performance of acts that the quality dictates, the person enters the habitus (*malakah*) stage where the quality can truly be predicated of the person.

Adab being identified as a habitus (*malakah*) entails that a person performs acts that constitute *adab* in order for the soul to possess *adab*. The statements of the early Muslims on *adab* which identify it with specific acts and dispositions can now be understood as identifying some acts that are the fruits of a person possessing *adab*. They serve as guidelines of acts that a person can perform continuously to reach the stage where *adab* is a habitus.

CHAPTER THREE
CONSTRUCTING THE EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITATIVE DISCOURSE: CRAFTS
AND *ADAB* MANUALS

Having explored the various significations of the term *adab* and investigated its psychological dimensions, we arrived, in the last chapter, towards a philosophical definition of the term with al-Attas. In this chapter, we aim to construct a central constituent of the practice of education's authoritative discourse, namely *adab* manuals. Exploring the authoritative discourse will allow us to situate Ibn Jamā'ah and his contribution to educational thought in the Islamic tradition. Manuals dedicated to *adab* have been composed for all crafts and practices in the Islamic tradition, including the practice of education. The focus of this chapter is to construct the authoritative discourse

of *adab* manuals through studying *adab* manuals in various practices aiming to identify the purpose these manuals served in Muslim societies. Then we will focus specifically on the *adab* manuals in the practice of education attempting to identify content and trends of these manuals historically.

What the prevalence of *adab* manuals indicate is that “there is a general *adab* shared widely in Muslim society that underlies the norms and activities of all other roles” and a “pervasiveness of theories of the person and of psychology evident in the concept and literatures of *adab*” (Metcalf, 1984, 4). The way *adab* is embodied and unfolds in each of these crafts and disciplines of knowledge indicates to us that, despite the different social roles, offices and crafts the *adab* manuals were intended for, it was expected that each practitioner would cultivate an *adab* that was common to all social roles and crafts. In addition to the universal nature of *adab*, it also had its own manifestations that were particular to each social role, office or craft.

Having established *adab* as the good sought after in all crafts and disciplines of knowledge, *adab* in literature dedicated to the practice of education in the Islamic tradition will be surveyed. This will establish that in any educational initiative, the highest good that is sought after in Islamic educational philosophy is *adab*.

Teaching as a Craft (*al-ṣinā‘ah*)

The existence of *adab* manuals in the Islamic practice of education must be understood within a larger context of how the activity of teaching and learning is viewed in relation to other human activities in the Islamic tradition. The educationalist al-Rāghib al-Aṣḥānī (d. 502/1108) situates human actions in relation to divine acts, or the acts of

God. He states, “Acts (*af‘āl*) are of two types: divine and human. Divine acts are of four types: origination (*ibdā‘*), existentiation (*takwīn*), sustaining (*tarbiyyah*), and transformation (*ihālah*)” (al-Rāghib 2007, 293). All of these acts are considered acts of creation with each act signifying a type of creation; creation referring to the act of bringing into existence from non-existence.

Origination refers to God creating an object where the act of creation is a single act and the object is not created from a pre-existing object nor created in a gradual manner. The thing is brought into existence in its complete form in a single act. Existentiation occurs when a thing is brought into existence in a gradual manner. al-Rāghib provides the creating of humans, plants and animals as examples of existentiation. Sustaining refers to God providing creation with all types of sustenance and transformation refers to God changing the qualities of creation such as color, taste, and odor.

al-Rāghib next treats human actions stating that there are of three types: acts of the soul, or psychic acts which al-Rāghib states are the “acts of the heart” (ibid., 294). The acts of the heart are not the physical acts of the body, but are the acts of thought and knowledge. Next are physical (*badanī*) acts to which walking, standing, sitting, and other acts of the body belong. The third types of human acts are artisanal (*ṣina‘ī*) in nature and are acts produced by both the soul and the body. The various crafts and arts belong to this type of human acts. al-Rāghib’s classification of acts is predicated on his understanding of the makeup of a human being. A human being is composed of both a body and a soul. Each has acts that are specific to it and acts that are produced when the body and the soul act together.

al-Rāghib adds another perspective on human actions by viewing them in relation to animals and inanimate objects. The key terms he uses when discussing the actions of humans, animals, and inanimate objects are *al-fi'l*, *al-'amal*, and *al-ṣun'u*. Each of the terms signify certain qualities of an action and those qualities determine which of the three, humans, animals, or inanimate objects, the term can be applied to. *Al-fi'l*, being the most general of the terms, is applied to actions that, “are skillfully or unskillfully done, done with or without cognition, are done intentionally or unintentionally, and to the actions of humans, animals, and inanimate objects.” *Al-'amal*, on the other hand, “is only applied to animals and not to inanimate objects, and to actions that are intentional and done with cognition, not to actions that are unintentional and done without cognition.” *Al-'amal* excludes only the acts of inanimate objects. The last term al-Rāghib treats is *al-ṣun'u* which is, “only applied to humans and not other animals. And [the term] is only applied to [actions] that are performed with skill.” So in this classification scheme of movements, *al-fi'l* is the most inclusive term, including the movement of animate and inanimate objects, and *al-'amal* brings in one level of exclusivity by being applied only to the movement of animate objects. The most specific class is *al-ṣun'u* which only refers to the acts of human beings, excluding all other movements of animate objects.

Afi'l, as we have just seen, is the most general in its application in that it includes all actions we observe in the world from all beings and is not exclusive to human actions. al-Jurjanī defines an animal as, “a sentient body which grows and moves possessing a will.” The ability to act intentionally is affirmed for all animals (*al-hayawān*) but not affirmed for inanimate objects (*al-jamadat*). Even though plants are bodies which do grow they are not included the category of animals. Aḥmadnagarī states

in his entry on plants, “there is no difference [of opinion] that plants are not [considered as] animals. The only difference is regarding whether they are living. It is said that they are living because life is an attribute that is the basis of nourishment and growth. Others said no because life is an attribute that is the basis of perception and volitional movement” (Aḥmadnagarī 1911, 1:394). Thus the types of acts that a willing sentient being can perform are of a different category than inanimate beings that lack a will or volition that category being *al-‘amal*.

For al-Rāghib, what makes human beings stand out in this framework is the ability of humans to perform acts that require skill and expertise, termed *al-ṣun‘u*, which signifies doing and act well and skillfully. The derived noun *al-ṣinā‘ah* refers to habitual work, trade, an art, or craft. Actions of this category assume will, knowledge, and a *telos* on part of the agent. According to al-Rāghib, actions of this category may occur without thought (*fīkr*) by the agent but this is due to the agent’s expertise of the craft. Whereas an action of the first category performed without exhibiting thought on part of the agent is due to the agent’s lack of expertise.

Crafts (*al-ṣinā‘ah*), according to al-Rāghib are either intellectual (*‘ilmī*) or practical (*‘amalī*):

“The intellectual crafts are those which do not require any assistance such as the members [of the body] like the hands and feet [to accomplish]. [Examples of the intellectual crafts] are knowledge of divine realities (*al-ma‘ārif al-ilāhiyyah*) and arithmetic. Practical crafts require the assistance of the members of the body and are of two kinds. The first kind [of craft] comes to an end with the completion of the actions of the craftsman such as dancing, playing of wind instruments (*al-zamr*), and plays (*muhakāh*). The second kind [of craft] produces an impression that remains [after the completion of an action]. This [second] kind [of craft] is [also] of two kinds: crafts that leave an intellectual, not a tangible, impression such as the craft of medicine and blacksmithing (*al-bayṭarah*). And crafts that leave a tangible impression such as the craft of building and writing” (al-Rāghib 2007, 294-5).

When one conceives of a craft what normally comes to mind is an activity that produces something that is tangible, that one can observe. In other words, the goal of a craft is the production of an artifact resulting at the end of the activity. In al-Rāghib's conception, a craft is inclusive of activities whose *telos* is to produce an artifact, but he extends the concept of a craft to the sciences as well, such as arithmetic. Medicine is classified as a practical craft, yet this is approaching medicine in terms of the actual practice of medicine. The science of medicine would be an intellectual craft.

Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), in addition to being a historian and a judge, has written much on education and is a major thinker in the Islamic tradition on educational thought. In his well known *al-Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn spends nearly a quarter of the book on teaching, epistemology, the development of the religious sciences and crafts.¹³ He argues that the teaching of sciences is to be considered a craft (*al-ṣinā'ah*) because, “[obtaining] skill in a science, the ascertainment of it, and the complete mastery of it is only by [possessing] a habitus (*malakah*)” (Ibn Khaldūn, 2005, 2:350). A habitus is developed only by constant practice of a particular craft. In teaching a particular science, the habitus will allow the instructor to “comprehensive knowledge of the science's foundations, principles, knowledge its topics and being able to derive solutions for new cases from its principles” (ibid). All habitus, Ibn Khaldūn states, are corporeal (*jismaniyyah*). What he intends by this is that they are sensible (*maḥsūṣah*), able to be perceived. The habitus can be perceived on the body or in the mind. Because the habitus are corporeal, in order for them to be acquired, a teacher is required.

¹³ For a thorough study on this topic see Zaid Ahmad. 2003. *The epistemology of Ibn Khaldūn*. London: Routledge Curzon.

Ibn Khaldūn further argues that teaching a science is a craft by pointing to the existence of different technical nomenclature that exists amongst the experts of a particular science which is the case with all crafts. The existence of different nomenclature within a particular science is evidence that the nomenclature itself is not part of the science. Ibn Khaldūn states, “for if they were part of the science, there would be only one [set of] technical terms used by them all. Do you not see in theology (*‘ilm al-kalām*) how, in the teaching of this science, the terminology of the early and later scholars differs? Similarly in legal theory (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), Arabic language, and law (*fiqh*), every science that is needed to be learnt you will find its terminology different when teaching the science. This all shows that the different technical terms are crafts utilized when teaching, while the science as such is one in itself” (Ibn Khaldūn 2005, 2:351). How this works is the science that is being taught is one and the same no matter who is learning the science or teaching it. The science of theology is one science, but when it comes to the activity of teaching the science of theology, different techniques are used. Of these techniques are terms that allow the teacher and the student to discourse about various issues and concepts that are particular to theology. Different teachers and scholars will invariably have different terminologies and techniques that they used when teaching theology. The activity of teaching is separate from the science that is being taught and it is the activity of teaching that is considered to be a craft.

We have seen with al-Rāghib that crafts are a category of actions that are specific to human beings that entail actions of the soul and the body. Ibn Khaldūn sees crafts in much the same way: as an activity that is specific only to human beings. “Humans being are distinguished from other animals with qualities that are specific to humans. Of these

qualities are the [existence] of the sciences and crafts that result from thought by which human beings are distinguished from all other animals” (Ibn Khaldūn 2005, 1:62). Thus the craft of teaching and learning is specific to human beings and not other animals and this craft involves the development of a habitus which, as we have encountered, is a quality of the soul.

In the framework outlined, Muslim writers on education have considered the activity of teaching and learning as a craft. For each craft, as we will be shown, there are manuals of *adab* that the practitioner of the craft must embody when engaging in a particular craft. The craft of teaching and learning also has its manuals of *adab* for the teacher and the student.

***Adab* Manuals and Crafts**

In the literature of almost all craft and practices in the Islamic tradition, one encounters manuals of *adab* that relate to that specific craft, social role, or act of worship. The presence of *adab* manuals is seen amongst different theological sects, Sufi orders (*turuq*), different political and religious offices, and for each age group and gender. *Adab* manuals transcend all boundaries in the Islamic tradition. One finds well known early *adab* manuals in various fields of human activity such as *Adab al-Qaḍī* by al-Khassaf (d. 261/874) in the field of law, *Adab al-Kātib* by Ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnawārī (d. 276/889) which he wrote for secretaries in the Abbasid administration, *Adab al-Ṭabīb* by Ishāq ibn ‘Alī Ruhāwī (d. 319/931) in the field of medicine, *Adab al- Ṣuḥba* by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) in the field of Sufism, *Ādāb al-Mulūk* by al-Tha‘labī (d. 427/1035) in the field of politics, and *al-Jāmi‘ li-Akhlāq al-Rāwī wa Ādāb al-Sāmi‘* by Khaṭīb al-

Baghdādī (d. 463/1070) in the field of *hadīth*. What has been mentioned so far are separate tracts devoted to a particular craft or a particular aspect of a craft or science. There are other writings and compilations that contain sections dedicated to the *ādāb* for the particular field. In *hadīth* compilations and legal manuals, for example, one encounters chapters and sections devoted to the *ādāb* of a particular aspect of a craft, science, acts of worship, or a daily act that a Muslim will perform.

Adab manuals were read and studied by the practitioners of each craft or science. These manuals served purposes different from those manuals that were in a craft that were designed for instruction and content. One would undergo training to be a judge by reading texts in positive law in one of the four legal schools, legal theory and other texts in other sciences. Then one would also study *adab* manuals written for a judge. This phenomenon of *adab* manuals existed all across the Islamic tradition and indicates, as Barabara Metcalf notes, that the “ideal of *adab* to be strikingly pervasive” (Metcalf, 1984, 3). The ideal was not to merely be a judge, a jurist, a hadith scholar, a Sufi, a man, a woman, or a ruler. Rather it was to be a master of these practices while possessing *adab*. In fact, to be considered a master of a practice was only possible if the craft was practiced with *adab*. Thus it is *adab* serving as the ideal to be cultivated in Islamic educational philosophy.

In examining the content of the *adab* manuals and by looking at manuals across various disciplines and crafts, we hope to ascertain a good sense of what the ideal of *adab* entails and how it is reflected in the disciplines of medicine, issuing legal verdicts (*fatāwa*), and *hadīth* transmission. The 4th AH/9th century CE physician, Ishāq ibn ‘Alī al-Ruhāwī, composed an important work entitled *Adab al- ṭabīb* intended to reform the

practice of medicine in his times. He observes that practitioners of medicine his time have resorted to dishonest and deceptive practices resulting in them, “marring the good qualities of medicine and bringing down the respected standing of its practitioners” (al-Ruhāwī 1992, 35). This situation resulted due to practitioners not acquiring knowledge of the foundational principles of the craft of medicine thereby not being able to pay heed to the directions the craft was headed. His solution was that the practice of medicine needed to be aligned with the *ādāb* required of the craft. He states, “Thus I have gathered together, to the extent I am able to, the *ādāb* which a physician must instill in himself, and the virtuous character traits according to which the physician must constitute his self with” (al-Ruhāwī 1992, 35). Once the physician acquires the proper *adab* and virtues, he will then be able to correctly practice his craft in its ideal manner. What exactly does the *adab* of the physician entail? In the passages following, al-Ruhāwī outlines the sections and topics of the book. This provides us a conception of what al-Ruhāwī has in mind when he speaks of the *adab* of the physician.

al-Ruhāwī organized *Adab al-ṭabīb* into twenty chapters divided over two sections. The first section focuses on specific *ādāb* and virtues that the physician must acquire, practices for managing and maintaining his physical body, practices that the physician must first do concerning himself, then those practices the physician must do concerning his ill patients and those who are healthy. Finally the first section treats instructions, injunctions, and ways of managing one’s health that the physician should offer to the patient, his servants, and those who oversee the patient’s health interests. In the second section of *Adab al-ṭabīb*, al-Ruhāwī focuses on necessary practices and regimina for patients and those who are well to observe. al-Ruhāwī sets this in the form

of stories and traditions, “by which all people can acquire *adab*, particularly the physicians” (al-Ruhāwī 1992, 36).

Studying the chapter titles also provides us with further details as to al-Ruhāwī’s conception of *adab* as it applies to the physician. The twenty chapters and their titles, as outlined by al-Ruhāwī himself, are:

- Chapter 1: The responsibility (*amānah*) and creed (*i’tiqād*) the physician must uphold, and the *ādāb* that the physician should cultivate in his soul and character.
- Chapter 2: The measures by which the physician treats his body and limbs. This chapter includes many obligations and must be discussed in detail.
- Chapter 3: What a physician must avoid and be aware of.
- Chapter 4: What the physician should advise the servants of the patient [to do].
- Chapter 5: The *ādāb* the visitors of the patient and the family of the bereaved should observe.
- Chapter 6: Matters the physician should pay close attention to such as simple and compound drugs, how to avoid using expired drug intentionally or unintentionally from pharmacists and other who are in charge of managing and safekeeping drugs.
- Chapter 7: What the physician should ask the patient and other about.
- Chapter 8: What is obligatory for the ill and healthy people to believe regarding the physician when ill or healthy.
- Chapter 9: The patient and the healthy person must accept what the physician [prescribes].
- Chapter 10: What a patient should advise [before an illness occurs] his family and servants [to do at the onset of an illness].
- Chapter 11: How a patient should interact with his visitors.
- Chapter 12: On the noble nature of the practice of medicine.
- Chapter 13: All people must hold the physician in high esteem in accordance with the position of the craft of medicine. However, kings and noble people must esteem the physician more [than the common people].
- Chapter 14: On rare incidents that occurred to some physicians. Some of which are already known. [Knowledge of this] will encourage the physician to be alert as to its paths. Some are funny, intending to encourage the physician to test the intelligence of the one seeking treatment, lest the physician be held responsible for any harm that results.

- Chapter 15: The craft of medicine is not to be taught to everyone seeking to learn it. Rather, [it should only be taught] to those who physical and moral constitution are suitable [to the craft].
- Chapter 16: On the examination of physicians.
- Chapter 17: On the ways kings may remove the corruption that exists amongst physicians, and guide all people to rectifying their relationship to medicine and how this was accomplished in past times.
- Chapter 18: Warning people from those who falsely practice under the same of medicine, and the difference between them and the medical tactics.
- Chapter 19: On blameworthy habits that many people have adopted that harm the sick and the physician.
- Chapter 20: On what the physician should store up and prepare for during periods of health for periods of illness, and from the time of youth for the time of old age.

One immediately notices the absence of any chapter on the content of medicine itself. If one were to look at the contents of the famous Canon on Medicine (*Ḳānūn fi 'l-tibb*) of Ibn Sīnā (d.428/1037), one finds the text devoted to topics such as the temperaments, the humours, anatomy, general physiology, psychology, the causes of disease, semeiology, sphygmology, urinoscopy, dietetics, the need for compound drugs, and on the preparation of various medicines. These topics are the technical aspects of the craft of medicine that are absent from al-Ruhāwī's composition on the *ādāb* a physician must abide by. This sheds light on the conception of *adab* in al-Ruhāwī's mind and what was absent in the practice of medicine in his time that did not allow physicians to obtain the good of the practice of medicine. It was not the content that was lacking, rather it was the absence of *adab* that created physicians unable to recognize and obtain the goods of the practice of medicine. The ideal self in the craft of medicine, in addition to mastering the content of medicine, must also possess the required *adab* of medicine as well. Such a physician will practice medicine in a specific manner that will realize the goods that are internal and external to the practice of medicine. In an important passage al-Ruhāwī

states, “It is, therefore, necessary for a physician to acquire the *ādāb* and the knowledge that benefits him in the practice of medicine. And without doubt, one who does not acquire what I will mention and discuss will be embarrassed [to practice medicine] if one possesses a minimal amount of perception (*al-ḥiss*)” (al-Ruhāwī 1992, 40).

al-Ruhāwī starts his first section on the theological doctrines that a physician must uphold. What is significant here is that he terms the items he will cover in this section rational *ādāb* (*al-ādāb al-aqliyyah*) or *ādāb* that the intellect must possess. For al-Ruhāwī, it is a must for a physician to have correct theological beliefs regarding God, His prophets, and other tenets of faith. The *ādāb* for the intellect are three and entails, firstly, upholding there is a Creator of the cosmos who is one, omnipotent, wise, gives life and death, and health and illness. Secondly, the physician must have firm affection and dedicate his entire intellect, self, and will to Allah. Thirdly, the physician must uphold that Allah has prophets that Allah has sent to humanity for their benefit and interests. Not possessing these *ādāb* of the intellect, on the part of the physician, will lead to a corrupt practice of medicine that does not achieve the goods of the craft. After a physician upholds correct doctrine taught from the prophets of Allah, the physician must turn to himself and acquire the virtues and improve one’s moral character. This entails worshipping Allah in a manner that is pleasing to Him, and bringing into balance the three faculties of the soul: faculty of the mind (*al-quwwa al-nafsainyyah*), the vital faculty (*al-quwwa al-hayawiniyyah*), and the faculty related to lust (*al-quwwa al-shahwaniyyah*).

For al-Ruhāwī, the *adāb* a physician is expected to cultivate, while many are specific to the craft of medicine, are also expected for any Muslim to cultivate regardless of their craft or profession. al-Ruhāwī states that the goods of the *adab* are, “general and

apply to all people who have intelligence. And if one possesses *adab*, then one would deem the acquiring [of these *ādāb*] as a virtue” (al-Ruhāwī 1992, 39). This is an important observation on the nature of the self that possesses *adab* that serves as the highest good that education in the Islamic tradition seeks to cultivate. The ideal of *adab* serves to inform all crafts and disciplines. This ideal, however, does create different expectations at certain levels of a craft or a discipline of knowledge that are specific to them and not transferable. Thus the *adab* of the intellect are to be found in the *adab* expected, not only for a physician, but for a judge, a jurist, a student, a teacher, and a ruler as well. al-Ruhāwī draws an analogy between the *ādāb* of the physician and the *ādāb* of a judge stating that the physician acts like a judge over the soul as a judge is over the body and, “the qualities that are befitting for a judge are all, or mostly, befitting of a physician as well” (Ibid., 39). In an *adab* manual for delivering the Friday sermons, the Shafite jurist Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār (d. 724/1324) states when discussing the *adab* that relate to oneself, “It is necessary that [the person delivering the sermon] be upholding correct doctrine, be of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jama’ah*, not an anthropomorphist, nor one who negates His attributes” (Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār 1996, 87). This being identical to what al-Ruhāwī mentioned as the *adab* relating to physicians. al-‘Aṭṭār later elaborates on more of the *ādāb* that a person delivering a sermon needs to cultivate stating that the person needs to know all of the legal rulings related to delivering the Friday sermon such as what the conditions of the sermon are what invalidates the sermon. These particular *ādāb* is specific to delivering the Friday sermon.

al-Ruhāwī’s work on *adab* is represent a systematic work whose chapters are well organized and build on each other. This is not the case with all *adab* works. There does

not seem to be a particular style of composing works on *adab* that all writers adhered to. The similarities between different works of *adab* are more in the content and purpose rather than in the style and order of the work. For example, al-Ruhāwī will have chapters each dedicated to a particular *adab* the physician is to cultivate. He dedicates the first chapter of his work to the virtues and character traits a physician must acquire. al-‘Aṭṭār dedicates the chapter on the virtues and character traits for one delivering the Friday sermon towards the end of the work. In a work on the *adab* for judges by an 11th century Hanablite jurist, Mar‘ī ibn Yūsuf al-Karmī (d. 1033/1623), the virtues and character traits required of judges is scattered throughout the work in different places. The Shafite jurist, al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058), dedicates chapters to the same topic in the second half of his *Adab al-qadī*. The first section is dedicated to procedural issues the judge should be aware of when in court. (al-Māwardī 1971)

Adāb that are common to all crafts and disciplines of knowledge are an important point of inquiry in Islamic philosophy of education. The *adāb* were in the mind of the writers when composing these tracts to be read and studied by students and practitioners of the craft. They provide us with the conception of the self that is to be cultivated in any Islamic educational initiative. We have seen that a person having upholding correct theological doctrines regarding God, prophets, revealed books, and other issues holds a central place in the self that possesses *adab* that is common to all educational initiatives. Another example of an *adab* that is common to all disciplines is the virtuous character traits (*al-akhlāq al-maḥmūdah*) that constitute the soul possessing *adab*. al-‘Aṭṭār says, “It is necessary [for the person delivering the Friday sermons] to avoid the customs of politicians, the pleasures of the [lower] soul, demonic states, senseless moods, and

engaging in sophisticated discussions. It is necessary to hold his soul to the fine, virtuous traits of character, and avoid evil and rude traits of character” (Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār 1996, 170). al-Karmī states that judges should, “beware of forgetting Allah, Most Great. This comes about from – without him being aware of it – from being accustomed to having his judgments carried out, the love of leadership, social status, and being placed in charge over people, people being in awe of him, veneration his position, and similar factors” (al-Karmī 2001, 47). He continues providing the cause of forgetting Allah saying, “This also comes about from destructive vices that come about due to being oblivious to the self and its refinement, and arising from the engagement of a judge with people who have not perfected themselves [by acquiring the virtues of good character] such as those who follow their desires and lusts” (Ibid.) In *Adab al-Wazīr* by al-Māwardī, an *adab* manual for governors, he outlines a number of virtues to acquire and vices a governor should rid oneself of such as covetousness, forbearance, being grateful, patience, not listening to slander, and other vices and virtues. (al-Māwardī 1929) We have already encountered similar passages in al-Ruhāwī’s work. All of this indicates that in the conception of the self that possesses *adab*, the acquisition of the virtues and the elimination of vices is a constituent element to be cultivated regardless of the specific craft or discipline of knowledge one is concerned with undertaking.

One finds a strong correlation between *adab* and moral character in many writings of *adab*. Although this is not the only defining aspect of *adab*, yet it the conception of *adab* in the Islamic tradition, the position of moral character is central. To the extent that *adab* has been defined as, “a term signifying knowledge by virtue of which all types of errors can be avoided. It is [a term] general in its application that includes [errors in]

speech, acts, and character (*khuluq*).” This definition allows us to understand that the strong relationship moral character (*akhlāq*) has with *adab* that we see all so pervasive on all writings on *adab* that it is in the context of the *adab* a person must have in relation to himself. Discussions on *adab* are always relational – meaning that one possesses *adab* but in addition to possessing *adab* one also exhibits and manifests *adab* in relation to something. Thus there are *ādāb* to be observed in relation to a patient, to a student, to one’s subjects, to a teacher, to a prophet, to Allah, and to one’s own self. Thus we find al-Māwardī stating, “There are *ādāb* that belong to the judgeship. These *ādāb* increase the awe judges possess, strengthen the reverence they have; awe and reverence being the basis of their presence. This will lead the opposing parties to deal fairly with one another and prevent them from denying the other’s rights. The *ādāb* in regards to judges...are of three types” (al-Māwardī 1971, 2:241-242). The first type of *adab* of a judge relate to their own selves and the character traits they possess. A judge should possess the qualities of abstinence (*zuhd*), humility, and composure (*khushu*). Possessing these traits would increase the judge in his awe and reverence that are needed in the courtroom. al-Māwardī then continues with the second type of *adab* of a judge and these relate to the *adab* a judge exhibits in relation to the witnesses of a case. The third type of *adab* relates to the *adab* a judge exhibits in relation to the opposing parties of the case he is handling. Thus, how *adab* manifests itself and what action, word or moral character traits manifest is determined by the relation of the object of *adab* to the person exhibiting *adab*.

The relational aspect of *adab* that we find in our writers is expressed in al-Attas’ definition of *adab* where it is an understanding that there is a hierarchy in knowledge and being and *adab* entails that one recognize and acknowledge one’s place in this hierarchy.

Along with this recognition and acknowledgment comes an appropriate action, speech, or disposition that is a true reflection on the hierarchy. It is this hierarchy that produces a relational self; a self is can never be conceived of in isolation of anything because the self does not exist in isolation.

The *Ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘allim* Genre of Literature

Thus far, we have been studying *adab* literature in various domains of society from the governor, the judge, to the physician, the *ḥadīth* scholar, and the person delivering the Friday sermon. Manuals of *adab* exist for each social role, craft and discipline of knowledge. A vast amount of literature has been generated that treats *adab* as it relates to various fields. One can get the impression that education in the Islamic tradition is only conceived within the context of a particular craft or social role. This is an important question of philosophical importance as to whether or not teaching can be conceived of as a craft or practice in itself and it is this craft of teaching that is applied to specific crafts. We will not take up this question at this time. Nonetheless, the material examined and the conclusions we arrive at in this study will bear direct relevance to this question.

In the Islamic tradition, one does encounter an impressive amount of literature on the *adab* of the student and the teacher. Sebastian Günther has labeled this literature as the *ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘allim* genre of literature and it is in the 3rd - 4th /9th century that we find literary expression of educational thought in the Islamic tradition. (Günther 2005) Yahya Ḥasan ‘Alī has identified an earlier date for the literary expression of educational placing it in the first half of the second century AH with a tract written by the

jurist Abu Ḥanifah (d. 150/768) to his student Abū Yūsuf (d. 182/799). (Murād 2003)

The fact that during the initial stages of the Islamic tradition existed in an oral culture forces us to conclude that the *ādāb* most likely did exist but not primarily in written form. So there very likely did exist this tradition even before this time period when we see the generation of many texts in various disciplines of knowledge.

Historians of educational thought in the Islamic tradition have all mentioned that one of the earliest writings on education is *Kitab Ādāb al-mu'allimīn* by the North African Maliki jurist Muḥammad ibn Saḥnūn (d. 256/870). Examining its structure, contents and style, both Günther and Ṭalas state that the work is intended for elementary teachers and is intended to serve as professional advice for them regarding their practice. (Günther 2005; Ṭalas 1957) This text indicates that elementary education in North Africa in this time was well established. Additionally, the text provides us with an idea of what the curriculum was at the time. Ṭalas and Günther state that from Ibn Saḥnūn's work, one learns that the teacher (*al-mu'addib*) was requested to teach a curriculum that was compulsory for the child and another curriculum that was optional. The compulsory curriculum primarily focused on the Qur'an. Children were required to recite the Qur'an correctly, with its correct vowelings, rules for copying the Qur'an, and other aspects of reciting the Qur'an. The optional curriculum was composed of subjects such as mathematics, poetry, history of the Arabs, Arabic grammar, handwriting and the art of delivering the Friday sermon. (Günther 2005; Ṭalas 1957)

Other issues discussed by Ibn Saḥnūn in his text relate to teacher responsibilities, treating students fairly, and what type of teacher to appoint. Günther provides us with a list of the chapters of the text:

- i. [Traditions] on the teaching of the Quran.
- ii. [Traditions] on the equity [to be observed in treating school] boys.
- iii. Chapter [of traditions] on the reprehensibility of erasing the Word of God the Exalted [when written on slates], and what should be done [instead] in this regard.
- iv. [Traditions] on disciplining [students], and on what is permissible in this [regard] and what is not.
- v. [Opinions] on the final exams for the recitation of the Quran [at elementary schools], and what is [to be given] to the teacher on this [occasion].
- vi. [Opinions] on the presentation of gifts [to the teacher] on feast days.
- vii. [Opinions] on [the occasions] when [the teacher] should give days off to the [school] boys.
- viii. [Opinions] on the obligation on the teacher to stay all the time with the pupils [under his supervision].
- ix. [Opinions] on the wage of the teacher and when it is obligatory.
- x. [Opinions] on renting a copy of the Quran, law books, and other such books
(Günther 2005, 95-96).

Written in a very legal, administrative manner and in the form of questions posed and responded to, with statements from Ibn Saḥnūn on certain issues, what one notices here is the absence of any treatment of the *adab* that a teacher must observe as we saw in the other *adab* manuals of a physician or a judge. The use of *adab* in this text is used primarily in the sense of disciplining and creating habits in the student. *Kitab Ādāb al-Mu'allimīn* is a very early text and later compositions in the *Ādāb al-'ālim wa-l-muta'allim* genre differ significantly from it in both style and content as we will see when analyzing Ibn Jamā'ah's *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi' wa al-Mutakallim fī Ādāb al-'ālim wa-l-Muta'allim*. There are many factors that explain the differences in the compositions. One is that it is clear that Ibn Saḥnūn is writing for a particular situation regarding the state of elementary education in his time and location. He is addressing the needs that have arisen in his context by composing this tract on professional advice to teachers. Another factor is that one would naturally assume that one teaching the Qur'an would be a Muslim

holding sound creed; otherwise the person would not be qualified to teach in the first place.

Other representative writings in *Ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘allim* genre that Ṭalas lists are:

- Abu Nasr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Fārābī (d. 339/950). Wrote extensively on educational thought but his writings in this area are no longer extant.
- ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad Qābisī (d. 403/1012). His manual on *adab* is entitled *al-Risālah al-Mufaṣṣilah li-Aḥwāl al-Muta‘allimīn wa-Aḥkām al-Mu‘allimīn wa-al-Muta‘allimīn* and is considered to be one of the most extensive writings in this genre. Quoting extensively from Ibn Saḥnūn, Qābisī discusses the merits of learning the Qur’an and teaching it to others. However, he treats many issues not covered by Ibn Saḥnūn, such as the teaching on Christians and Jews by Muslims, the teaching of girls, and issues related to a child’s family. Qābisī does dedicate a chapter on how to attain righteousness.
- Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Miskawayh (d. 421/1030). Considered as one of the *falāsifah* in the Islamic tradition, he composed numerous works dealing with educational thought. His most famous work is *The Refinement of Character (Tahdhib al-Akhlaq)*.
- The Brethren of Purity (*Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’*). A group of philosophers from the fourth or fifth century AH, tenth or eleventh AD. They left a collection of fifty-two treatises on various metaphysical topics, mathematics, and education.
- Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sīnā. One of the greatest philosophers of the Islamic tradition who composed numerous works on logic, metaphysics, and medicine. His educational work is entitled *The Book of Management (Kitāb al-Sīyāsah)*.
- Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī (d. 504/1111). One of the great theologians, jurists, and Sufis of the Islamic tradition. al-Ghazālī is considered to be one of the great writers on Islamic educational thought. He was written numerous works in different sciences. One of his well known works is *The Revival of the Religious Sciences (Iḥyā’ Ulūm al-Dīn)*.

This list may give the impression that *adab* manuals are a thing of the past and this genre was at an ebb since the 12th century, yet the *adab* manuals have continued to be written since al-Ghazālī and Ibn Jamā‘ah. One such work, *The Adab [of Learning] and the Endpoint of Desire (adab al-ṭalab wa-l-muntahā-l-‘arab)*, was composed by the

Traditionist and former Zaidī Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Shawkānī (d. 1250/1839).¹⁴ This work, while comprising similar topics that previous writers engaged in, stands out due to the writer dedicating a significant portion of his work on factors that lead to partisanship (*al-ta‘ṣṣub*) and the topic of being objective and fairness (*al-inṣāf*) when studying. The reason for this seems to be stemmed by the state of scholarship in al-Shawkānī’s era. Early in his life, he enquired as to why certain legal positions were adopted and adhered to by local jurists in the face of a multiplicity of opinions. al-Shawkānī was not satisfied with the adopting of opinions merely on the basis of custom, what was familiar, or false doctrine. Rather he would enquire about the evidences for each legal position and would spend time researching legal literature that provided evidences for the jurists’ position. al-Shawkānī saw that it was partisanship (*al-ta‘ṣṣub*) that lead students and scholars from determining what the truth was on matters and not being objective when weighing the evidence for each issue. He states, advising the student, “When you subjected yourself, O student, to fairness and not being partisan to any school of law, nor [to any particular] scholar, rather you place all scholars on the same level in regards to the Sacred Law, all being subjected to it...then you have obtained the greatest benefit of knowledge and acquired its most unique gems” (al-Shawkānī 1998, 89). Thus, one of the most important qualities to cultivate is the ability to discern when bias enters into scholarship.

al-Shawkānī also provides an analysis of how partisanship takes root in the scholarly class. Explaining the reason for partisanship, he states that “a student starts to study in a region that has adopted a particular school of law and follow a particular scholar. This

¹⁴ On al-Shawkānī’s life, works, and legacy, see Bernard Haykel’s *Revival and Reform in Islam*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[condition] is a malady that has pervaded the Islamic regions and is widespread among its inhabitants” (ibid., 91). Studying in an environment where there is only one school of law creates a psychology which engenders partisanship among the class of scholars to the point where they treat their own school of law as the Sacred Law, dismissing all other voices that differ from the student’s positions as error and misguidance for no reason other than being different and unfamiliar. Here we see *adab* manuals develop and being used to correct corrupt practices of a craft that may exist in a certain time period. In this sense, *adab* manuals continue to change and reflect the situations in which authors find themselves.

Adab manuals continue to be written in our own times serving the same ends of ensuring the practice of education is aligned to its internal goods. More recently, the *ḥadīth* scholar Muḥammad ‘Awwamah (b. 1940) has written a sizeable *adab* manual entitled *Directive Landmarks Regarding the Craft of Learning Sacred Knowledge* (*Ma ‘ālim al-Irshādiyyah li-Ṣinā‘ah Ṭālib al-‘Ilm*). This work covers many of the issues and topics that most educational *adab* manuals historically have deal with. Issues and topics addressed in *Ma ‘ālim al-Irshādiyyah* are: categories and types of knowledge, the merit of sacred knowledge and scholars, the *ādāb* a student must cultivate in himself such as sincerity, efficient utilization of one’s time, the *ādāb* a student is to cultivate in relation to his teacher, and the *ādāb* towards the material objects required for learning.

There are two related themes that set *Ma ‘ālim al-Irshādiyyah* apart from other earlier *adab* manuals. They are the theme of a student adopting a methodical approach to studying and the theme of direct, unmediated learning from a qualified teacher. ‘Awwamah’s emphasis on these two themes stems from the current state of religious

education and educational institutions in the Muslim world. His main concerns focus on shifts in scholarly authority brought in by the introduction of higher education institutions patterned on Western models in the Muslim world. These Western style institutions, such as Aligarh Muslim University (established in 1920) which grew out of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College (established in 1877), in addition to competing with pre-existing educational institutions such as the madrasa, generated a new class of religious authorities who underwent training that was, in most respects, unfamiliar to the practice of education in the Islamic tradition. It is seen as a break with the norms of the practice and its most problematic effects in the practice was twofold: (1) students were learning from teachers who did not enjoy an authoritative status amongst the community of practitioners, and (2) the new institutions cultivated in their students an approach to learning that was not methodical, lacked rigor, and assumed to be part of the authoritative community of practitioners independent of any conferring from the existing experts of the practice. For example, he warns against the phenomenon of “taking the parchment as a teacher (*al-tashayyukh bi-l-sahīfah*)” where students take on the path to learning solely from books produced by unqualified individuals, while not accompanying a master of the practice and being initiated into the community of practitioners. The breaks with the norms of the practice of education were expedited by the mass printing of educational resources and developments in technology, such as computer databases, both of which continued this trend which resulted in students having, in ‘Awwamah’s eyes, a skewed sense of expertise and what being educated truly entailed; basically a state of confusion regarding the internal goods of the practice. This confusion regarding the goods of the

practice has graduated many unqualified individuals who later assume the role of masters of the practice of education.¹⁵

‘Awwamah’s solution to address this situation is multifaceted starting with the title of his manual on *adab*. He invokes the idea of a craft (*al-ṣinā‘ah*) to religious learning indicating that there is an authoritative discourse that informs the standards of learning a novice must acknowledge. Even though the understanding of learning as a craft has been historically recognized, ‘Awwamah intends to bring this dimension to the forefront of his reader’s mind by framing the contents of his manual and forcing the reader to approach education as a craft. By doing so, structure will be brought back to educational discourse which it currently lacks.

Building from the conception of a craft, ‘Awwamah introduces the importance of adopting a methodological approach to learning. The second section of the first chapter is dedicated to explaining the importance of a method (*al-manhaj*) for the student of the religious sciences. For ‘Awwamah, having a methodological approach is something natural to all endeavors in life. “Any practical or theoretical project that a person takes up will not and will never end up in sound results unless a person designs a plan and studies his project from the moment he starts” (‘Awwamah 2013, 25). For the religious sciences to be studied in a methodological manner is not something unique to them. Rather all sciences, in order to obtain the goods it seeks, require to be studied methodically. The question of who determines the appropriate methodology is answered by ‘Awwamah that it is the masters and experts of each craft who determine the appropriate methodology for

¹⁵ For an overview on the change of authority in within Islam over the last 200 years, see Francis Robinson. (2009). *Crisis of Authority: Crisis of Islam?. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Third Series)*, 19, pp 339-354.

their respective crafts. Here ‘Awwamah provides the examples of a physician and a Qur’ān reciter who understand the methods that are appropriate to their crafts, thus demonstrating that the religious sciences are no different than any other practice or craft in this regard. (‘Awwamah 2013, 27)

New types of educational institutions and mass education, while resulting in increased literacy rates in Muslim countries, has also resulted in new modes of education as well.¹⁶

‘Awwamah notes this change and the negative impact this has had on mastering the religious sciences stating,

“The religious sciences used to be acquired by learning in person (*talaqqī*), the crowding of the knees (*muzāḥama bi-rukub*)¹⁷, students of the sciences standing at the doors of scholars, by reading a number of authoritative texts in every science, and by putting to memory foundational short texts in each science. A student would be gradual in their learning joining between learning in person and learning by oneself – by which I mean his own private reading – all the while consulting with his teachers in issues that were difficult for him [to understand]. The student would, by the grace of God, reach the stage where he himself will be an authoritative source for the forthcoming generation of students.

...

However, we have entered into a low stage [of learning] that has led to an even more precarious stage. The state [of things] is as our Master the Messenger of God (God bless him and grant him peace) has said regarding the tribulations at the end of time, ‘Each will make the [previous] one [seem] insignificant.’ The first dangerous stage is the study in Islamic universities in the College of Sacred Law (*sharī‘ah*) without [the college] requiring the student to attend [lectures] continuously nor do they require, to admit a student, to be a student of the religious sciences before studying at the university level – meaning that the student has not student in Sharī‘ah schools at the elementary and high school levels. Instead, a student would be admitted into the College of Sacred Law even if he is without a high school [diploma] and with no foundations in the religious sciences, not having studied its foundational [texts] nor its necessary [prerequisites]. Such a student starts to study at the university level and studies for four year in the College of Sacred Law. He then graduates as a professor and teacher of religion for generations of students. He sees himself as having become a scholar when he sits with laypeople speaking on God’s religion based on the questions posed in the gathering” (‘Awwamah 2013, 181-182).

¹⁶ See Robinson (2009) p. 351.

¹⁷ This is an idiomatic expression referring to a manner of sitting in front of a teacher where the knees of the student are touching the knees of the teacher in a lesson.

Here we see that, with the introduction of the Western model university, a new mode of learning was introduced. It is important to note here that ‘Awwamah is not necessarily identifying the low quality of graduates on the university itself. Rather he identifies the reconceiving of the standards of scholarship and what qualifies one to be a scholar to be problematic. It is in the independence from the community of the practice of education the universities cultivate in their students that breaks away from the standards of the practice. To be sure, ‘Awwamah does not jettison university education in favor of maintaining the status quo. Rather, in his view graduates from the university simply do not meet up to the standards of the practice. He states that “I do not deny some of the good [practices] of modern education for students of religious sciences...it is best and complete for a student to combine what is best in both [systems]: between the rooted, venerable [education system] and the fixed, modern [one]” (Ibid., 186). He does not elaborate much on the benefits of the modern systems of education.

A final area of ‘Awwamah’s engagement that we will look at is the impact of technological advances on the practice of education. ‘Awwamah acknowledges benefits that computer software such as databases of journals and books bring. Yet he aims to highlight what this technology takes away from the practice of education. He classifies the detriments of such software into material and spiritual. The material detriments lie in their inaccuracy and lack of reliability. For ‘Awwamah, there are simply too many errors in e-journals and e-books created by unqualified individuals overseeing the production of such resources. These errors render them as an unreliable source. The spiritual detriments lie in the fact that “the religious knowledge differs from other types of knowledge in that it entails a cognitive [component], disciplining [of the soul], and traversing of the

spiritual path (*sulūk*)” (‘Awwamah 2013, 185). An engineer can rely on technological advances because his craft deals with inanimate objects. However, in the case of the student of religious sciences, they are not merely engaged in the cognitive dimensions of their craft. Rather their craft demands from the soul to refine their souls in addition to developing their minds. For ‘Awwamah, a database of books will inform the student that prayer is an obligatory act, as well as inform the student on the legal proof texts for this. Yet, a database is not able to refine the soul of the student and serve as a guide on the spiritual in the manner that learning from a living teacher would provide. It is in disrupting the irreplaceable and direct, human to human connection in the learning process where the new educational advances are not accommodated and have created the situation in learning ‘Awwamah so bemoans.

The *ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘allim* genre of literature identified by Günther serves as the locus point for constructing the authoritative discourse of the practice of education in the Islamic tradition. In exploring this genre of literature, we have seen that *adab* manuals were created for all crafts in the Islamic tradition. Education, viewed as a craft, also has its manuals of *adab*. Although the content of these manuals varied throughout the centuries, they were all focused on content that did not relate to any substantive aspects of the science or practice. The manuals, instead, focused on how a person in the practice should cultivate *adab* as conceived of in the practice. Additionally, there are *ādāb* specific to the craft and what I have terms universal *ādāb* that are common to all crafts and practices.

Educational manuals of *adab* serve to ensure, like all *adab* manuals, that the practice is carried out in a manner that is aligned to the achievement of its internal goods. To that end, many *adab* manuals contain criticisms of the way the practice is carried out by its

practitioners. Though the content of *adab* educational manuals have variable elements, for example the earlier manuals focus on administrative dimensions of education, later manuals post-Ghazālī are more systematic and exhibit the relational nature of *adab*. Later manuals are organized according to the object of *adab*, whether it be the person himself, the teacher, the lesson, or educational materials. Current *adab* manuals continue in this trajectory following the same model of purpose and composition. ‘Awwamah’s contribution to this genre continues this tradition of *adab* manuals addressing deficiencies in the practice of education as conceived in the Islamic tradition.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SELF IN THE ISLAMIC TRADITION

Introduction

In the educational context, it is important to keep in mind that a person’s identity or sense of self cannot be reduced to them as a student. When considering the self that Islamic education seeks to cultivate, one must consider the person in the educational context. The self in the educational context is connected to and part of the conception of the self in the Islamic tradition. This greater conception must be explored in order to fully appreciate and better understand the self that Islamic education seeks to cultivate. As we

saw with Socrates, the cultivation of the soul takes place within the greater context of the conception of the person.

This chapter will look at how the Islamic tradition understands the aims of human beings' existence and what constitutes a human being. Additionally, two main ideas that ground the self that is to be cultivated in Islamic education will be explored in this chapter. We will explore what constitutes human happiness (*sa'ādah*) in the Islamic tradition seeking to arrive at an understanding of the *telos* of the human species. Additionally, the concept of human nature, the *fiṭra*, will be studied before exploring the self that possesses *adab* as conceived in the educational context.

The *fiṭra* is a term that is challenging to translate. Generally, however, it refers to the primordial natural disposition that human beings have been created by God upon. The *fiṭra* plays and how it is understood has significant theological, legal, educational, and spiritual implications. It will be shown that there are various understandings of the *fiṭra* amongst Muslim scholars, yet, the *fiṭra* does serve a role epistemologically as well in terms of what types of knowledge constitute the *fiṭra*.

The Human Person and Its *Telos*

In the Islamic tradition, one finds that Muslims conceived of the human person as possessing a physical and a spiritual component. The exact nature of these two components and their relationship with each other will be explored in order to develop an Islamic anthropology. In explaining what constitutes the human person, al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī (d. 502/1108) states, “The human being (*al-insān*) is composed of a body (*jism*), which perceives with the eye, and a soul (*nafs*) which perceives with the inner sight

(*baṣīra*).” This observation is grounded not solely in empirical observation, but in the Qur’ān, as al-Rāghib cites two verses of the Qur’ān in support of his claim, “Your Lord said to the angels, ‘I will create a man from clay. When I have shaped him and breathed from My Spirit (*ruh*) into him, bow down before him.’” [38:71-72]

After acknowledging the many different ways to understand and classify where humans stand in relation to all of creation, the Ash‘arite theologian and philosopher, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) discusses the place of humans in creation by considering which beings in creation possess an intellect (*‘aql*), wisdom (*ḥikma*), natural inclinations (*ṭabī‘a*), or carnal desires (*shahwa*). The first category is of those beings that possess an intellect and wisdom, but do not possess natural inclinations or carnal desires. In this category are angels. The second category is of those beings that do not possess an intellect or wisdom, but do possess natural inclinations and carnal desires. All animals, except for humans, fall in this category. The third category is composed of those beings that do not possess any of the four qualities, which plants and inanimate objects fall into. The fourth category is composed of those beings that possess an intellect, wisdom, natural inclinations and carnal desires. Human beings fall into this category (al-Rāzī 2013, 84-85).

al-Rāzī reasons that when God’s effusion (*fayḍ*) pervaded all possibilities, God’s inclusive effusion necessitated that it bring all four categories of creation into existence. For this reason, God said that “I am putting a successor on earth” [30:30] in order to avoid a possible category remaining non-existent. Although this is an explanation by al-Rāzī as to why God created human beings, it does not provide us with an understanding of what constitutes a person nor of what is the *telos* of a human life or of humanity at

large. This is not to say that al-Rāzī did not hold that there is a purpose or goods of a person's life. But understanding where humans stand in relation to other created beings is an important part of understanding the *telos* of humanity's creation.

For an understanding of what constitutes a person and the *telos* of human life, we will be focusing on the writings of the 12th century theologian and philosopher al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī (d. 502/1108). His thoughts represent by and large perspective of the Sunni tradition and in our enquiry we will be referencing other representative writers as well. In developing a *telos* of human life, we will look at the concept of *sa'ādah*, usually translated as happiness, and al-Rāghib discourse on this term. In his *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur'ān* (Dictionary of Qur'ānic Vocabulary), al-Rāghib defines the term *sa'ādah* as, "Divine assistance given to human beings in order to attain that which is good, and its contrary is wretchedness (*shaqāwah*)" (al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī 1992, 410.) This application of the terms *sa'ādah* and *shaqāwah* have their bases in the Qur'ān, "As for those who have been given *sa'ādah*, they will be in Paradise," [11:108] referring to the final good of the human life where people end up in the hereafter, similarly we have in the Qur'ān describing the two possible ends of human beings stating, "some of them will be wretched and some happy" [11:105]. Thus the Qur'ānic understanding of ultimate human happiness (*sa'ādah*) is the attainment of paradise where a person will be eternally with God; happiness being achieved in the life hereafter. (Ibid., 410)

The term *sa'ādah* has also been applied to worldly aspects as well. In this sense, I would translate the term as referring to the good of something or some activity. In al-Rāghib's conception, every created thing has a purpose and therefore a good for which it is to achieve in this world. This he deduces from the Qur'ān (20:50), "Our Lord is He

who gave everything its form, then gave it guidance.” al-Rāghib comments that this verse shows that, “In all things, God has made a perfection (*kamal*) that their nature drives them towards.” (al-Rāghib 1988) Thus, there is a perfection that is not actualized in this world of all created things, including human beings. This is referred to as the God given form in the verse. For each thing, its *sa ‘ādah* or happiness/good is in actualizing and obtaining its perfection that is specific to it. Thus there is the term *sa ‘ādah* can be applied to an ultimate good of a thing, which would be the thing obtaining its perfection, and the term can also be applied to an activity which is aligned to the ultimate good of a thing but which is sought for other than itself. Achieving both goods results in happiness, but that requires the lesser goods to be sought in order to achieve the ultimate happiness, which for all things is their perfection.

The types of goods (*sa ‘ādah*) can be seen clearly in al-Rāghib’s discussion of the perfection of humans. His discussion starts with identifying three classes of goods (*sa ‘ādah*) as they relate to humans. The first class relate to those goods that are external to a person (*sa ‘ādah kharijah*), meaning that they are not related to the person’s physical or spiritual dimensions. These include goods such as wealth, social status, and fame. The second class are those goods that relate to the physical dimensions (*sa ‘ādah badanīyya*) of a person such as one’s health, balanced personality, and physical beauty. The third category of goods are ones that relate to a person’s spiritual dimension (*sa ‘ādah nafsānīyya*) and include praiseworthy habits (*ādāb*) and noble knowledge. al-Rāghib holds that it is this third category of goods that is the most superior. This is because these goods, once obtained, persist with a person despite the different conditions and circumstances a person finds himself in and they are also beneficial in obtaining the good

of this world and the hereafter. This is to be understood in light of another passage al-Rāghib on goods, where he classifies goods as goods of this world or goods of the hereafter. Goods of the hereafter, once obtained, are continuous and never end, whereas goods of this world, if they are not sought for purposes of achieving perfection, the highest good, are “like a mirage, and are a delusion, a trial, and a punishment” (al-Rāghib 1988, 102).

al-Ghazālī’s discussion on *sa ‘ādah* as it relates to human beings arrives at the same conclusion as al-Rāghib. In the section on the rational proofs on the merits of knowledge, al-Ghazālī states,

Know that what is precious and desired is of many types: that what is sought after for the sake of something else, that what is sought for its own sake, and that what is sought for its own sake and for the sake of something else as well. That which is sought for its own sake is more noble and superior to that what is sought for the sake of something else.

And that which is sought for the sake of something else are *darāhim* and *dananīr* for they are merely stones with no intrinsic benefit. Were it not for God, Exalted and High, facilitating the fulfillment of needs with these two stones, they would be considered the same as pebbles [by people]. That which is sought for its own sake is happiness in the hereafter and the bliss of the beatific vision of God, the Exalted. [An example of] what is sought for its own sake and for the sake of something else is [the seeking] of a sound and healthy physique (al-Ghazālī 2010, 1:148).

Like al-Rāghib, al-Ghazālī observes that goods (*sa ‘ādah*) relate to this world and the hereafter. Thus happiness is not a phenomenon that human beings only obtain in the hereafter. al-Ghazālī also identifies ultimate happiness with being with God in the hereafter. That is the only good that is intrinsically good, all others are extrinsically good and are only considered to be a good if sought after to serve in obtaining what is intrinsically good.

Thus far, we have described happiness (*sa'ādah*) as it relates to an individual person. Happiness is understood as the achievement of perfection that is specific to its type. al-Rāghib explains,

The nobility of the human being lies in that God created them complete in terms of possessing the qualities for the purpose for which he was created. To clarify this, [consider] that every species that God has created in this world or has guided some created beings to make and produce has a particular act (*fi'l*)¹⁸ that is specific to this species, and were it not for this [particular act], this species would not exist. Each species also has a purpose that is specific to it. The [particular act] of the camel, for example, is to carry us and our heavy possessions to a town to which we would only be able to reach with great hardship. Likewise the horse is like wings for us to fly with, the saw and chisel are to repair our doors, beds, and other things with, and the door in order to protect the house with (al-Rāghib 2007, 294).

Every created being has many functions and acts yet it, in terms of its perfection (*kamāl*) there is an act that is specific to it. When looking at the acts that are specific to humans, we come to know that it is not that there is one act particular to each species, rather a species can have multiple acts that are specific to it. What is important here is that these acts do relate to a species perfection and thus to its happiness. al-Rāghib continues and describes the acts that specific to human beings. He explains,

Acts that are specific to humans are three: (1) Cultivating and populating (*imārah*)¹⁹ the earth. This is mentioned in God's, the Exalted, statement, "and made you inhabit and cultivate [the earth]." [11:61] This is achieved by acquiring sustenance that will suffice for oneself and others. (2) Worshipping God. This is mentioned in God's, the Exalted, statement, "I created jinn and mankind only to worship Me." [51:56] This is achieved by the submitting to the Creator in His commands and prohibitions. (3) Being God's successor (*khilāfah*). This is mentioned in God's, the Exalted, words, "and make you successors to the land to

¹⁸ al-Rāghib defines an act (*al-fi'l*) as, "a generic word that applies to an act that creates something or not, carried out with knowledge or no knowledge, or carried out with purpose or no purpose. It is also applied to the acts of humans, animals, and inanimate objects." See Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (2007, 294).

¹⁹ Franz Rosenthal comments on the word, "*Imarah*, from the same root as *'umran*, and practically identical with it." He also notes that, "As soon as several human beings, with their God-given power of thinking, begin to cooperate with each other and to form some kind of social organization, *'umran* results. *'Umrān* (translated here as "civilization") is one of the key terms in Ibn Khaldun's system. It is derived from a root which means "to build up, to cultivate," and is used to designate any settlement above the level of individual savagery."

see how you act” and other verses. Being a successor entails following the Creator, Exalted is He, to the extent a human being can, when governing through operationalizing the noble qualities of the Sacred Law. These noble qualities of the Sacred Law are wisdom (*ḥikmah*), establishing justice between people, clemency, goodness, and virtue. The objective [of being a successor] is to arrive to the Garden of refuge (*jannāt al-ma'wā*) and [obtain] proximity to God, Mighty and Exalted is He (al-Rāghib 2007, 82-83).

These three acts are what constitute human perfection. In working towards these ends is where human happiness lies. One observes, in al-Rāghib’s explanation, the differentiating of ultimate happiness, an intrinsic good which is sought for itself, and goods that are sought for the sake of the ultimate good which is proximity to God.

***Fiṭra* – Natural Disposition**

Central to the conception of the human self in the Islamic tradition is the concept of *fiṭra*, often translated as the primordial disposition of human beings. There is no systematic outline of the nature of human beings in the foundational texts of the Islamic tradition, the Qur’ān and hadīth. What we have is various interpretations and assumptions regarding the various aspects of the human person throughout the Islamic tradition. Camilla Adang states that the subject of *fiṭra*, “has received relatively little attention in modern scholarship” (Adang 2000, 21:391) Griffel comments along the same lines stating, “*Fiṭra* plays an important role in al-Ghazālī’s thinking and yet the subject has attracted only scant attention. This is not only true for al-Ghazālī but for the Islamic intellectual history as a whole” (Griffel 2012, 2). Consequently, we will begin our enquiry of *fiṭra* by studying the lexical dimensions of the term, similar to our study of the term *adab*, and then look at key texts in the Qur’an and hadīth literature that have served at the center of discussions of Muslim theologians, philosophers and exegetes on *fiṭra*.

Like Adang, I will leave the word *fiṭra* untranslated, “for it is by no means unequivocal” (Adang 2000, 21:393). During this enquiry, we will be referencing the works of Western scholarship on the *fiṭra*.

Lexically the word *fiṭra* is based on three root letters *fa’ – ṭa’ – ra’*. al-Zabīdī (1965, 13:325) states that these root letters primarily signify the opening of something or causing something to appear and become manifest. In the Qur’an, the word and its cognates occur about twenty times. The noun *al-faṭr* denotes a vertical opening or fissure (*al-shaqq*) as in the Qur’an 82:1, “When the sky is torn apart (*infaṭarat*), when the stars are scattered.” ‘Abdallāh Ibn ‘Abbās (d. 68/687–8), one of the earliest authorities on Qur’ānic exegesis, stated that he did not know what the verse, “Creator (*fāṭir*) of the heavens and earth” [Qur’ān 35:1] meant, the word *fāṭir* being unknown to him, until he came across two bedouins quarreling about which one of them possessed a well. One of the bedouins said, “I am the one who dug (*faṭartuha*) the well” while the other one said, “It is I who began (*‘ibtada’ tuha*) it’s [digging]” (Ibn Kathīr 2005, 1:44) The meaning of *fa’ – ṭa’ – ra’* now indicating the initiating of and beginning of an act in addition to its primary signification of an opening. The use of the word in this verse signifies that God is the sole creator and originator of the heavens and earth, without any associate in this act of creation. In another verse of the Qur’ān, “I worship only Him who created (*faṭara*) me, and it is He who will guide me,” [43:27], and in, “to Him who created us (*faṭaranā*)” [20:72] the use of the verb *faṭara* has been explained by exegetes and lexicographers to mean the act of creating and bringing into existence from non-existence. (al-Samīn 1995, 3:2014) Hence, one of God’s names is *al-Fāṭir*, the Creator as in Qur’ān 35:1, “Praise be to God, Creator (*fāṭir*) of the heavens and earth.”

An important nuance of the meaning of the verb *faṭara* has been brought about by some exegetes of the Qur'ān. The general meaning of the verb is to create, to bring out, and make apparent with the additional meaning of something coming forth from the inside of something, splitting the outside and making it apparent. The Arabs say the trees broke open (*tafaṭṭara*) with leaves and the plants broke through (*faṭara*) the earth. (Maydānī 2000, 7:23) This brings to light that what is meant by the term is not a mere opening of something, but rather it is the actualizing a thing's inner core that appears and becomes manifest.

Other meanings of the root letters that have been identified are flaws, such as in the verse, “You will not see any flaw in what the Lord of Mercy creates. Look again! Can you see any flaw (*fuṭūr*)?” [67:3] Here humans are told to reflect on the universe and its composition without any cracks in it as one would find when a building made by a human being over the years. The openings and cracks that appear are considered a flaw and therefore a sign of imperfect craftsmanship.

The term *fiṭra* occurs once in the Qur'ān, in 30:30, and this verse has received the attention from Qur'ān commentators, philosophers, and theologians. The verse reads, “And set forth yourself entirely towards the religion, not inclining to anything else (*ḥanīfan*). The *fiṭra* of God, according to which He created (*faṭara*) all of mankind. There is no altering the creation of God. That is the true religion, but most of mankind knows not.” In this verse, one finds three terms being used that have received the focus of Qur'ān commentators: religion (*dīn*), *ḥanīf*, and *fiṭra*. *Ḥanīf*, occurring twelve times in the Qur'ān, is strongly associated with the Prophet Abraham who is seen as the ideal *ḥanīf*.²⁰

²⁰ See verses 2:135, 3:67, 3:95, 4:125, 6:79, 6:161, 10:105, 16:120, and 16:123.

The term is used alongside *millat ibrahīm*, the religion of Abraham and has been used synonymously with the term *muslim* (Qur'ān, 3:67). This is so because of the pure sincerity and utter dedication to God that the Prophet Abraham embodied and his turning away from all forms of religion that violated the doctrine of God's oneness (*tawhīd*). The Prophet Abraham is described in the Qur'ān as being the paragon of monotheism, "Abraham was truly an example: devoutly obedient to God and true in faith (*ḥanīfan*). He was not an idolater." [16:120] and the Prophet Muhammad is commanded to follow the Prophet Abraham, "Then We revealed to you [Muhammad], 'Follow the religion of Abraham (*millat ibrahīm*), a man of pure faith who was not an idolater.'" [16:123] In this verse, the quality that is stressed is that Abraham turned away from the idol worship of his people and adopted monotheism.

al-Rāghib al-Asfahani states that *al-ḥanaf* is, "an inclining towards uprightness and away from misguidance" (al-Rāghib 1992, 260). The main idea behind the term in the Qur'ān is that a *ḥanīf* is one who has turned away from all false beliefs and practices and has submitted to the true religion of God. There were a number of individuals in Mecca during the pre-Islamic times who were referred to as being a *ḥanīf*. The common characteristic of this group was that they did not accept the polytheism of the Meccans and the pagan practices.²¹ These people then turned away from the Meccan polytheism and religious practices associated with it and adopted a monotheistic understanding of God. The *ḥanīfs* also associated themselves with the religion of Abraham due to the emphasis on God's oneness.

²¹ Umayya b. Abi 'l-Ṣalt being one of the more well known individuals identified as a *ḥanīf*. For a thorough analysis of the idea of a *ḥanīf* and the individuals identified as being a *ḥanīf*, see Dr. Jawad 'Ali's *al-Mufaṣṣal fī tārikh al-'Arab qabla al-Islām* vol. 8 pgs. 351-399.

In 30:30, the *fiṭra* has been conflated with religion (*dīn*) at the end of the verse where “that is the sound religion” refers to “the *fiṭra* of God.” This is important as it gives us an important avenue to investigate what is the nature of this *fiṭra* upon which humans have been created. Describing this religion as *ḥanīf* serves as evidence to support us to say that the oneness of God is an essential part of the *fiṭra*. This has been demonstrated above when looking at the qualities of Abraham highlighted in the Qur’ān; turning away from polytheism and idolatry, and adopting the religion of monotheism.

From the discussion so far on 30:30, the *fiṭra* has been equated with the correct religion and the oneness of God. And the *fiṭra* is also that which inherent to all humans, being created with by God. It would seem from the preceding discussion that all human beings are born believing in the correct religion, as Muslims and as monotheists. This has been the claim of some Muslim theologians and philosophers. Adang states that the 5th/11th century Zāhirī jurist and theologian Ibn Ḥazm of Cordoba held that based on Qur’ān 30:30 and the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad, “*everyone* starts his life as a Muslim, and that it is his parents who give him his subsequent religious identity: if they are Muslims, they will continue to raise their child as a Muslim; if on the other hand, they are unbelievers, they wean it away from its inborn Islam” (Adang 2000, 392). I will be arguing, however, that the *fiṭra* is a particular way human beings are constituted. This constitution is such that it provides human beings with a natural propensity towards belief in God and His oneness, and the doctrines and practices of what is understood to be the true religion. Thus human beings, by virtue of the *fiṭra*, can be said to be *homo religious* (religious man)²² in the Islamic tradition where religion and belief in God is considered

²² The idea of *homo religious*, or religious man, has been developed by Mircea Eliade.

natural to the human condition and the religion of Islam, its doctrines and practices, to be compatible with the *fiṭra*.

In order to further explore the nature of the *fiṭra* that constitutes all human beings, its cognitive dimensions and its relationship to the detailed doctrines and practices of Islam, statements of the Prophet Muhammad related to the *fiṭra* will now be examined. A famous *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad on the *fiṭra* that has received, alongside the Qur'ān 30:30, much discussion is: “Abū Hurayra said, “The Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “Every child is born on the *fiṭra*. It is his parents who then cause him to be a Jew or a Christian or a Magian, just as an animal gives birth to its offspring free of any defects. Do you observe any of offspring being born with its ears lopped (*jad'ā'*)?” Then Abū Hurayra (Allah be pleased with him) would quote the verse, “The *fiṭra* of God, which He created all of mankind upon. There is no altering the creation of God. That is the true religion” [30:30]” (al-Bukharī #1359, 2002, 328-329). There are many transmissions of this *ḥadīth* that contain variants that are important to our discussion on the *fiṭra*. These variants will be referred to in their appropriate places.

In this *ḥadīth*, the *fiṭra* is mentioned without any explicit discussion as to what constitutes the *fiṭra*. What we can gather from the outset is that every human being is born on the *fiṭra*. What can be understood about the *fiṭra* so far is what we have understood from the Qur'ān 30:30; that the *fiṭra* is created and given by God, and is associated with a monotheistic understanding of God. In this *ḥadīth* we find that *fiṭra* is the natural state of a human being and it is due to the upbringing of a child that will make the child adopt a different religion. In light of this *ḥadīth*, a person becoming a Jew, Christian, or adopting any other religion is entirely due to external factors. It is the

parents and the upbringing they provide their child that leads a child away from the *fiṭra*. This brings up the question as to whether this change of religion entails a change in the *fiṭra* in light of Qur’ān 30:30 where it states, “there is no altering the creation of God.” This has been understood in at least two general ways by commentators of the Qur’ān. Baydāwī (d. 685/1286) comments on this part of the verse that one possible reading is that no one has the ability to alter or change the *fiṭra*. This is the nature upon which God created human beings and human beings do not have the capability alter this nature because the *fiṭra* is not able to altered. No matter what religion one adopts, the *fiṭra* will still be present although it has been hindered from being expressed. Another reading of the verse is that is to be read as a command from God to human beings. According to this reading, the *fiṭra* can be changed, but God is commanding humans not to change it by adopting beliefs and practices that are contrary to it (al-Bayḍāwī 2000, 3:51). According to both readings of the verse and this *ḥadīth*, the *fiṭra* is either altered or impeded from being manifested solely due to external factors. Likewise the *fiṭra* it is to be maintained and nurtured by external factors as well.

That the *fiṭra* is the natural state of a person when they are born is understood from the questioning of the Prophet Muhammad in the *ḥadīth*. Turning the listener’s attention to consider the offspring of animals when they are born, the question is rhetorically asked if any offspring of animals, or as in one transmission of the *ḥadīth* where the Prophet said, “just as the camel gives birth to a calf that is free of defects”,²³ are born earmarked or branded. Just as the earmark of animals is something that is not

²³ Hadith #646. Mālik ibn Anas. 1997. *al-Muwattaʿaʿ, riwāyat Yaḥyá ibn Yaḥyá al-Laythī al-Andalusī*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī.

natural to them and is considered a defect, likewise is the *fiṭra* considered to be the natural state in which human beings are born.

In mentioning Judaism, Christianity, and Mazdaism in the *ḥadīth*, some commentators have identified the *fiṭra* with Islam. In other words, the *ḥadīth* is to be understood as saying that it is a child's parents who make him or her a Jew, Christian or a Magian, and in the absence of parents of a different religion, the child will grow up to be a Muslim. As mentioned previously, Ibn Ḥazm held that the *fiṭra* is identical with the religion of Islam. Based on Adang's study of Ibn Ḥazm's writings on this topic, he doesn't seem to understand this particular *ḥadīth* in this manner, nor does he use it to justify his position. His views on the *fiṭra* come up when he discusses the fate of children who die before they are able to choose the religion of Islam in his *Kitāb al-Fiṣal*.

Responding to the Azraqiyya, an early offshoot of the Kharijite sect, who held that only people who choose to be Muslims will enter paradise, Ibn Ḥazm maintains that such children will go to paradise. Based on the Qur'ān 2:136 and 2:138, Ibn Ḥazm states that "all souls are created by God, humans, *jinn*, and angels alike, are conscious, discriminating believers. This being so, all of them are entitled to go to paradise for their belief, except for those who change this covenant, this *fiṭra*, and this <<colour>> and leave it for another and die in this other state" (Adang 2000, 400). This understanding of *fiṭra* has been shared by some Muslim theologians. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (d. 463/1070) states, in his commentary on this *ḥadīth* that, "Others have held that *fiṭra* here [in this *ḥadīth*] is to be understood as the religion of Islam. They say, "This position is what known to the understanding of scholars and exegetes of the early [Muslim] community (*salaf*)" (Ibn

‘Abd al-Barr 2001, 2:627). He then quotes the glosses of a number of early Qur’ānic exegetes on Qur’ān 30:30 all stating that *fiṭra* in the verse is the religion of Islam.

Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) and his main student, Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawzīyyah (d. 751/1350) were two other theologians who both held the *fiṭra* is to be understood as referring to the religion of Islam. (Ibn Taymiyya 1971, 8:359-502) Ibn Taymiyya understands the *fiṭra* as referring to “the *fiṭra* of Islam. It is the primordial disposition which God created human on the day when He said, He said, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ and they replied, ‘Yes!’”²⁴ [The *fiṭra*] consists of being free from false doctrines and accepting true doctrine. This is so because the essence of “Islam” is to submission to God, no one other than Him” (Ibn Taymiyya 1980, 4:245). He then goes on to comment on the part of the *ḥadīth* that refers to offspring being born free of physical defects, and how this serves as an example of the human heart being free of any defect. Any defect that does occur only takes place due to external factors. Ibn Taymiyya then goes on to provide an analogy for understanding the *fiṭra*. He states, “The relationship of the *fiṭra* to the truth is like that of the eye to the sun. Every person possessing eyes will be able to see the sun if [the eyes] were left without any barrier. False doctrines that are accidental [to the *fiṭra*] that come about due to a person becoming a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian, are like barriers that impede between the eyes and seeing the sun” (Ibid., 4:247). Confirming that only due to external factors prevent the *fiṭra* from having its effect and becoming manifest in a person’s life.

There is still some ambiguity as to what is meant by Ibn Taymiyya’s equating the *fiṭra* with Islam. A natural understanding could be that a child is born as a Muslim, being

²⁴ Referring to Qur’ān 7:172.

cognizant of the creedal doctrines and practices of Islam. So what does Ibn Taymiyya exactly understand by Islam when equating it with the *fiṭra*? Based on the Qur’ān 16:78, “It is God who brought you out of your mothers’ wombs knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and minds, so that you might be thankful”, Ibn Taymiyya sees the *fiṭra*, not as providing knowledge of the creed and practices of Islam to a person when they are born. Rather, he sees it as a faculty that cognitively and practically necessitates a person to accept the religion of Islam, provided that no impediments exist that will prevent the *fiṭra* from being effective. A child is not effectively (*bi-l-fi’l*) a Muslim when they are born. What Ibn Taymiyya means by Islam when equating it with the *fiṭra* is, “a heart that is sound, its accepting and wanting the truth, which is Islam.” This natural disposition is not neutral regarding the truth. By its very nature, the *fiṭra* will necessitate a person accepting the truth, i.e. Islam, because it wants to seek it as opposed to merely accepting and finding the truth to be good when it is presented to a person. “This is similar,” Ibn Taymiyya states, “to a child being born loving foodstuffs and drinks that are compatible with its body, thus desiring milk which is compatible to it” (Ibn Taymiyya 1971, 8:384). The truth, Islam, being loved by the *fiṭra*. Perhaps what Ibn Taymiyya has in mind when he says the *fiṭra* is Islam is that the *fiṭra* is created by God in complete compatibility with Islam and the *fiṭra* has a strong impulse to seek out the truth. This impulse is so strong that it will necessarily lead to a person becoming a Muslim assuming there are no impediments.

As mentioned previously, Ibn Ḥazm holds that all children are born on the *fiṭra* which he equates with Islam. When a child reaches the age of moral responsibility (*taklīf*), the child must choose whether to remain on the *fiṭra*, i.e. continue to be a

Muslim, or adopt another religion. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, who has the most extensive commentary on this *ḥadīth*, discusses other views of theologians on how *fiṭra* is to be understood in addition to the view mentioned previously. He states that a group of scholars stated that, “what is meant by *fiṭra* in this *ḥadīth* is the disposition (*khilqa*) a child is created with regarding knowledge of his lord. It is as if [the Prophet] said, “every child is born with a disposition by which he knows his lord when he reaches the age of discernment.” [The Prophet] intended by this a disposition that is contrary to the disposition of animals that cannot attain the knowledge of God” (Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr 2001, 2:626). The *fiṭra* is a particular disposition which God created human beings on. This disposition is not equated with Islam, rather this natural disposition provides humans with the capacity to know God. This interpretation of *fiṭra* is supported by the form of the noun in the Arabic language. The noun *fiṭra* is on the form of *fi‘la* which are known as *nomina speciei*, or nouns of kind and manner. This noun form indicates the manner or mode of what is expressed by the verb. As mentioned before, the meaning expressed in the verb *fa – ta – ra* is to create. Accordingly, the noun *fiṭra* denotes a particular way of being created, if understood in its passive sense, or a manner of creating, understood in its active sense. The *fiṭra* is the particular disposition on which God created human beings.

Fiṭra as disposition has been explained by commentators as the natural capacity of a person to be guided and accept the religion of Islam. al-Ṭībī (d. 743/1342) explains this capacity to accept the religion of Islam stating, “the goodness of this religion (Islam) is found in the soul. A person turns away from this religion only due to adverse circumstances in life and the uncritical acceptance of authority (*taqlīd*)” (al-Ṭībī 1996, 1:234). So it is not that the soul has the knowledge of God, or knows the religion of Islam

in general or its particular doctrines and practices. Rather, *fiṭra* is the constitution of the soul that provides it the capacity to acknowledge God's existence and to recognize the goodness of the doctrines and practices of Islam. The soul is created and comes into the world with this particular constitution that is not in a state of unbelief or belief, nor in a state of acknowledgement or denial of God. (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr 2001, 2:626)

This position is also based on Qur'ān 16:78, "It is God who brought you out of your mothers' wombs knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and minds, so that you might be thankful." The key part of the verse is that human beings did not have any knowledge when born into this world. Although this state of being without knowledge is qualified as to refer to specific knowledge of God's existence and the details of the practices of Islam as we will see later. Ibn Taymiyya objects to this position by stating that if this were the case, then it would be superfluous to for the Prophet to mention the altering of the *fiṭra* by the child's parents. (Ibn Taymiyya 1971, 8:385) This objection is weakened by the fact that the *ḥadīth* does not refer to an altering or changing of the person's *fiṭra*. According to the Qur'ān 30:30, the *fiṭra* is not able to be changed nor is anyone able to alter the *fiṭra*. Nor does a person becoming a Jew or a Christian alter someone's *fiṭra*. They may be acting against their *fiṭra*, but the *fiṭra* remains unaltered. Rather, even according to Ibn Taymiyya's understanding, a person adopting another religion is a barrier for the *fiṭra* to be expressed, not an altering of the *fiṭra*. Additionally, to further support their position, theologians bring in other another *ḥadīth* related to the nature of human beings, the Prophet Muhammad said, "God has said that, "I created all of my servants as *ḥunafā*.'" Those theologians who hold this understanding of the *fiṭra* mention two observations with this *ḥadīth*: one is that God did

not say that He created all of His servants as Muslims. The other observation is that they glossed the term *ḥunafā'*, as we have seen before, created in with disposition that has the potential to accept the truth. (al-Ṭībī 1996, 10:38) Other transmissions of the *fiṭra ḥadīth* contain the additional text, “and if his parents are both Muslim, then the child will be a Muslim” when mentioning that it is the parents who make a child a Jew, Christian, or a Magian. If the *fiṭra* were to be equated with the religion of Islam, a child would not need Muslim parents in order to be a Muslim.

Anwar Shāh Kāshmirī (d. 1352/1933) argues, supporting the view that the *fiṭra* is not to be identified with the religion of Islam, that *fiṭra* is to be understood as one of the preliminary factors (*muqaddimat*) that lead a person to Islam. The *fiṭra* is “a natural disposition [that lends itself] to accept Islam. Stated in another manner, it is the child’s preparedness (*isti’dād*) for it (i.e. Islam). [This disposition] is remote from unbelief but close to Islam. And yet stated in another manner, it is the build of the child being free from any factors that encourage it to unbelief” (Kāshmirī 1980, 2:485). So the *fiṭra* is this preparedness (*isti’dād*) of the soul to accept the religion of Islam, but is not to be identified with Islam. Its preparedness or compatibility, being close to Islam, is perhaps why scholars of the early Muslim community glossed the term *fiṭra* in Qur’ān 30:30 as religion or Islam. Not that the *fiṭra* is identical with the Islam, but, assuming that there are no external factors serving as impediments and the child has Muslim parents, the child will naturally see the goodness of Islam and become a Muslim.

Epistemological and Psychological Dimensions of the *Fiṭra*

Thus far, it has been argued that, in the Islamic tradition, the *fiṭra* is a God given natural disposition of the human soul and its preparedness (*isti'dād*) to accept the truth. This natural disposition is what all human beings have been created with. External factors can either be compatible with the *fiṭra*, allowing it to manifest, or it can serve an impediment for the *fiṭra* to be manifested. To be sure, the *fiṭra* does have a propensity for belief. This propensity is not to be equated with knowledge of the creed and practices of Islam. This is supported by the Qur'ān 16:78, "It is God who brought you out of your mothers' wombs knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and minds, so that you might be thankful."

The question arises as to what does "knowing nothing" in the verse mean exactly. It could be understood that the human soul has absolutely no *a priori* knowledge when created. This is similar to Locke's understanding of the origins of innate ideas. Locke holds that ideas such as the whole is larger than its part, the impossibility for the same thing to be and not to be, or the idea that God is to be worshipped do not have their origins that are innate to human beings. Locke observes, "If we will attentively consider new born *Children*, we shall have little Reason, to think, that they bring many *Ideas* into the World with them" and he ultimately assigns the origins of these ideas in human experience whether that experience be sensation or reflection (Locke 1975, 85).

Muslim theologians, logicians, philosophers, and mystics of the Ash'arite and Mu'tazilite schools have all affirmed some understanding that humans have knowledge that is *a priori* and knowledge that is *a posteriori*. The Ash'arite theologian al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013) classifies knowledge (*al-ilm*) into God's knowledge and human's knowledge. Human knowledge can either be necessary knowledge (*al-ilm al-darurī*) and

acquired knowledge (*al- 'ilm al-naẓarī*). God's knowledge is not classified as either being necessary nor acquired. This classification applies solely to created beings. Necessary knowledge is knowledge that is not acquired as the result of reflection or reasoning. Rather, it is knowledge that cannot be repudiated, nor can it be doubted. Examples of necessary knowledge include knowledge gained through the five senses and knowledge a person finds naturally occurring in his soul. Such knowledge includes the knowledge a person has of his own existence, knowledge of his internal states of pleasure, pain, hunger, happiness. It also includes *a priori* knowledge of necessary truths such as the knowledge that two contrary propositions cannot be true and false at the same time and that two is greater than one. All other knowledge requires reflection on the part of the person and is classified as acquired knowledge. (al-Bāqillānī 2000, 14-15)

Muslim theologians have made observations and remarks that the *fiṭra*, even though it does not provide the soul with knowledge of the religion of Islam, nonetheless is such a constitution of the soul that does have certain types of knowledge. When discussing the four homonymous applications of the word intellect (*al- 'aql*), al-Ghazālī describes the first as “the quality which differentiates humans from all other animals. It prepares humans with the ability receive theoretical knowledge.” al-Ghazālī takes this definition from al-Muḥasibī who defines the intellect in this sense as “an innate capacity (*gharīzah*) by virtue of which prepares [one] to obtain theoretical knowledge.” The second application of the term intellect refers to “to those sciences that come about in a child who has reached the stage of discrimination (*mumayyiz*) and consists of the knowledge of what is [rationally] possible and impossible, that two is greater than one, and that one person cannot be in two places. It was what some theologians have referred

to when defining the intellect as some of the knowledge that is necessarily known.” This knowledge is necessary and human beings do not differ from one another regarding possessing this knowledge. After clarifying the four applications of the term intellect, al-Ghazālī describes this knowledge “as if they are constitutive of this innate capacity by virtue of the *fiṭra*. [This knowledge] appears when a cause makes it manifest.”

From al-Ghazālī’s description of necessary knowledge and its relationship to the *fiṭra*, there are certain types of necessary knowledge that constitute the *fiṭra*. What we observe of this knowledge depends on what external factors a person is exposed to. Ibn Taymiyya, agreeing with al-Ghazālī’s understanding of the types of knowledge that constitute the *fiṭra* provides further examples for us. In his discussion of Qur’ān 52:35-36, “Were they created without any Creator or were they the creators of themselves?” Ibn Taymiyya sees this verse as an example of utilizing an *a priori* principle that is rationally impossible. This principle is “part of the natural disposition (*fiṭriyyun*), intuitively known (*badihīyyun*) established firmly in the souls [of humans] that no person can deny. A person with a sound natural disposition (*fiṭra*) cannot claim that a temporal entity can come into existence without an agent that brought it into existence. It is not possible for him to claim that this entity brought itself into existence” (Ibn Taymiyya 1971, 9:212). Ibn Taymiyya describes this knowledge as part of the natural disposition using the term *fiṭriyyun* for this. Another example that we can gather from the writings of Ibn Taymiyya is the rational principle that the existence of an entity whose existence is rationally possible can only be determined over its non-existence by a willing agent (*murajjih*). He states that this principle is “necessarily known by virtue of the *fiṭra* which is not possible to reject” (Ibid., 8:136). Necessary knowledge, such as the law of non-contradiction, the

law of the excluded middle in addition to the principles mentioned above, are seen as constituting the *fiṭra*. It is not knowledge of particulars that a person only comes to know through experience. These are rational principles and categories that a person knows *a priori* by virtue of the *fiṭra*.

CHAPTER FIVE

BADR AL-DĪN IBN JAMĀ‘AH: ON ACQUIRING *ADAB*

The Educational Career of Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamā‘ah

The goods of an act serve to influence the manner the act is carried out. The ‘act’ of education in Islam, I argue, has the cultivation of the self that possesses *adab* as its highest good. In this chapter, we will study a developed understanding of the educational act in the writings of many Muslim authors but focus on the writings of Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamā‘ah (d. 733/1333). He lived and worked under the Mamluk sultanate and due to the high level of intellectual activity that took place in the Muslim world during the Mamluk era and the Mamluk’s educational concerns, Ibn Jamā‘ah’s educational thought reflects a mature and sophisticated of the ‘act’ of education in all of its dimensions, social, theological, and political. His writings on education are comprehensive in that regard unlike the writings of the early period.

This chapter will focus on the method of cultivating *adab* as understood by Ibn Jamā‘ah and all other Muslim writers. We will focus on analyzing the title of Ibn Jamā‘ah’s major work on education *Tadhkirat al-sāmi‘ wa-l-mutakallim fī ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘allim* and how it differs from other titles in the *ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘allim* literature. It will be shown that the role of hearing, its relationship to reading, and the teacher are all essential components when it comes to cultivate the self possessing *adab*. The hearing of knowledge, whether from one’s own recitation, or the reading of the teacher, is linked to various modes of how knowledge is ‘read’. This reading of knowledge takes place in various contexts and each has a mode of reading specific to it. The role hearing plays in the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation *adab* will be studied. Additionally, that the ‘act’ of education in Islam is focused on the personal relationship between the teacher and student rather than on an institution will be shown, and then the implications this has for cultivating *adab* within a student will be analyzed.

To develop a full understanding of the self that possesses *adab* in the context of education, we will be studying the authors and works in the *ādāb al-‘ālim wa-l-muta‘allim* literature. Having already looked at the genre, we will be focusing our study mainly on Badr al-Dīn Ibn Jamā‘ah’s (d. 733/1333) *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi‘ wa-l-Mutakallim fī Ādāb al-‘Ālim wa-l-Muta‘allim*: A Monograph for the Auditor and the Lecturer on the *Ādāb* of the Teacher and the Student. Ibn Jamā‘ah’s work is chosen because it is considered late in the genre. Being a late work, it is representative of this genre of writing at a mature stage and is composed in a setting where madrasas and other educational institutions developed into playing a more formal role in Muslim society. This is evidenced by Ibn Jamā‘ah’s own career of serving as a teacher and rector in many of the major educational institutions of his time. Additionally, the work itself has received wide acceptance amongst scholars and students alike being used referenced in many works in the same genre composed after Ibn Jamā‘ah. Franz Rosenthal notes, for example, that al-‘Almawī’s (d. 1573) *al-Durr al-Naḍīd*, a text on *adab*, has sections that are almost identical to Ibn Jamā‘ah’s *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi‘* (Rosenthal 1947, 7).

Ibn Jamā‘ah’s own education and the teaching and judiciary posts held throughout his career have stood out as being exemplary and has been the focus of discussion amongst his biographers.²⁵ He has been described as the “judge of the two regions, Egypt and the Levant” (Subkī 1964, 9:139) for serving as the chief judge (*qāḍī al-quḍāh*) for a span of forty years in Egypt and the Levant which was an important political position during the Turkish period of the Mamluk era. The Mamluk sultanate, displacing the

²⁵ For studies on the background of the Banū Jamā‘a dynasty, see Salibi, Kamal S. "The Banū Jamā‘a: A Dynasty of Shāfi‘ite Jurists in the Mamluk Period." *Studia Islamica*, no. 9 (1958): 97-109 and Sirriyeh, Elizabeth. "Whatever Happened to the Banū Jamā‘a? The Tail of a Scholarly Family in Ottoman Syria." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 28, no. 1 (2001): 55-65.

Ayyubids dynasty, reigned from 648-923/1250-1517 over the regions of Egypt and the Levant. The term Mamluk means ‘a thing possessed’ and refers to the fact that it was military slaves that made up the Mamluk forces. They were also referred to as the *dawlat al-atrāk* or the dynasty of ‘the Turks’ due to the ethnic makeup of the ruling slave forces. Historians of the Mamluk era commonly divide up their rule into the Turkish or Bahri period, which runs from 648-784/1250-1382, and the Circassian or Burji period, which extends from 784-923/1382-1517. Their origins lie in al-Şāliḥ Najm al-Dīn Ayyūb’s (637-47/1240-9) recruiting of Turkish slaves from the Ƙipčāk steppe who were uprooted from their lands by the Mongol invasion. They were called al-Baḥriyya because he stationed them on al-Rawḍa on the Nile river (Baḥr al-Nīl). Ayalon states, “The importance of the Baḥriyya regiment lies in the fact that its formation had ultimately led to the creation of the Mamlūk sultanate. It is wrong, however, to call the early part of Mamlūk rule (648/1250-784/1382), in which the Ƙipčākī element was predominant, by the name of “the Baḥrī period”. The common name in Mamlūk sources for that period is Dawlat al-Turk, to distinguish it from the Circassian period (784-922/1382-1517) which they call Dawlat al-Djarkas” (Ayalon 2014) due to the dominance of rulers who were ethnically from Circassia.

Ibn Jamā‘ah’s career as a chief judge was part of a long family tradition of serving as judges from 1291 to 1382. Ibn Jamā‘ah belonged to the Shafi’ī school of law and served as a judge giving verdicts according to the school. His judgeship was in an era that witnessed significant shifts in the judiciary in the Muslim world introduced by Mamluk sultans. In most Muslim lands, there was the practice of the judiciary basing its decisions on one of the four schools of Sunni Law. “In 663/1265, the Mamluk sultan al-

Zāhir Baybars decided to appoint four Chief *Qāḍīs* in Cairo, one from each of the Sunni schools of law, thereby adding Ḥanafī, Mālikī and Ḥanbalī judges. The incumbent Shāfi‘ī retained exclusive jurisdiction in matters pertaining to the public treasury and the property of orphans. The judiciary of Damascus was similarly reformed the following year. Over the next century non- Shāfi‘ī Chief *Qāḍīs* were appointed in other Mamluk towns and cities. By the latter half of the eighth/fourteenth century, Aleppo, Tripoli, Hama, Safed, Jerusalem and Gaza each had its own quadruple judicial system” (Rapoport 2013, 2:210). Each judge was expected to give rulings according to the established doctrine of his own school, avoiding the weak legal opinions in their school, regardless of his own personal position. Judges would frequently transfer cases to other schools for the benefit of the public. And people would often refer their cases to judges who belonged to different schools of law. The aim of these initiatives on the part of the Sultanate was to provide legal uniformity and stability in Mamluk society while, at the same time, maintaining a balance of legal diversity for the sake of public welfare. (ibid., 2:213) Such is the environment Ibn Jamā‘ah’s career as a judge and a teacher in the major educational institutions of his time.

One can observe the intimate involvement of the Mamluk Sultanate in setting up the judiciary system. This indicates the political importance of being a judge in Mamluk Cairo and the Levant to the extent that often it would be the sultan himself that would personally appoint a person as the chief judge (*qāḍī al-quḍah*). The chief judge would oversee the administration of the major colleges (*madaris*) and be responsible for delivering the Friday sermon (*khitābah*) in the main mosque of either Cairo or Damascus. Ibn Jamā‘ah served as the chief judge for a period of thirty years from 687/1288 through

727/1327. He served in the cities of Jerusalem, Cairo, and Damascus. He first served as the chief judge in Jerusalem in 687/1288 along with holding the office of *khitābah* and served to lead the prayers at al-Aqṣā Mosque. On the 14th of Ramaḍān in 690/1291, he transferred to serve as chief judge for the first time in Cairo, until the 14th of Dhul-Hijja in 693/1294 where he served as the chief judge in Damascus for three year until 696/1297 when he was discharged and then later in 699/1300 he was reassigned back to the office of chief judge in Damascus until the 17th of Safar 702/1302. In this year, the Shafī'ī jurist Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd, who was serving then as the chief judge in Cairo, had died. Upon his death, Ibn Jamā'ah was called back to Cairo to serve as the chief judge for a second time until he was requested to discharge his duties due to his old which he obliged to in the year 727/1327. (Khalaf 1990, 159-161)

The madrasa has been the most studied institution in the field of Islamic education. There have been various understandings by scholars on what place the madrasa held in Muslim society, its purpose, culture, curriculum, and other aspects of this institution. One view is that of George Makdisi who sees the madrasa as, “the institution of learning par excellence, in that it was devoted primarily to the study of Islamic law” (Makdisi^{1981, 9}). The madrasa, Makdisi notes, was the institution for higher education in the Muslim world from the 5th century onwards and concentrated on law to the exclusion of the other religious sciences such as theology, in particular the teaching of the Ash'arī school of theology and other non-religious sciences. Sciences that were helpful to the study of law were also taught in the madrasa with a set curriculum, but only as ancillary sciences (Ibid.⁹⁻¹⁰). The *maktab* was the site of elementary education which consisted primarily of the teaching of Arabic grammar, morphology, writing, and memorization of

the Qur'an. The 'foreign sciences' such as theology according to the Mu'tazilite school and medicine were taught in libraries and hospitals (Ibid.²⁴⁻²⁷). Contrasted to this is the view of the madrasa is that of writers such as A.L. Tibawi and Jonathan Berkey who both argue for a more informal structure of Islamic education. "Instruction in jurisprudence and its related subjects took place in a variety of institutions, many called madrasas, but others not," and due to Islamic law not providing any corporate identity to an institution, "no formal degree system was ever established" (Berkey 1992, 16). Madrasas were places where all subject matters such as "Qur'anic science, traditions, grammar, adab literature, dogmatic theology, sermons" (Tibawi 1962, 25: 230-31) and even medicine were taught, not only law. That being said, Berkey and Tibawi both conclude that "Islamic education remained fundamentally and persistently an informal affair" (Berkey 1992, 18) and as we shall see below, was focused more on *who* was teaching and *what* was being taught rather than on any institution.

Ibn Jamā'ah's education, his expertise in various sciences, and his career as an educator all contribute to the significance of his insights and writings on education. Despite him being a chief judge in various areas and various times, he was consistently involved in the area of education teaching either privately or in madrasas. His biographers have highlighted, in addition to his mastery of various sciences, his exceptional skill as an educator. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī (d. 852/1448) describes Ibn Jamā'ah as being, "a leader, caring, easy-going, having good character. He delivered excellent lectures, and would instruct well, without severity or embarrassment [of students]" (Khalaf_1990, 181). In total, Ibn Jamā'ah held teaching positions or served as an administrator in thirteen madrasas. Similar to his positions as a judge, the madrasas

were in Cairo and Egypt, yet he did not serve as a teacher or as an administrator in Jerusalem. Ibn Jamā‘ah served in five madrasas in Damascus and eight in Cairo.

- a) **Madrasa al-Qaymarīyyah.** (Damascus) Ibn Jamā‘ah assumed a teaching post here in 681/1282 for seven years until he accepted the post of chief judge in Jerusalem in the 687/1288. He later returned to teaching at the madrasa in 693/1293 until he left for Cairo to assume the position of chief judge.
- b) **Madrasa al-‘Ādilīyyah al-Kubrā.** (Damascus) This madrasa was established by Nūr al-Dīn Zangī in 568/1172. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught at this madrasa in 670/1272. Although others held he taught there in 693/1294.
- c) **Madrasa al-Shāmiyyah al-Baraniyyah.** (Damascus) This madrasa was established by the Lady of the Levant daughter of Najm al-Dīn Ayyub, known as Umm Ṣaliḥ. The famous scholar of *ḥadīth*, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here in 693/1294.
- d) **Madrasa al-Nāṣirīyyah al-Juwānīyya.** (Damascus) Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here in 693/1294 until 696/1297 only to return in 701/1302.
- e) **Madrasa al-Ghazālīyyah,** (Damascus) This madrasa was located in one of the corners of the Grand Umayyad Mosque and named after al-Ghazālī who spent his spiritual retreat at this corner. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here in 685/1287 until 687/1289 leaving to Jerusalem for the position of chief judge. He later returned to teacher here in 699/1300.
- f) **Madrasa al-Ṣāliḥiyya.** (Cairo) This school was built in 641/1244 and had a post for all four Sunni schools of law. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here on two occasions. The first was in 691/1291 to 693/1293 while serving as chief judge at the time. The second time was on 711/1311 until 727/1327 being asked to leave due to an eye condition.
- g) **Madrasa al-Nāṣirīyyah.** (Cairo) A school dedicated to teaching the Shafī‘ī school of law. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here from 693/1293 until 727/1326.
- h) **Madrasa al-Kāmilīyyah.** (Cairo) This school was dedicated to the teaching of *ḥadīth* (*dār al-ḥadīth*) and was one of two such schools in Cairo. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here from 711/1311 until 727/1326.
- i) **Jāmi‘ ibn Ṭūlūn.** (Cairo) Built in 263/877. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here from 711/1311 until 727/1326. There was a post for teaching all four Sunni schools of law. Additionally, *ḥadīth*, grammar, and Qur’an recitations were taught here.
- j) **Zāwiyyah al-Shāfi‘ī.** (Cairo) Imam al-Shafī‘ī taught here as well as many jurists of the Shafī‘ī school. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here in 721/1320 whereas some sources mention he taught here until his death in 733/1333.
- k) **al-Mashhad al-Ḥusaynī.** (Cairo) Built by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-‘Ayyūbī in 567/1172. Ibn Jamā‘ah taught here in 693/1294.
- l) **Madrasa al-Khashābīyyah.** (Cairo) (Ibid., 183-195).

In each of these madrasas, Ibn Jamā‘ah taught a variety of subjects. His biographers all state that he mastered numerous sciences. One of the sciences he taught in the madrasa

was Qur'ānic exegesis (*tafsīr*), a science which he composed his own work. He studied and taught Law, *ḥadīth*, legal theory (*usūl al-fiqh*), theology, logic, history, grammar, morphology, Qur'ānic recitations, and the sciences related to spherical astronomy (*asturlāb*). (Ibid., 54) His work on education represents the insights of a person of high scholarly credentials, and vast experience in the judiciary and the major educational institutions of his times.

Ibn Jamā'ah's *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi'*

Some observations and comments on the title of Ibn Jamā'ah's work *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi'* and my translation of the title are appropriate as they will provide us with some significant insights as to the philosophy of learning and knowledge transmission in the Islamic tradition. Two words are the focus of our investigation here *al-sāmi'* and *al-mutakallim*. I have chosen to translate *al-sāmi'* as auditor and *al-mutakallim* as lecturer. The title captures Ibn Jamā'ah's understanding of what the learning process must entail. Authors of *adab* manuals prior to Ibn Jamā'ah have used a variety of names for teacher and student. These range from *al-ālam*, *al-shaykh*, *al-ustādh* to *al-faqīh*, *al-mudarris*, *al-mufīd*, *al-mustamlī*, and *al-mu'īd*. Some of the terms, such as *al-ustādh*, which is Persian in origin and means an expert, and *al-ālam*, which means a scholar, are general terms for teacher. Other terms clearly come from a particular craft but then get used in a context that is more general of learning. For example, *al-mustamlī* refers to the one who dictates a lecture, and *al-faqīh* refers to a jurist. Works of *adab* that use these titles may intend their work to be solely for the student in law for example, or it may reflect the occupation of the author.

In Ibn Jamā‘ah’s case, he uses *al-sāmi‘* and *al-mutakallim* in the title of his work on *adab*. To fully understand the significance of the two terms, I will examine how the term has been used in amongst writers on education and its methodology. Specifically, the significance of the relationship *al-sāmi‘* has to do with the act of reading and its various types will be examined. Additionally, there is a theological significance to the faculty of hearing that provides us additional insight to Ibn Jamā‘ah’s understanding of the cultivation of *adab*. To that end, we will examine certain texts of theology on the faculty of hearing to the end of establishing that for Ibn Jamā‘ah, learning takes place by hearing knowledge. Knowledge is ‘heard’ from a teacher but is also acquired through various modes of reading where one ‘hears’ knowledge being read to one by oneself, by a teacher, or by another student. In his title of the work, Ibn Jamā‘ah is stating that the work is on the cultivation of *adab* in the context of education. This cultivating of *adab* on the part of the student can only take place when the activity of teaching and learning requires a teacher who already has cultivated a self that possesses *adab*. The habitus of *adab* can only be cultivated in someone from a person, in this case the teacher, who already possesses *adab* and can take the student through the necessary steps to cultivate *adab*.

The term *al-sāmi‘* is an Arabic noun in the form of a subject and is derived from the verb *sami‘a* which means ‘to hear’. Thus *al-sāmi‘* refers to the one who is hearing and the term *al-mutakallim* is a noun meaning ‘the one who is speaking’. A representative statement on the learning process was made by al-Daḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim (d. 106/723), a teacher who held positions in various schools dedicated to elementary education known as *maktabs* or *kuttāb*.²⁶ He said, “The first stage of [acquiring]

²⁶ For more on *maktabs* see Makdisi, *The rise of colleges: Institutions of learning in Islam and the west*, 19.

knowledge is silence (*al-ṣamt*), the second stage is hearing it (*istimā'ahu*), the third stage is acting upon it, and the fourth stage is spreading and teaching [the knowledge acquired]" (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 1996, 1:293). Another summary statement on the learning process was mentioned by a certain Muḥammad ibn al-Naṣr who said, "It was said that the first [stage] of knowledge is to be silent (*al-inṣāt*) with it, then to listen to it (*istimā'ahu lahu*), then to memorize it, then to implement it, [and] then to spread it" (Ibid., 293) In both statements, the tenth form of the verb *sami'a* is used. The difference between the two verb forms is that despite them sharing in the same basic meaning, to hear, the tenth form will signify additional dimensions that the first form will not. In the case with the verb *istama'a*, it refers only to listening that is intentional and focused. The first form *sami'a*, signifies listening that could be both unintentional or intentional. Various other traditions also refer to a student perfecting the act of listening (*ḥusn al-istimā'a*) as a quality a good student possesses.

The term *al-sāmi'* has been applied in the context of *ḥadīth* transmission to the student who is receiving the *ḥadīth* from the transmitter, *al-rāwī*. In the transmission of *ḥadīth*, the *ḥadīth* scholar would conduct sessions of *ḥadīth* audition known as a *majlis al-samā'ah*. These sessions would be conducted in a mosque or the private residence of a scholar and anywhere from tens to thousands of people would attend. In the sessions, a *ḥadīth* scholar would read the *ḥadīth* and the attendees would listen to the *ḥadīth* being recited. Some would copy down the *ḥadīth* and have it verified at the end of the session. Attendees would receive an *'ijāzah*, a license and certificate to transmit the *ḥadīth*, at the end of the session. "The elements involved in this certificate were: the certifier, *musmi'*; the reader or recite, *qari'*; the auditors, *sami'un* (sing. *sami'*); and the writer of the

certificate, katib, katib al-sama'” (Makdisi 1981, 141). An example is the sessions of audition (*samā'ah*) of *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* of al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1066), a text in *ḥadīth* and law. (Abū Ghuddah, 1992) The idea here is that the term for acquiring *ḥadīth*, *samā'ah* (audition), emphasizes the role listening plays in the learning process as the term refers to the session of knowledge transmission and the students are referred to as *sami'un*, auditors because they are hearing the knowledge being recited. A *majlis al-samā'ah* would last anywhere from an hour or more and would occur depending on the length of the book being read. The *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, a book of 4,000 pages, was read in its entirety over 757 sessions by Ibn Ṣalāḥ in the Dar al-Hadith al-Ashrafiyya in the city of Damascus. This was a very public reading of the text as indicated by *samā'ah* certificate of the sessions. Scholars, students, and non scholars were all in attendance for the sessions. Depending on the situation and the caliber of the scholar and students in attendance, either the teacher would read from the book or a student would be appointed as the reciter for the session and would read aloud. The text would be read from memory or from a book depending on the type of session being conducted. The certificate of the audition (*al-samā'*), which was typically written of all such readings, is a rich and detailed resource on what took place during the audition sessions. Scholars of *ḥadīth*, jurists, judges, students, and non scholars were all in attendance for the sessions. The certificate for this session includes information on the number of sessions and the date of each session, name of each auditor along with their nicknames, agnomens and other pertinent information about them, and information about what the students were doing during the session and what sessions they attended and did not attend (Ibid., 103-114).

There are theological considerations to the faculty of hearing and the importance of hearing knowledge in the learning process that Muslim scholars have explored. In texts of theology, one frequently encounters a discussion on the five external senses of hearing, vision, smell, touch, and taste. Muslim theologians have differed over and discussed over whether the sense of hearing or the sense of sight is superior. Studying the reasons provided for the superiority of the sense of hearing grants us insight to the role of hearing in the learning process. In al-Nasafī's well known theological treatise, *al-'Aqā'id*, he states, "The external senses are five: hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. Each sense discloses aspects of an object [that is] specific to that sense." The Ash'arite theologian Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftazānī (d. 792/1390) elaborates on each of the senses stating regarding the sense of hearing that, "Hearing is a faculty in the nerve that is spread out in the canal of the inner hole of the ear." Other commentators have glossed on this section focusing on the particular order of the senses mentioned, investigating whether or not there is a hierarchy of the senses represented by the order or is there some other understanding represented in the order. Mulla Aḥmad al-Jundī explains, "He mentioned hearing before the other senses despite the most important sense for animals being the faculty of touch, because most religious knowledge has its basis in sound transmitted reports that impart knowledge by way of the faculty of hearing" (al-Jundī 2008, 1:47). It is the faculty of hearing that is ranked at the top of the hierarchy of all the senses due to its role in the acquisition of knowledge. What is not to be understood here is that the rest of the faculties do not impart knowledge and that they are not involved in the acquisition of knowledge. The faculties are all involved yet they are not all of equal rank. Another commentator on the same text, al-Farhārī (d. 1239/1823) highlights further the role

hearing has in the acquisition of knowledge. “It is said the he mentioned [the sense of] hearing before others due to it being more noble. This is because firstly, this sense can perceive from all sides. Secondly, it can perceive what is behind a wall. These two reasons are not the case regarding the sense of sight. Thirdly, acquiring religious virtues are contingent on the sense of hearing. Fourthly, most human perfections are contingent on it. This is why you will often find scholars who are blind whereas those who are deaf are considered amongst the animals that do not speak or understand” (al-Farhārī 2012, 89-90). Hearing holds the highest rank of the senses due to its role in learning and cultivating the virtues. Additionally, religious knowledge is only acquired through hearing. Human perfection consists partly in acquiring knowledge which, of all the senses, hearing ranks the highest.

One significant work on the *adab* of a student and a teacher in the context of *ḥadīth* transmission is *al-Jāmi‘ li-Akhlāq al-Rāwī wa Ādāb al-Sāmi‘* (The Compendium on the Character of the Transmitter and the Ādāb of the Student of *Ḥadīth*) by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071). Here the term for student of *ḥadīth*, *al-sāmi‘*, is being used that we also see with Ibn Jamā‘ah. Yet Ibn Jamā‘ah’s usage is not to be understood as being restricted only to the student of *ḥadīth*. Rather, I argue that Ibn Jamā‘ah selects this term to emphasize the specific mode that embodies the essence of how the teaching and learning of any discipline of knowledge is to be practiced. This mode of acquiring knowledge consists of the necessary nature of a student ‘reading’ knowledge with a teacher. Ibn Jamā‘ah’s advice to the student on the *adab* to observe during a lesson reflects the correct manner of sitting and listening. “[A student] should enter the presence of the teacher (*shaykh*) or sit in his presence with a heart that is free of concerns that will

distract him and a mind that is focused, not in a state of slumber, anger, extreme hunger and thirst or other similar states. This is so that a student will be receptive to what is said and comprehends what he hears” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 96). This is the *adab* that a student should embody all lessons in order to hear the lesson correctly. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī quotes the grammarian Khalīl ibn Aḥmad speaking about his experience as a student emphasizing the role of listening and silence. He says, “When I wanted to begin to learn grammar, I started to attend the study circle (*ḥalaqah*). I sat in the study circle for one year not speaking [during the lessons] I only listened. During the second year, I began to study (*naẓartu*), and during the third year, I began to reflect. And during the fourth year, I began to inquire and speak” (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 2008, 593). The measures Ibn Jamā‘ah recommends are all intended so that the activity of hearing the lesson is carried out in the most effective manner. The emphasis on hearing is further emphasized in another passage regarding the manner a student should sit when in the lesson. “The student should sit in front of the teacher in a manner embodying *adab*,” Ibn Jamā‘ah writes. He continues explaining the manner of sitting stating, “Just as a young child sits in front of his Qur’an reciter (*muqrī*) or to sit cross-legged with humility, submission, tranquility, and constrained. [The student] should also listen attentively to the teacher while looking at him, wholly facing towards him in order to fully comprehend his words so that the student will not be in need of the teacher having to repeat what he said a second time. The student should not turn unless there is a necessity [to do so], nor should he look to the right or the left, nor above or in front him without need particular when the teacher is examining the student or speaking with him” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 97-98). Ibn

Jamā‘ah’s choice of *al-sāmi‘* for student expresses his understanding of the mode which teaching and learning should take place, namely by ‘hearing’ knowledge.

The role listening plays in the learning process is inextricably linked with the role of reading. Makdisi argues that the term for reading, *qar’a*, the term for listening, *samī‘a*, are nearly synonymous. He writes, “One ‘read’ a certain subject, the sense of studying and mastering it. The verb *qar’a* was used with, and without, the preposition ‘alā. For instance, *qar’a ‘l-madhhab wa ‘l-khilāf ḥattā tamaiyaz* (He ‘read’ the law of his school and that of others until he distinguished himself; and *qara’a ‘l-fiqh ‘alā (fulān)* (He ‘read’ law under the direction of So-and-So); both used in the sense of he ‘studied’. The verb *qara’a* meant also to read aloud or recite *from memory*, as did the verb *samī‘a*, used especially for the field of hadith, the other scriptural source of Islam” (Makdisi 1981, 141). Additionally, readings were conducted for different goals and under different teachers. A text on the rare words in *ḥadīth*, *Gharīb al-ḥadīth* by al-Khattabi (d. 386/996), was read for the purposes of memorization (*qirā’a al-samā‘*), read under another scholar for purposes of ensuring the text was correct (*qirā’a tashīḥ*), and read under a third scholar for commentary in order to comprehend the text. Makdisi notes that reading a text, being synonymous with hearing a text, “applied to the professor himself, or to the student who actually did the reading, or to the student in attendance who was not reading, but who was following the reading or recitation in his own copy” (Makdisi 1981, 144). Ibn Jamā‘ah pays close attention of the *ādāb* to be observed when reading during a lesson. Paying attention to the voice he states, “the teacher should not raise his voice beyond what is needed nor should he lower his voice that results in not being able to completely understand [what is being read].” He comments further, “it is best that the

teacher's voice does not extend beyond his assembly [of students] and reaches the ears of those present. If someone attending is difficult of hearing, then it is not objectionable for the teacher to raise his voice to so that he may hear [what is being recited]. There has been a prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*) transmitted regarding this. Additionally, the teacher should not read continuously without pausing. Rather, he should recite correctly, distinctly, and slowly in order to contemplate on it, listening to the recitation" (Ibn Jamā'ah 1974, 39). One observes here that there is no mention of looking at text when speaking about the act of reading. This indicates that it is conceived as an aural act not necessarily a visual act. To be sure, visual reading was not absent from the Islamic tradition, but aural reading was predominant.

There are other modes of reading Ibn Jamā'ah mentions that the students should adopt. "A student should divide up the time of his day and night and utilize what is left of his life, for the end of his life is of little worth [to acquiring knowledge]. The optimal time for memorization (*ḥifẓ*) is the early mornings before dawn, for investigation (*baḥth*) is after dawn, for writing is midday, and for private reading (*muṭāla'ah*) and reading for review (*mudhākara*) is night" (Ibn Jamā'ah 1974, 72-3). Here we have four types of reading identified by Ibn Jamā'ah, reading for memorization (*ḥifẓ*), investigative reading (*baḥth*), private reading (*muṭāla'ah*) and review reading (*mudhākara*). These readings are all conducted by the student that take place outside of the lesson. The act of memorizing was a reading conducted by the student for the purposes of preserving to memory what was read publicly in the lesson. It was not conducted during the lesson and generally away from any forms of distraction such as other students. This type of reading is not to be understood as a silent reading. Rather the student would read aloud for the sake of

putting to memory what was learnt in the lesson. Investigative reading, on the other hand, was a reading conducted in order to look up an issue. This was conducted privately as well and may well have been a silent reading. Private reading (*muṭāla‘ah*) would be considered visual reading since it is the reading of an actual book done by the student privately. The goal behind *muṭāla‘ah* would be for the student to enrich his studies by reading alone other works in the field or by reading works in another field that would not normally be read with a teacher. Although, Ibn Jamā‘ah advises, “the student should be cautious in the beginning of his studies about readings (*muṭāla‘āt*) in different books for this will waste his time and will scatter his thoughts. Rather, the student should give the book he is currently reading or the science he is studying his full attention until he perfects it” (ibid., 119). *Muṭāla‘ah* is a reading that is for the adept student who has grounding in the sciences, not for the novice who still has not received sufficient training in the foundations of the sciences.

The review reading (*mudhākara*) is conducted for the purposes not of memorizing but of correctly understanding and discussing the contents of the lesson. The term *mudhākara* is a verbal noun from the third form of the verb *dhakara* which means to remember or to recall. Third form verbs have the meaning that the act is conducted with another person, thus *mudhākara* usually implies that one is reading and reviewing the lesson with another person. Both *mudhākara* and *muṭāla‘ah* are readings that are best conducted at night, and would often last throughout the night. Despite *mudhākara* taking place between two people, Ibn Jamā‘ah states, “If a student cannot another person to review with, the student may review by himself.” He then continues to describe the way one would read in a *mudhākara* session, “The student should repeat the contents of what

he heard in the lesson and the words of the lesson by heart so that it would be affixed to his mind. Repeating the contents by heart is exactly like repeating the words by the tongue. It is rare for someone to succeed who limits himself to reflecting on and attempting to comprehend [the lesson] only in the presence of the teacher. Who discontinues and leaves the lesson and then does not return the contents of the lesson.” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 145). Two ways of reading have been identified here: reading by the tongue and reading by the heart. Both methods of reading require repetition of the content and the text which also entails vocalizing of the text on part of the student. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī provides a description of how the student of law should study that brings all the various forms of reading together. He states,

The student should continuously attend the session and attentively listen (*istimā‘*) to the lesson. Once he attends for a while and he is intimate with what he has listened to [from the teacher], he should ask the teacher (*faqīh*) to dictate a portion from the beginning of the book to him. He should then write down what is dictated to him then separate himself from the session and study what he has written. If he understands the text, then he should depart from the session and read the text privately (*tāla‘ahu*) and repeat his reading until he puts it to memory. He should then repeat reading the text to himself until he perfects it [to memory]. When he attends the session afterwards, he should request the teacher to listen to him recite and then recite to him from memory. Then the student should ask the teacher to dictate to him what follows and take the same steps as the steps previously mentioned (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 2008, 594-594).

This passage illustrates the hearing of a text and its reading in the various modes mentioned. Additionally, the role the teacher plays is essential in this process. The teacher reads the text that the student hears. The dictation of the text, along with commentary by the teacher, and having the student read the text from memory for the teacher to hear are all constitutive of the learning process.

In light of study of the role of the teacher and the student in the learning process as conceived by Ibn Jamā‘ah, and the types of reading and listening each undertake, I

have translated *al-sāmi* ' as auditor and *al-mutakallim* as lecturer. To complete the study, we will now look at the term 'lecture' in the English language and explore the various modes of reading that took place in the Middle Ages and the early modern period. The noun 'lecture' in English means the action of reading, the action of reading aloud and is etymologically derived from the Latin *lectūra* and *legere*, meaning to read.²⁷ The term *legere* referred to the act of teaching and to the act reading as well. A passage in *The Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury provides us with an understanding of the activity of learning and reading in the Middle Ages. He writes, "The word "reading" is equivocal. It may refer either to the activity of teaching and being taught, or to the occupation of studying written things by oneself. Consequently, the former, the intercommunication between the teacher and learner, may be termed (to use Quintilian's word) the "lecture"; the latter, or the scrutiny by the student, the "reading," simply so called" (Salisbury 2009, 65-66). To do away with the ambiguity in the term for reading, *prelegendi*, John of Salisbury referred to the activity of teaching or reading aloud as *prelectio* and referred to the silent reading of text, although the physical text is not necessary, by the term *lectio*. Jacqueline Hamesse notes that the term *legere* (to read) can be used to refer to different activities. "Thus *legere librum illi* indicates explaining a book to someone; *legere librum ab illo*, a learning from a book with the aid of someone; *legere librum*, reading a book" (Hamesse 1999, 106). This pre-modern understanding of reading is important to pay attention due to the fact that our current understanding of reading is usually known as visual reading which is reading from a text. Texts and reading in our modern minds are inextricably linked. The activity of reading involves our eyes looking at a text. This

²⁷ "lecture, n.". OED Online. December 2014. Oxford University Press.
<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/106869?rskey=jeuWs8&result=1> (accessed December 20, 2014).

visual reading is what is understood by the term reading in our current understanding of reading. A person would not be reading something if there was no text to read from.

In early modern times reading was an act that was not linked to a physical text in the way we conceive of the term. To better understand the activity of reading, Heidi Hackel has looked at two early modern reading practices that come under the term aural reading. Aural reading, which was the norm at the times, covers the practices of vocalized reading and communal reading aloud. Aural reading is to be contrasted with visual reading which is linked to the text. Learning is accomplished through the eyes, where as in aural reading, learning is accomplished primarily through the ears. The term *lectio* refers to the activity of reading that is carried out in public and privately as well. “Classrooms, churches, courts, great halls, and even closets were also spaces for aural reading” (Hackel 2005, 47). A central feature of reading, then, is the hearing of a text being read. As Hackel notes that early modern readers “often used their voices even when reading alone in a closet or study” (ibid., 45). Expanding further on the activity of reading Mary Carruthers identifies two distinct methods of reading. She states, “It seems to me, however, that silent reading, *legere tacite* or *legere sibi*, as Benedict and others call it, and reading aloud, *clare legere in voce magna* or *viva voce*, were two distinct methods of readings taught for different purposes in ancient schools and both practiced by ancient readers, and they correspond roughly to those stages in the study process called *meditatio* and *lectio*” (Carruthers 2008, 212). In this understanding, *lectio* refers to a public or communal reading of a text that is heard by the student and other attendees and is reading done in a loud voice. A student will also reading silently, *meditatio*, yet still vocalize the reading. This is carried out in a manner where only the reader is reading alone studying.

What is important to point out here is the term reading is referring to the act of reading that does not require a physical text to be present. It is the hearing of the *text being read*, either by oneself in private, *meditatio*, or being read by oneself or from someone else in public, *lectio*, which captures the activity of reading in pre-modern and early modern times.

An essential understanding of the Ibn Jamā‘ah’s theory of learning is that the cultivation of *adab* can only occur from a teacher who possesses *adab*. In this section, we will examine this aspect of *adab* cultivation which is the necessity of a teacher. There are many statements by Muslim scholars to the effect that autodidactic learning, especially in the beginning of a student’s learning career, is not viewed favorably in the Islamic tradition. al-Nawawī quotes a famous saying about learning from books without recourse to teachers, “Do not acquire knowledge from a person who learnt from the depths of books (*buṭūn al-kutub*) without having read to scholars or an expert scholar. For a person who learns only from books will commit errors in vowelizing the text (*tashīf*) and will make many mistakes and errors in word forms (*tahrīf*)” (al-Nawawī n.d., 1:66). The purpose highlighted here is the avoidance of mistakes and ensuring the text is accurate. This purpose and more is also in the mind of Ibn Jamā‘ah,

And the student should exert his utmost to have a teacher (*shaykh*) who has acquired a complete mastery of the religious sciences (*‘ulūm al-shar‘iyyah*) and is considered to be reliable amongst contemporary scholars. The teacher should have conducted much research and have spent a long time in the company of other scholars, not someone who studied only from the depths of books and who has not known to have kept the company of proficient scholars. Al-Shafi‘ī, God be pleased with him, said, ‘Whoever has studied Law from the depths of books has missed all legal rulings.’ And some used to say, ‘Of the greatest misfortunes is the taking of books as [replacement for] teachers,’ namely those who learn only from books (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 87).

From these passages, one can say that the purpose of a teacher is for correctly understanding the discipline the student is being initiated into. Expertise on the part of the teacher is required in addition to being known amongst one's colleagues as reliable. This is to ensure accuracy of the content that is being taught by the teacher and the proper transmission and composition of the texts being studied. It is in this sense that al-Shāṭibī (d. 790) discusses on the possibility of acquiring knowledge without a teacher. After stating that, despite it being possible to acquire knowledge without a teacher, he rejoins "but what is customarily known is that it is necessary for there to be a teacher [to acquire knowledge], which is agreed upon in general, despite [them] differing on some of the details." al-Shāṭibī (d. 790) provides further support to the purpose of accuracy stating, "It has been said, 'Knowledge was in the breasts of people, then it transferred to books, and the keys to the books are people'" (al-Shāṭibī 2013, 1:140). Indicating that early on, learning took place primarily by oral means, and with print materials becoming more common, teachers were still needed to explain the science and ensure the accuracy of the content.

However, when we look further into the role of a teacher and why it is an essential component of the learning process, we find that accuracy of knowledge and content expertise is not the only good to be acquired from a teacher in the learning process. Rather, the more primary role of the teacher is the cultivating of *adab* in the students he or she teaches. When it comes to selecting a teacher, the first task Ibn Jamā'ah advises the student to do is to, "first consider and seek God's guidance whom one should study with and *whom to acquire virtuous character traits and ādāb from*" (Ibid., 1:85). Here the role of the teacher is not merely for the accuracy of content, rather

the student is to embody the virtues and *adab* of the teacher. For this, there are qualities the teacher needs to possess and the student should look for when adopting someone as their teacher. al-Shāṭibī has an important passage that explores this other dimension of the role of a teacher. There are three indications of a teacher who is realized in his knowledge (*al-‘ālam al-mutaḥaqqiq*),

The first of them is that he implements what he knows so that his words are in accordance with his actions. For if his words were contrary to his actions, then he is not someone qualified to study with and should be taken as an authority in the science. This idea has been clarified completely in the *Book of Legal Reasoning*. All praise be to God. The second indicator is that the teacher is someone whom elder scholars have trained in the relevant science because he studied with them and kept their company. Such a person is more fitting to be characterized with what the elder scholars have been characterized with. This was how the early Muslims were...this method became the principle for everyone after them. The Successors kept the same manner of learning of the Companions had with the Prophet (God bless him and grant him peace) until they acquired a deep understanding of the religion and attained the heights of perfection in the religious sciences. It suffices you to know the soundness of this principle that you will not find a scholar whom people studying with is well known except that he had a mentor who was well known [for people studying with] in his own generation. And rarely a heretical sect will be found or someone who holds positions contrary to orthodoxy (*al-sunnah*) except that they have not learnt in this manner. And for this very reason Ibn Ḥazm al-Zahiri²⁸ was censured for he did not continuously study with scholars *nor cultivated their adab*...The third indicator is that the teacher emulate the scholars he has studied under and *cultivate their adab in himself* (al-Shāṭibī 2013, 1:141-144).

²⁸ ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Sa‘īd Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) was an Andalusian scholar belonging to the Zahirī school of law. He was an author of numerous works in the law, theology, legal theory, *hadīth* as well as in other disciplines. He wrote *al-Fiṣal fi ‘l-milal wa ‘l-aḥwā’ wa ‘l-niḥal* on heresiography which he studied the sects that exist within Islam as well as other faiths that existed in his time, and *al-Muḥalla* in law. His works had a mixed reception from his contemporaries and later scholars. What al-Shāṭibī has in mind here regarding his statement on Ibn Ḥazm is the lack of *adab* displayed in the tone and language used by Ibn Ḥazm when referring to scholars who held divergent viewpoints. The historian al-Dhahabī, despite praising him highly, says, “he did not use proper comportment when addressing other scholars. Rather he used extremely arrogant language, and he hurled insults (*sabba*) and derided people. He was thus treated the way he treated others. A group of scholars did not pay attention to his works, abandoned him and discouraged others from reading his works, while other scholars read his works critically while benefitting from them” (al-Dhahabī 1981, 18:184). According to al-Shāṭibī, this was a result of Ibn Ḥazm not having spent time with scholars and thereby not cultivating *adab*.

The role of the teacher is not merely to convey correct content and ensure its accurate comprehension on part of the student. Additionally, and more importantly, the teacher is fundamental for the cultivation of *adab* in the student. In the educational context, the context of Ibn Jamā‘ah’s work, the *ādāb* he describes are to be applied in all situations of where education is taking place. These *ādāb* are to be acquired by teacher ensuring the student practice the *ādāb* in relation to each object, such as books other tools of learning, and each situation, such as a lesson. Then through the repeated practice of the *ādāb* in relation to all objects and contexts, it will become a habitus and the student will then possess *ādāb*. Once it is a habitus, the student will not necessarily be in need of a teacher in the same manner as he needed a teacher prior to *ādāb* being a habitus. The cultivation of *adab* additionally ensures the correct practice of a craft or an act. Similarly to the case of Ibn Ḥazm, in medicine we find a certain an Egyptian physician, ‘Alī ibn Riḍwān, whom his biographer, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a (d. 668/1269), described as someone who, “would often be involved in refutations of his contemporary physicians and in refuting the physicians of the past. Additionally, his investigations were shallow (*safāhah fī baḥthihi*) and he exhibited disgraceful qualities with those he held discussions with” (Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a 1965, 563). What is important to pay attention to here is that Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a mentions almost right after this that ‘Alī ibn Riḍwān did not have a acquire the craft of medicine from a teacher and that he composed a book arguing that learning the craft medicine from books is superior than learning the craft from teachers. We see the improper practice of the craft of medicine due to the practitioner not possessing *adab*. In the case of Ibn Ḥazm al-Ẓahirī and ‘Alī ibn Riḍwān their practice of the crafts of law and medicine was not aligned with the goods of the craft. In the end, it made them unreliable

and they were not taken as authorities due to not practicing these crafts with *adab*, having acquired the crafts without a teacher.

Berkey, I believe, has accurately observed based on studying biographical dictionaries on scholars and their academic careers, that education in Islam was “tied to persons rather than institutions” and “the personal connection – the educational model relying not simply on close study of a text, but on intensive, personal interaction with a shaykh – has always been central to Islamic education, not simply in Mamluk Egypt” (Berkey 1992, 18-21). Berkey identifies that in addition to the knowledge that was being imparted to the student, teachers “also imparted authority, an authority over texts and over a body of learning” (ibid., 23-24). Our study of Ibn Jamā‘ah’s conception of the necessity of a teacher in the learning process supports Berkey’s conclusion, yet it also shows that his analysis falls short when trying to understand why Islamic education has been focused on the person rather than the institution. The fact that Islamic education was personal and not focused on institutions was due to the cultivation of *adab* which I argue is the highest good of education in Islam. Content accuracy, craft expertise, and authority are also goods that are internal to the practice of education. Yet above all, the highest good is that of *adab* which can only be cultivated in the eyes of Ibn Jamā‘ah by a teacher who has successfully cultivated a self that possesses *adab*.

CHAPTER SIX

THE *ADAB* POSSESSING SOUL: THE RELATIONAL SELF

The self that has cultivated *adab* is a relational self. Most conceptions of the relational self are concerned with social aspects of humans. While the self that has inculcated *adab* does concern itself with social aspects, it has relational dimensions that extend to God and to one's own self. This self is embedded in the cosmos, with a particular order of creation that results in a hierarchy and is constituted in terms of its relations with all beings in creation. In this chapter, we will build the *adab* possessing self that serves as the highest good of education in the Islamic tradition. Ibn Jamā'ah's *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi' wa-l-Mutakallim fī Ādāb al-Ālim wa l-Muta'allim*, a manual of *adab* for the teacher and the student, will serve to provide us with the different relational aspects of the *adab* possessing self. The manual serves a dual purpose: it provides us a picture of what constitutes a soul that possesses *adab* and it also serves on how to cultivate such a soul in light of *adab* being a habitus. Ibn Jamā'ah composed this manual of *adab* for the student and the teacher in order to provide what constitutes correct action in the context of *adab*. Correct action is an act that is carried out in recognition of another being's rank in the order of creation and the rights of the being by virtue of the rank it holds in the hierarchy of creation. *Adab* manuals serve as a guide for the student as to what correct action would entail. The correct action is determined based on the student's relationship to the rights of other beings by virtue of the place in the order of creation.

The student would undertake the correct actions with the aim of cultivating a habitus of *adab* after which correct action would ensue forth from the student and teacher without difficulty and effort.

The anatomy of *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi*‘ provides us with an understanding of what constitutes the self that possesses *adab*. At the same time the work serves as a manual of practices for the student and the lecturer to employ in order to cultivate *adab*. For Ibn Jamā‘ah the work is intended to be a “reminder for the teacher of what has been made incumbent on him and as a counsel to alert the student as to what is specifically binding upon him” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 3). What can be understood from this statement is that the *ādāb* the teacher and the student are required to cultivate are the similar if not identical. This is consistent with the understanding of *adab* being a habitus (*malakah*); as the student will undertake these practices that will engender a state (*ḥāl*) of *adab* in the soul that does not possess the quality of permanency. Upon the repetition of these practices and the passage of time, the state of *adab* will turn into a disposition or habitus. The difference is not in any essential property of *adab*, rather *adab* as a habitus is identical to *adab* as a state. The difference between the two is the quality of fixedness and permanency (*rusūkh*). When *adab* is a habitus, it is a quality that is firmly rooted in the soul and acts of *adab* ensue from the soul without any prior effort or deliberation. Thus the *ādāb* of the teacher and the student will be the same while the only difference lies in the degree of fixedness and the effort and deliberation required for acts of *adab* to ensue. Additionally, the student, once a teacher, will now be relating to various beings in creation as a teacher. Holding a different rank, the rights that come from that rank will also reflect the rights of a teacher not of a student.

Based on the above understanding of *adab*, Ibn Jamā‘ah’s conception of the practices the teacher and the student must employ exhibit much overlap. The question of how does Ibn Jamā‘ah determine which practices constitute *adab* and which do not arises here. “Good *adab*,” Ibn Jamā‘ah’s writes in the introduction of *Tadhkirat al-sāmi‘*, “is whose merits the Sacred Law (*al-shar‘*) and reason have countenanced as well as considered opinion and statements [of people] are in agreement that those who possess it should be praised.” This passage provides us with an answer to this question. For Ibn Jamā‘ah, good *adab* is that which the Sharī‘ah has countenanced as good. Often equated with Islamic Law, in the Islamic tradition Sharī‘ah refers to the doctrinal, legal, ethical and spiritual ordinances of God. It is in this sense that Khaled Abou El Fadl describes the broad meaning of the Sharī‘ah as, “the way or path to well-being or goodness, the life source for well-being and thriving existence, the fountain or source of nourishment, and the natural and innate ways and order created by God” (Abou El Fadl 2014, xxxii). Good *adab* is not contrary to human reason. However by identifying the Sharī‘ah as the foundation for knowing what entails good *adab*, Ibn Jamā‘ah, in line with Asharite theological school to which he belonged, sees human reason unaided by revelation as being unable to determine which practices the student and teacher must employ to cultivate *adab*. Hence, revelation is required in order to indicate which practices qualify as *adab* and which do not. To be sure, *adab* is not only constituted by what is divinely determined but is also inclusive of what is customarily considered good *adab* by societal customs. Yet custom-based *adab* does differ depending on the time and location a person finds themselves in.

Ibn Jamā‘ah outlines the overall anatomy of the *Tadhkira* stating,

I have collected, by the grace of God, the Exalted, the various *ādāb* pertaining to each chapter in a single composition; something I have not seen before.

[Additionally], I have prefaced them with a short chapter on the merits of knowledge and scholars seeking its [spiritual] blessings and following the example [of writers before me]. I have arranged the [book] in five chapters that encompass the objectives of the book.

Chapter One: On the merits of sacred knowledge, scholars, and the honorable rank and nobility of the scholar.

Chapter Two: On the *ādāb* of scholar in relation to himself, with his students and his instruction.

Chapter Three: On the *ādāb* of the student in relation to himself, with his teacher, his fellow students and his lesson.

Chapter Four: On having books and the *ādāb* associated with it.

Chapter Five: On the *ādāb* relating to the school living quarters and valuable counsels associated with it (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 4).

In treating each *adab*, Ibn Jamā‘ah typically will explain the nature of the *adab* to be cultivated and explore how the *adab* serves to achieve the internal goods of learning. After which he will provide examples of the early Muslim community (*al-salaf*), the community which is taken to have upheld and maintained the ideal embodiment of Islam, and statements of Prophet Muḥammad to support his identifying why this should serve as an *adab* to be cultivated. What is significant to note here is that *adab* is always to be cultivated in *relation* to some object. The teacher cultivates and exhibits *adab* in relation to his students and his instruction. The student cultivates *adab* in relation to his or her teacher, fellow students and the lesson. *Adab* is additionally cultivated in relation to the tools of learning such as books, writing instruments, and when in the living quarters. From this we see that there are *ādāb* to be cultivated that are specific to individuals, places, situations, and objects. Furthermore, it may be concluded that *adab* is only to be demonstrated to objects that are other than the person; that are external to one. However, as Ibn Jamā‘ah argues, there are in fact *ādāb* a person is to cultivate in relation to one’s own self whether a teacher or a student. It is in this sense the self that possesses *adab* is a

relational self. In this chapter, I will focus on the *ādāb* Ibn Jamā‘ah identifies that are to be cultivated in relation to the self of the teacher and of the student and the *ādāb* the teacher and student cultivate in relation to each other.

Knowledge and Scholars in the Islamic Vision of the Created Order

Ibn Jamā‘ah, as do other writers on the *adab* of the teacher and the student, begins with a chapter on the merits of knowledge, scholars, teaching, and learning. The intent of this chapter is to establish the position of scholars and scholarship in hierarchy of the cosmos. One of the main ideas Ibn Jamā‘ah stresses is that religious scholars are to be seen as inheritors of prophets. After quoting numerous verses of the Qur’ān that praise scholars and sacred knowledge, Ibn Jamā‘ah focuses on the metaphysical implications of being a scholar and concludes that scholars possess the highest rank hierarchically of God’s creation after the rank of God’s prophets. His reasoning is based on the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muḥammad, “Scholars are the inheritors of prophets. Prophets bequeath neither *dīnār* nor *dirham*,²⁹ rather they bequeath knowledge.” Ibn Jamā‘ah commenting on this *ḥadīth* says, “Just as there is no rank higher than the rank of prophethood, there is no nobility greater than the nobility of the inheritor of the rank of prophethood” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 6). In the Islamic tradition, the position scholars and scholarship possess in the hierarchy of the cosmos is understood in relationship to the prophets of God and in relation to other human beings specifically and to the rest of creation generally, the prophets possess the highest rank and scholars possess a rank just below that rank of prophets.

²⁹ The *dīnār* and *dirham* were forms of currency in use during those times and are still used in certain nations in the Middle East.

Ibn Jamā‘ah also cites the social and religious goods related to scholarship in addition to the metaphysical ones. He states that “occupying oneself with acquiring knowledge for the sake of God is more meritorious than physical acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, exalting [God], supplication, and the like. This is due to the benefit of knowledge extending to the scholar and to others whereas [the benefit] of supererogatory physical acts of worship extend only to the person performing them. Knowledge also validates other acts of worship as they depend on knowledge and are contingent upon it; scholars are the inheritors of prophets and such is not the case for mere devotees; obeying scholars is an obligation upon others in religious matters; the positive effects of knowledge remain after the scholar has passed away whereas the effects of acts of worship [come to] end with the passing away of the devotee; and the continuance of knowledge entails the revival of the Sharī‘ah and the preserving of the emblems of the religion”(Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 13). What this chapter tells us is that these *ādāb* that Ibn Jamā‘ah will detail are linked with the metaphysical and social place scholarship and knowledge hold in that the *adab* a teacher and a student cultivate reflect their rank in the order of creation and at the level of human existence.

The *Ādāb* in Relation to One’s Self

In exploring Ibn Jamā‘ah conception of the self that possesses *adab* I will be looking at the *adab* as it relates to both the teacher and the student together. This is because I argue that the student is simply the starting point of the path in cultivating the self that possesses *adab* and the teacher represents the terminus of the path and although there are differences in terms of what *ādāb* Ibn Jamā‘ah emphasizes, there is much

overlap as well. Taking this approach, in addition to be an easier way to organize our study, also highlights the underlying conception of *adab* as a habitus in that these *ādāb* are at the same time the starting and the end point. Being a habitus, the difference between the novice and the *adab* possessing soul lies not the *adab* qua *adab* but in the state of the soul as discussed previously.

Ibn Jamā‘ah identifies twelve *ādāb* a teacher is required to cultivate in regards to his own self where as he identifies ten for the student. The first *adab* the student is to direct him towards is, “to purify his heart from all types of pretense (*ghish*), foulness (*danas*), animosity (*ghill*), envy (*hasad*), heretical doctrines, and vice. This will prepare the student to receive sacred knowledge, preserve it to memory, come to know its subtle meanings, and the true nature of its ambiguities” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 67). All of these *ādāb* relate to the student’s heart and are therefore spiritual in nature. Once see the influence of al-Ghazālī here as he also identifies the first duty (*wazīfah*) of the student is the “purifying the soul of vicious character traits and blameworthy qualities.” Furthermore, Ibn Jamā‘ah provides the same reasoning as al-Ghazālī as to why this is the first *adab* of the student saying, “For [acquiring] knowledge, as some have said, is the prayer of [a person’s] innermost being (*al-sirr*), the worship of the heart and an inner act of drawing near to God. Just as the prayer, which is an act of worship involving the outward limbs, is not valid without outward ritual purity from states of impurity and filth, likewise acquiring knowledge, which is the worship of the heart, is valid only by the purification [of the heart] from the filth of blameworthy attributes and the impurity of vicious and base character traits.” What is understood from this is that the learning process is at its essence an activity of the soul. And in order for the soul to be able to

receive knowledge, it must cultivate *adab* and an important aspect of *adab* entails divesting the soul of vicious character traits and the soul acquiring virtuous character traits. Although Ibn Jamā‘ah identifies this as the first *adab* for the student, for the teacher this constitutes the eighth and ninth *adab*. It is difficult to determine whether Ibn Jamā‘ah’s ordering of the *ādāb* is intentional or not. Nevertheless, one can infer that this being the first *adab* for the student is intentional as it prepares the student for the reception of knowledge, which implies that it serves as a condition for knowledge acquisition. Explaining this idea Ibn Jamā‘ah states, “When the heart is rendered pure for [receiving] knowledge, the heart’s blessing (*barakah*) manifests and it begins to grow like the earth when it is rendered pure for cultivation, the earth’s crops grow and yields abundantly” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 637). The heart, a spiritual substance, is the vessel of knowledge and needs to be prepared to receive knowledge. This preparation is the purification of the heart from vicious character traits and the acquiring of virtuous character traits.

Writers on *adab* in other genres have identified a person holding correct doctrines related to creed as constituting *adab* relating to oneself. For example, in discussing the *ādāb* of a physician, al-Ruhāwī holds that a person, in addition to being an apprentice to a physician should also study and know books related to drugs and the practice of medicine. However, before even initiating this course of study, the physician must hold correct theological doctrines regarding God and prophets. For example, the physician must hold “that every entity that has been brought into existence has a creator who brought it into existence who is one, powerful, wise, carries out all things willfully, grants life and death, illness and health. [This creator] has blessed creation since the moment He

created them by making known to them what will benefit them in order that they use it... This is the first duty and belief that a physician should believe in firmly” (al-Ruhāwī 1992, 41). al-Ruhāwī then goes on to explain second duty which is for the physician to possess full love of God and the high spiritual station the love of God holds. He ends with the third duty of the physician which is to uphold the doctrine that God has sent prophets to mankind because the human intellect unaided by revelation is unable to discern all that benefits them. He ends advising the student that, “these principle duties a physician must hold between him and his creator and must hold these beliefs correctly,” and “you should not keep the company of him who deviates from these principles” (Ibid.)

Similarly, in his book on the *ādāb* required for one delivering the sermon of the Friday prayer, Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār (d. 724/1324) states the following as the first *adab* in relation to his self, “He should hold correct doctrine (*ṣaḥīḥ al-‘aqīdah*), that of orthodoxy (*ahl al-sunnah wa-l jamā‘ah*), not the doctrine of the anthropomorphist nor the doctrine of those who divest God of His attributes” (Ibn al-‘Aṭṭār 1996, 87). The very same idea is presented by Ibn Jamā‘ah when speaking of the *adab* of the student thus placing him in the same line as *adab* writers of other crafts. An essential element of what constitutes the purifying of the heart is to ensure that a person holds correct doctrines regarding God, prophets, and other tenets of faith. The student or teacher must not hold any heretical doctrines as doing so renders the heart corrupt and will jeopardize the deliverables of the act of learning and teaching.

Regarding what virtuous and vicious character traits entail when dealing with the *adab* of the student Ibn Jamā‘ah does not go into detail. This is due perhaps to the fact that he did so when dealing with the *adab* of the teacher. Ibn Jamā‘ah places the

acquiring of the virtues and the divesting of vices as the third, eighth and ninth *ādāb* of the teacher, whereas it was the first *adab* of the student. The eighth and the ninth *ādāb* take up the most attention of Ibn Jamā‘ah of all the twelve *ādāb* of the teacher in relation to his own self. In the *Tadhkirat*, Ibn Jamā‘ah sees the virtues and vices as those virtues that are to be applied when one engages with other people in society, i.e. they are the social virtues. They are social in the sense that they are manifested towards an object other than oneself. The next set of virtues are those they relate to the person them self; not requiring another object in order to be manifested. This set of virtues and vice pertain either to the inner dimensions (*al-bāṭin*) of the self or its outer dimensions (*al-zāhir*).

The **eighth** *adab* is dedicated to detailing the social virtues. Ibn Jamā‘ah states,

The Eighth *Adab*: To engage people with noble character traits (*makārim al-‘akhlāq*) such as: having a cheerful countenance, spreading the greeting of peace, feeding others, suppression of rage, preventing harm from people and bearing harm that issues forth from them, preferring others and to leave appropriating things for oneself, dealing with [others] in fairness and not to ask to be treated with fairness, showing thankfulness to acts of generosity, facilitating things, striving to take care of [peoples’] needs, using ones social standing to intercede for others, showing kindness to the poor and love to[one’s] neighbors and close kin, [dealing] in gentleness (*al-rifq*) with students, supporting them and being truly devoted (*wa birrihim*) to them – as will be discussed later God willing (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 23).

Being self-explanatory, Ibn Jamā‘ah simply lists the social virtues with the understanding that most of these are known to the average Muslim and are expected in any Muslim society. From the list it can be seen that all of the virtues Ibn Jamā‘ah lists involve the exhibition of that virtue to some member of society other than the teacher. Additionally, Ibn Jamā‘ah does not discuss nor list social vices as they too are self explanatory. And finally, for Ibn Jamā‘ah, even these social virtues are known and determined by the example of the Prophet Muḥammad. With this understanding, he ends this *adab* with the

following anecdote from the Prophet's life, "In the case when [the teacher] observes someone not performing his prayer or his ablution or an obligatory act correctly, [the teacher] should gently and with kindness guide him [to the correct manner] just as the Messenger of God (God bless him and grant him peace) did with the bedouin when he urinated in the mosque and with Mu'āwiyah ibn al-Ḥakam when he spoke during prayer," (Ibid.) implying that these virtues are taken from the Sharī'ah, specifically in the example of the Prophet.

The **ninth** *adab* relates to the virtues and vices that relate to the person of the teacher.

The ninth *adab* is that [the teacher] purifies his outer form and inner form from base character traits and cultivates his self with the praiseworthy character traits. Among the base character traits are: enmity (*al-ghill*), envy (*al-ḥasad*), transgression (*al-baghy*), anger for other than the sake of God, the Exalted, deception (*al-ghish*), pride, ostentation, vanity, acting for the sake of reputation (*al-sum'ah*), avarice (*al-bukhl*), wickedness (*al-khubth*), insolence (*al-baṭar*), covetousness, boastfulness (*al-fakhr*), vainglory, competing and vying for the world, sycophancy (*al-mudāhana*), pretentiousness, loving to be praised for acts one did not do, blind to the faults of the self and being distracted from them by [focusing on] the faults of other people, showing partisanship and solidarity for other than God, having hope and fear in other than God, backbiting, tale-bearing, calumny, lying, vulgar speech, looking at people with disdain even if they are lower than one. So be warned against these filthy attributes and based character traits for they are the gateway to all types of evil. In fact, they are all evil (Ibn Jamā'ah 1974, 23-24).

All of the vices mentioned relate to the person of the teacher and the removal of which is considered necessary. The outer/inner form dichotomy introduced here by Ibn Jamā'ah is not to be confused with the social virtues and the outer form being equated here. Rather the distinction implies that outward vices are perceptible by the external senses, whereas the inward vices are not perceptible to them.

There are four vices Ibn Jamā‘ah singles out for special attention due to, “some amongst the jurists of our time who possess wicked souls have been afflicted with these attributes, except for those who God, the Exalted, has protected. In particular [they have been afflicted with] envy, vanity, ostentation, and looking at others with disdain.” This passage demonstrates the practical dimensions and social role *adab* manuals held in circles of education in classical Muslim societies as ensuring the correct practice of each craft is a means for the goods of each craft to be realized in society thus allowing the community to continue to flourish and grow. All of these vices result in the craft of teaching and learning to be undertaken without *adab* and the ends of the craft will not be realized. Additionally from Ibn Jamā‘ah’s observations one can infer that some practitioners are afflicted with traits, as in the case of law, which practitioners of other crafts may not. The purpose of practicing a craft with *adab* is to ensure that the external and internal goods of craft are realized. Ibn Jamā‘ah’s closing of this paragraph provides us with insights as to the relationship between *adab* manuals and the sciences. Ibn Jamā‘ah closes this paragraph saying, “The cure for each of these afflictions is to be found in the books related to sciences of the heart (*al-raqā’iq*). Whoever desires to purify his soul from these afflictions should see well to these books. The most beneficial of them is the *al-Ri‘āya* of al-Muḥāsibī (God have mercy on him).” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 24). What we can understand from this important passage is that *adab* manuals do not represent a science in the sense that they serve to inform the readers of the details of the particulars outlined in the *adab* manuals. Here Ibn Jamā‘ah does not discuss how a person would acquire the virtues and divest himself of all the vices. Rather he redirects the reader to the science whose subject matter this would be which is the science of

Sufism. Yet, due to the importance of this observation, and due to the fact that most likely a student and teacher of law will be reading the *Tadhkira*, Ibn Jamā‘ah does spend some time defining these vices and providing the means to rid oneself of them. What this demonstrates is that in order to cultivate the self that possesses *adab* one would have to take from various sciences and *adab* manuals serve to provide the reader with what constitutes the self that possesses *adab*. For example, in the case of a person riding their hearts from heretical doctrines, they would be referred to the science of theology.

Ibn Jamā‘ah next moves on to discuss the virtuous character traits thus completing the **ninth** *adab* of the teacher. He lists them stating,

Of the praiseworthy character traits are continual repentance, sincerity, certainty, God-fearingness, patience, contentment, being satisfied [with God’s apportionments], asceticism, absolute trust in God, entrustment to God, being free of malice, having a good opinion of others, relinquishing any claims, good character, acknowledging acts of goodness, being grateful for blessings, having tenderness towards God’s creation, and having modesty towards Gods and towards people. The love of God is the character trait encompassing all good qualities and attributes. The love of God can only be achieved by emulating the Messenger of God (God bless him and grant him peace). ‘Say: ‘If you love God, follow me, and God will love you.’ [Qur’ān 3:31].

This passage and the others allow us to make some important observations regarding the conception of the virtues in Ibn Jamā‘ah’s thought. What differentiates the list of virtues above from the social virtues mentioned in the eighth *adab* is the object which the virtues are directed towards. The object of a social virtue is primarily transitive, meaning they are external to the person possessing the virtue. One shows thanks to others, facilitates things for them, and shows kindness towards others. The ninth *adab* encompasses those virtues whose primary object is God. One is to repent to God, be sincere towards God, have certainty of God, be content with God, and ultimately to have love of God. These virtues could be classified as theological virtues in the sense that God is the object of these

virtues.³⁰ However, when keeping in mind the greater conceptual understanding of the virtues in the Islamic tradition, an additional dimension of the virtues comes to light – their role regarding the salvation of a believer. al-Ghazālī sums up this dimension stating, “Salvation is in [acquiring] virtuous character” (al-Ghazālī 2006, 213). al-Ghazālī expands on the salvific dimension of these virtues by first clarifying that the perfect embodiment of the virtues has only been achieved by the Prophet Muhammad and other rare individuals. Who they are al-Ghazālī does not identify. Individual salvation does not depend on acquiring each virtue in its perfect form. Rather, what is expected is that there be a stronger inclination towards the good or the beautiful in an individual than towards the ugly for there are various degrees between absolute beauty and absolute ugliness. And in accordance with the degree of closeness a person is to beauty in this world, they will be felicitous in the life hereafter. (ibid., 217) The virtues that constitute the *adab* on the part of the student and the teacher have dimensions that extend beyond the educational sphere.

In closing the first *adab* of the student, Ibn Jamā‘ah restates the purpose behind this *adab* stating, “Thus when the heart is rendered pure for [receiving] knowledge, its blessings manifest and increases just as land when it is ready for sowing, its seed grows and bears harvest” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 67). The student, being at the beginning of the path of self cultivation, needs to set the foundations for the cultivation of the self that

³⁰ The category of theological virtues is particular to the conception of virtue in the Christian tradition. For example, Augustine of Hippo (d. 430) acknowledges the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude that originate in writing of Plato. However, in addition to the cardinal virtues, Christian theologians affirm virtues that are uniquely Christian and are seen as being superior to the cardinal virtues. These have been identified as the virtues of faith, hope and love based on Corinthians I 13:13, “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” See Brynjulv Norheim Jr (2004) *The theological virtues. Aquinas did, but did Kant?*, *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology*, 58:2, 108-122. Scholastic writers such as Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) provide more clarity regarding the different types of virtues.

possesses *adab*. Ibn Jamā‘ah supports this being the first *adab* for the student by citing the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muhammad: “In the body, there is a morsel of flesh, if it is sound, the entire body is sound and if it is corrupt, the entire body will be corrupt. Indeed it is the heart.” He provides additional support by citing a statement of one of the early Muslims, Sahl stating, “Light is not allowed to enter a heart that contains anything God Mighty and Majestic abhors.” Light here refers to sacred knowledge. It is understandable now why Ibn Jamā‘ah stresses this as the first *adab* of the student and not for the teacher as the teacher, having cultivated the self possessing *adab*, needs only a reminder of this *adab*.

The **second** *adab* of the student according to Ibn Jamā‘ah is concerned with the motive behind the act of learning. A student should intend God’s countenance in his act of learning. The intention of an agent when carrying out an act has received significant focus by Muslim jurists, mystics, and moralists. Based on the statement of the Prophet Muhammad, “Actions are only according to intentions,” Ibn Jamā‘ah is writing and thoughts can be seen as a continuation and accurately reflective of the discourse generated around what makes up the essence of the act of a moral agent. Furthermore, the correct intentions behind the act of learning and align it with the ends of the act, thereby ensuring that internal and external goods are acquired. Ibn Jamā‘ah clarifies this point stating, “Learning is considered to be amongst the acts of worship and those acts that draw one near [to God]. If the intention of learning is sincerely for God, the Exalted, the act will be accepted [by God], grow, and its blessings will increase. However, if other than God is intended, [then the act of learning] will fail, not achieve its ends, and not yield any results. It is likely that the goods sought will not be realized or obtained,

thereby rendering his hopes unfulfilled and his effort futile.” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 69-70).

The intention serves to ensure that the external and internal goods of an act, an act’s final cause (*al-‘illah al-ghā’iyyah*) for which it is aimed at, will be acquired.

Ibn Jamā‘ah lists the goods of the act of learning and thereby clarifying for the student that he should “intend the countenance of God, the Exalted, to act in accordance with [the knowledge acquired], revive the Sacred Law (*sharī‘ah*), enlighten one’s heart, beautify one’s inward dimensions, proximity to God on the day of meeting with Him, and to become recipients of what has been arranged for his family of God’s good pleasure and His great bounty.” These goods have to do with the act of learning, and not with the specific craft that the student is being initiated into. The craft has internal and external goods, in addition to the goods in the act of learning, which are specific to the craft.

Additionally, Ibn Jamā‘ah identifies objectives that, if intended on the part of the agent, are harmful to the craft of acquiring knowledge and will jeopardize the attainment of the goods identified. “Worldly objectives should not be intended,” says Ibn Jamā‘ah, “such as [intending to] obtain positions of leadership, social status, wealth, competing with one’s peers, being held great in people’s hearts, being the head of gatherings, and the like. [Consequently, he would be] exchanging what is good for what is lowly” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 68).

This **second** *adab* of the student relates to the **first** and **second** *adab* to be cultivated on part of the teacher. However, as it relates to the student, the *adab* is intended to prepare the student to acquire knowledge. In the case of the teacher the *adab* is on maintaining the knowledge acquired and living up to the trust placed on the scholar and teacher. Thus the teacher should be constantly be vigilant (*murāqaba*) of God the

Exalted in private and public, and being in fear of God in all of the teachers movements, rest, words, and deeds. Ibn Jamā‘ah stresses this because the teacher is, “entrusted with the knowledge that has been consigned to him and the subtle perceptions and deep understandings that have been conferred to him. God the Exalted says, ‘Do not betray God and the Messenger, or knowingly betray the trusts that you have with each other’” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 15-16). Additionally, the scholar is required to cultivate a constant state of tranquility (*sakīna*), inspiring dignity, humility, scrupulousness, and humbleness before God. Here we see that the main focus of the *adab* of the student is on being sincere towards God in the acquiring of knowledge. In the case of the teacher, the *adab* of sincerity is now focused on fulfilling the trust that is placed on scholars and teachers.

The **second** *adab* of the teacher builds on the sincere fulfillment of the trust. The teacher must ‘protect’ knowledge. This protection entails preserving the honor and nobility of knowledge and the teacher given by God by the conduct of a scholar socially and in whom to teach and in what manner. So the scholar “should not dishonor knowledge by him going to or walking to those not worthy [of it] such as the worldly classes (lit. the sons of the world) unnecessarily and without need or those of them who desire to learn from him however great his stature or distinguished his standing maybe. al-Zuhrī said, ‘It is an ignominy for knowledge that a teacher should take it to the house of the student.’” Preserving the honor and dignity of knowledge impacts the conduct of a teacher socially and in what manner the act of teaching must take carried out. Scholars and teachers have taught those with political positions and kings, the sons of the world. Ibn Jamā‘ah explains that this is acceptable “when there is a religious interest that outweighs the detriment of dishonoring knowledge and his intention is good and sound,

then there is no harm God the Exalted willing.” When the scholars of the early community did keep the company of the sons of the world, they did not do so for any worldly motives. Similarly, Ibn Jamā‘ah notes “if the person who the scholar goes to is a person of knowledge and asceticism” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 17) then there is nothing wrong with keeping their company to teach them.

Stressing the external social goods of a teacher that are harmful to the craft of teaching, Ibn Jamā‘ah places asceticism or renunciation (*zuhd*) as the **third** *adab* the teacher must cultivate. This will allow the teacher to avoid external goods that come with the social role of a scholar and a teacher that end up harming the craft of teaching such as wealth, political influence, and relationships with politicians. The teacher must cultivate *zuhd* to ensure the internal goods of the craft of teaching are preserved. Thus, Ibn Jamā‘ah requires that the teacher “should be acquire the character trait of renunciation (*zuhd*) regarding worldly goods and to be scant with them to the extent possible not harming himself or his family. For the worldly goods he reasonably requires for himself and his family keeping them content is not deemed to be worldly. The least degree a scholar [should be at] is to disdain any attachment to worldly goods. This is because, of all people, he knows well the baseness and the alluring nature of the world, its ephemeral nature along with the great toil and fatigue [it brings]. He is, therefore, more duty bound not to pay attention to the world and be preoccupied with its worries” Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 18). Continuing on the same concern of not being tempted by worldly motives encroaching in the act of learning, the **fourth** *adab* is for the teacher to “watch over his knowledge from being made a means to obtain worldly aims such as social status, wealth, reputation, notoriety, attendants, or winning advancement ahead of his associates.” The

teacher is to remove these motives from his heart when carrying out the craft of teaching as these would render the internal goods of the act unattained as these do not constitute the internal goods of the act. Ibn Jamā‘ah stresses this point by citing a statement of a well revered scholar of the early Muslim community, Sufyan ibn ‘Uyaynah (d. 198/814), reflecting on this *adab* saying, “I was granted a profound understanding of the Qur’ān. When I accepted a parcel from Abū Ja‘far, it was stripped away from me. I ask God to pardon me.” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 19). The internal good of knowledge of the Qur’ān was not acquired due to a teacher employing knowledge as a means to worldly goods.

The **fifth** *adab* of the teacher focuses on the social role of the teacher in light of the rank a teacher holds in the order of creation. What we witness here is the impact of the cosmic position on the public conduct of a teacher. Ibn Jamā‘ah starts of this *adab* by observing that the means of living a teacher adopts must be not bring down the nobility of the rank of teacher. He states, “The Fifth *Adab*: [The teacher] should distance himself from low means of earning a living, those that are by nature disdainful, and [those means of earning that are] offensive according to custom and the Sacred Law such as cupping, tanning, money exchange, and goldsmithery (*ṣiyāgha*).” The Sacred Law determines the ranking of each means of earning a living, yet custom also plays an important role. The rank of a teacher also determines the social conduct of a teacher. The teacher is held to a different set of standards than a non-teacher. Along these lines, Ibn Jamā‘ah advises that, “the teacher should avoid circumstances that draw suspicion no matter how far-fetched. Neither should he perform any act that entails an impairing of [one’s social] respectability or outwardly be deemed objectionable – even if permissible in itself. For by doing such acts he exposes himself to suspicion and his reputation to being the talk of

people causing people to have blameworthy opinions earning the sin of gossip.” Thus even if the act is permissible for one to perform in the Sacred Law, the teacher must bear in mind how the act is perceived customarily as when. If the act raises doubt regarding one’s character, the teacher should avoid performing the act in public. All of this is to protect the honor and rank of the teacher. This is an example of an external good serving to facilitate the acquiring of an internal good. This *adab* is to be cultivated to achieve the external goods of honor and social rank which are there to serve the internal goods of being a teacher and a student. Ibn Jamā‘ah further advises the teacher stating, “However, if such acts do occur due to a need or the like, [the teacher] should inform anyone who witnesses the act of its ruling [in the Sacred Law], his reason for performing such an act, and his objective [in doing the act]. [This is] so that the person witnessing [the teacher] not fall into sin by virtue of him witnessing such an act and avoid the teacher [due to disdain] thereby not benefitting from the teacher’s knowledge... This is the reason the Prophet (God bless him and grant him peace) said to the two men when they noticed him speaking with Şafiyyah and then turned away, “At ease! She is Şafiyyah.” Then he said, “Indeed Satan flows in human beings like blood flows [in them]. I feared that something would enter your hearts.” He then said, “By which you would be ruined.” The student’s opinion of the teacher is a significant factor that determines whether or not the goods of teaching and learning will be acquired by the teacher and the student. The teacher must act in a manner that takes into consideration the student’s opinion of the teacher.

Continuing with the theme of a teacher’s social role, the **sixth** *adab* focuses on the responsibilities of a teacher when in public. The teacher is to “maintain the performance of the public acts of Islam and outward acts of worship such as the performance of prayer

in the congregational mosques, spreading the greeting of peace to all classes of people, commanding the good and forbidding the evil and patiently bear the harm that comes about from it, openly speaking the truth to rulers, exerting oneself for God's sake not fearing the blame of anyone. [All of this] recalling God's words, "[and] bear anything that happens to you steadfastly: these are things to be aspired to." [31:17]." These responsibilities come about due to the knowledge a teacher possesses and constitute an internal good of teaching and learning that, in particularly commanding the good and forbidding the evil, require knowledge and proper understanding. Ibn Jamā'ah continues to list the responsibilities including items such as rendering all innovative religious practices obscure, advocating what is in the interests of the Muslims in a recognized manner that has been adopted by the early Muslim community. Additionally, "[the teacher] should not be content, when it comes to his public and private spiritual works, with merely performing what is [legally] permissible. Rather, he should hold himself to the most beautiful and perfect manner of performing spiritual works." All of this, Ibn Jamā'ah states, "is because scholars are the ones who taken as exemplars, recourse is made to them on legal questions, they are the Proof of God, the Exalted, over the laity. A person may be observing them to learn from them who they do not know, and a person may be adopting their ways whom they are unaware of." The social responsibilities of a teacher or scholar are directly linked to their rank hierarchically in the created order. Being an inheritor of the prophets and, in the absence of a prophet, the proof of God over the laity, a teacher's actions take on a different valence. From this vantage point, the teacher must embody the ideals of the faith because of their role as being the sound understanding and practice of the faith for everyone. "For this reason," Ibn Jamā'ah

explains, “the misstep of a scholar is considered an enormity in light of the detriments that result from it, because people take him as an exemplar to follow.”

The **tenth** *adab* of the student focuses social conduct that is determined by rank of the teacher in the created order as the student is the teacher at an early stage of training. Ibn Jamā‘ah states, “The student should abandon all general social relationships as abandoning them is amongst the most important concerns for a student of the religious sciences. In particular, [the student should cut off relationships with] those who are not also students of the religious sciences, and with those who go to excess in recreational activities and have little time for reflection for natural dispositions are stolen [from others].” At first, this *adab* may seem to be merely practical; aimed to help focus a student on their studying. Yet the last statement is key to understanding the point of this *adab*. The dispositions a student is to cultivate are susceptible to being affected by the dispositions of others. The *adab* of others members of society who have not been cultivated are likely not the *adab* a student is to seeking to cultivate and keeping their company will expose a student to their *adab* that will not serve to achieve the goods he is seeking. Therefore, the student is to avoid the company of those who are not on the same path as he is. Instead, Ibn Jamā‘ah explains that, “What is recommended for the student of religious sciences is that they should only keep the company of one who benefits him or whom he benefits as has been transmitted from the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), “Be a scholar or a student but not the third type [of person] and then you would be ruined.” Seeing that a student will be eventually in need of the company of people, he, “should keep the company of someone who is upright, practicing, and God fearing, scrupulous, intelligent, abundantly good with little evil, well in dealing with

others, not arguing with others much, reminding him if he forgets, when he remembers he comes to his aid, when he needs he consoles him and when he is worried, he reminds him to be patient.”

The **tenth** *adab* of the teacher and the **third** *adab* of the student focus on the use of time in the pursuit of learning and teaching. The student should, “hasten to spend his early years and the moments of his life acquiring [knowledge] and not be deluded by trickery of procrastination and false hopes.” Similarly, the teacher is to be, “continuously be avid in increasing in knowledge by earnestness and effort; continuously maintaining ones litanies of acts of worship, occupying ones time and the time of others in [public] recitations, listening to the recitation [of students], private readings, reflecting, commenting [on passages], putting to memory, composing works, and research. The teacher should only spend the moments of his life in what he has dedicated himself to in terms of acquiring knowledge and acting upon it, and only spend his time on other matters to the extent required such as eating, drinking, sleeping, taking rest due to tiredness, fulfilling the rights of his wife, a visitor, obtaining foodstuff and other items he is in need of, attending to any physical pain or other needs that make it difficult to pursue his craft. For there is no worth in trying to preserve the life of a believer, and he whose state is the same for two consecutive days is cheated.” Invoking the rank of teachers and students as inheritors of prophets, Ibn Jamā‘ah states that this manner of spending one’s time is because, “the rank of knowledge is the rank of the inheritors of prophets. [Additionally,] lofty matters are only obtained by exerting oneself. In *Saḥiḥ Muslim*, Yahya ibn Abī Kathīr said, ‘Sacred knowledge is not acquired by the relaxation of the body’ and [the Prophet’s] *ḥadīth*, ‘Paradise is surrounded by loathsome things.’”

On the same theme of giving oneself entirely to teaching and learning, when it comes to the student, Ibn Jamā‘ah quotes al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī as transmitting a well known statement of the early Muslim community, “This knowledge is only acquired by one who closes up his shop, destroys his garden, abandons his companions, and if his close relatives dies, he does not attend his funeral prayer.” Ibn Jamā‘ah does note the hyperbole in this statement, yet observes that, “the point here is that it is necessary in order to acquire knowledge that the student bring together his heart and focus his thought.” The student and the teacher must cultivate the *adab* of a strong sense of purpose and focus; a single-mindedness. In order to achieve this single-mindedness, the student is required to cut off all relations and attachments that will not aid him in his goal of learning. Ibn Jamā‘ah likens these unnecessary attachments to high-way robbers (*qawāṭi‘ al-ṭarīq*) and explains that, “this is the reason why the early community recommended estranging one relatives and moving far away from [one’s] homeland. For if thought (*fikrah*) is dispersed, it will fall short of perceiving the true nature of things and obscure subtleties. God has not placed in a person to hearts in their body and it has likewise been said, ‘knowledge will not give you part of itself until you give your all to it.’”

The **fourth** *adab* to be cultivated on the part of the student continues along the line of dedication to learning and the attainment of knowledge. In this *adab*, however, the student’s wealth and lifestyle as possibly serving as impediments is analyzed. The student is to cultivate the *adab* of being, “content with an amount of food that is readily available even it is of a small amount. Likewise, [the student should be content] with clothing that is readily available even if [the garment] is worn-out.” The student is to cultivate the

virtue of patience to deal with these rough circumstances while studying. The students is required to create these circumstances if they happen to be affluent because usually affluence results in a person not able to develop the single-mindedness required to obtain knowledge. Ibn Jamā‘ah explains that it is by, “being patient with the constrictions of poverty (*ḍayq al-‘aysh*) [the student] will attain the vastness of knowledge (*sā‘at ul-‘ilm*), bring together the discomposure of his heart over various hopes. Thereby the well-springs of wisdom will overflow in [his heart].”

The relationship between affluence and learning has been commented on by many Muslim scholars. Ibn Jamā‘ah’s position in *Tadhkirat al-sāmi‘* is well supported by major figures in Islamic education. In this *adab*, Ibn Jamā‘ah next provides the statement of scholars on this issue for the student to know that the major scholars of the early community made their achievements by adopting a lifestyle of near poverty. Starting with the eponym founder of his own legal school, Ibn Jamā‘ah states, “al-Shāfi‘ī (God be pleased with him) said, ‘No one who sets out to acquire this knowledge while having [a large amount of] possessions and self-pride has succeeded [in achieving his goal]. Rather, one who sets out to acquire it with humility, straitened circumstances, and being of service to scholars will succeed.’ He also said, ‘Learning Sacred knowledge is suitable only for one who is bankrupt. He was asked, ‘Not for the one with wealth that only meets his needs?’ He said, ‘Not for the one with wealth that only meets his needs.’ Mālik said, ‘No one will attain what he desires of Sacred knowledge until he his harmed by poverty and prefers it over all other things.’ Abū Ḥanīfah said, ‘One should make their entire concern singular in order to help them in the study of Law. One should seek help by also cut off social relations by restricting themselves to only what they need, not exceeding

that.” The **fourth** *adab* of the student Ibn Jamā‘ah tackles this *adab* of single-mindedness on part of the student in order to assist him or her in learning as the, “student’s capital assets are focusing his thoughts, resting his heart, and employing his reflection.”

Humility and the continuous zeal for acquiring knowledge constitute the **eleventh** *adab* the teacher is required to cultivate. Humility and continuous learning are related in two ways: the teacher should not feel that there is nothing left to learn and the teacher should learn from anyone who possesses knowledge regardless of their age, gender, or social rank. Ibn Jamā‘ah explains, “[The teacher] should not refuse to learn what he does not know from someone lesser than him in social status, lineage, or age. Rather, the teacher should be avid to learn no matter who the person is. Wisdom is the believer’s stray camel (*dāllah*), he will take possession of it wherever he finds it. Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr said ‘A man will continue to be a scholar as long as he is learning. When he abandons learning and assumes he is not in need of learning and suffices with what he knows then he is the most ignorant of all.’ One of the bedouins recited [the following verses]:

Blindness is not [in] the length of the question,
[Rather] complete blindness is the lengthy silence
while [in the state of] ignorance.”

Typical of Ibn Jamā‘ah, he next provides statements and examples of this practice from the early Muslim community. He states, “Groups of scholars of the early community (*al-salaf*) would learn from their own students what they did not have knowledge of. al-Ḥumaydī – who was a student of al-Shāfi‘ī – said ‘I accompanied al-Shāfi‘ī from Mecca to Egypt. [Along the way], I would learn from him issues [related to Law] and he would learn from me *ḥadīth*.’ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said ‘al-Shāfi‘ī said to us ‘You are more

knowledgeable in *ḥadīth* than I. Therefore, if a *ḥadīth* is authentic according to you, then tell it to me so I may implement it.’” Ending the *adab*, Ibn Jamā‘ah cites the practice of Prophet Muḥammad who exemplifies in its most complete form the *adab* possessing soul.

Ibn Jamā‘ah dedicates the **eleventh** and final *adab* of the teacher relating to himself to the collecting and composing of books. Composing works is an essential *adab* of the teacher for two reasons: the knowledge the teacher has acquired during his career and as a means of solidifying the knowledge. For Ibn Jamā‘ah, the teacher should only begin to compose his own works “with total excellence and complete mastery. For the teacher has studied the depths of various disciplines and the subtleties of the sciences [all of] which requires a significant amount of investigation, reading, research (*tanqīb*), and review.” As a way of ensuring all of the knowledge acquired over the teacher’s career, the teacher is required to record their findings in compositions. This will ensure the continual growth in knowledge that is accumulated in the community of scholars in particular and for the general community of believers. Thus Ibn Jamā‘ah recommends that it is preferred for the teacher, “to devote his attention to [composing works] whose benefit extends [to as many people possible] and that whose need exists for the most.” The scholar must write in a manner that ensures these two benefits are achieved. For this, Ibn Jamā‘ah recommends that the scholar should concentrate his efforts, “to compose a work that is original, intending to utilize clear language in his compositions, avoiding lengthy passages that will bore the reader and succinctness that does not achieve the [author’s] purpose.”

Regarding the second reason for composing works, solidifying the scholar's knowledge, Ibn Jamā'ah quotes al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī listing the benefits of authoring works stating that, “[composing works] strengthens the memory, sharpens the mind (*al-qalb*), develops the disposition (*al-ṭab'*), and perfects expression.” These serve as internal goods to the practice of teaching. Completing the list with what would be considered as external goods al-Khaṭīb states that composing works, “brings about a good reputation, abundant reward, and eternalizes [his name] until the end of time.”

The remaining *ādāb* of the student concentrate on what Ibn Jamā'ah considers being the greatest supports for the student. The **sixth** *adab* describes the greatest supports to studying, correct understanding, and avoiding the dullness of studying to be eating a sufficient amount of food from that is made from sources considered permissible in the Sacred Law. The student must cultivate and develop the ability to determine which foodstuff will contribute to studying. This includes the ability to discern the spiritual and physical effects of food and drink. Ibn Jamā'ah highlights the spiritual aspect to the *adab* a student should cultivate towards eating. “A sound mind is too honorable to be wasted and neglected with even a paltry amount of food that ends up in what is known.” Ibn Jamā'ah clarifies ‘what is known’ when one consumes food stating that it results in, “sleep, obtuseness, indolence of the mind, dullness of the senses, and laziness of the body.” The rank the mind has in the order of creation dictates that it should be employed in ways that honor and are reflective of its rank in the created order. Consuming food should be done in a manner that upholds the mind's rank in the created order. The **eighth** *adab* of the student extends the theme of the sixth *adab* to avoid specific food, such as

sour apples, beans, and drinking vinegar. The student must consume foods that sharpen the mind that are known empirically.

For the **seventh** *adab*, Ibn Jamā‘ah tackles the *adab* of scrupulousness (*wara’*) in all matters of a student’s life. This *adab* impacts the student by “illuminating his heart and preparing it to accept knowledge, its light, and to benefit from it.” Being scrupulous entails adopting the more precautionary approach in matters of eating, drinking, dressing, and one’s residence. For Ibn Jamā‘ah scrupulousness entails a certain disposition to applying the Sacred Law which entails that one should adopt positions of the Sacred Law that are stricter when legal differences of opinion exist. The student, Ibn Jamā‘ah advises, “should not be content for himself by adopting what is plainly permissible according to the *sharī‘ah* whenever it is possible for him to avoid it or there is no need pressing him to...Rather he should seek out the highest level [of practice] and adopt the example of the righteous scholars of the early community avoiding much of what they would judge to be legally permissible.”

The *Ādāb* the Student is to Cultivate Towards the Teacher

The *ādāb* a student is to cultivate towards his or her teacher embody the position of a student and a teacher in the order of creation mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. Additionally the rank knowledge holds in general and Sacred Knowledge in particular in the order of creation is embodied in these *ādāb*. In light of this, the student is to cultivate the *adab* to deeply consider and seek God’s assistance regarding with whom he or she should study. This is so because it is the teacher from whom the student will be acquiring ethical character and various *ādāb*. Thus the student should select a teacher,

“whose qualifications are complete, care [of the student] is realized, moral integrity is apparent, continence (‘*iffah*) is known, good reputation is well-known, excellent in teaching, and thoroughly imparts understanding.” Additionally, the student should not restrict himself to teachers who are popular and ignore less known teachers even though they are more qualified. Doing so constitutes an act of pride and ostentation.

The ethical dimensions of a teacher are not the only items a student is to take into consideration when selecting who to study with. The academic dimensions are equally important. The teacher should have complete mastery of the religious sciences.

Additionally, the teacher should have spent much time with other contemporary scholars in research and lengthy sessions of scholarly inquiry. The teacher should not, “be one who has studied from the depth of books, whose companionship with expert scholars is not known. al-Shāfi‘ī said ‘One who acquired learning in Law [solely] from the depth of books brings legal rulings to ruin.’ Some of the [early community] would say ‘Amongst the most severe tribulations is the taking up of the pages of books for a teacher.’”

Participation in a community of scholars and scholarship is an essential component to cultivating *adab* and to ensure correct understanding of the knowledge taught.

Once the proper teacher has been identified, the student must now cultivate the *adab* of not criticizing his teacher nor abandoning the teacher’s scholarly positions and advice all of which requires humility on the part of the student. “The student should be with his teacher like a patient with an expert physician. He should consult with him regarding his endeavor, seek out his pleasure in what he seeks, exaggerate in respecting him, and draw close to God by serving his teacher. [The student] should know that in abasing himself to his teacher is [true] glory, in submitting to him is [true] pride, and

humbling himself to him is a raising of rank.” This is brought about by the student, “viewing his teacher with the eye of veneration and hold that he possesses a degree of perfection. This is more conducive to the student benefiting from his teacher. One of the early community, when going to visit his teacher (*shaykh*), would give something as charity and say, ‘O God! Cover the faults of my teacher from me and do not take the blessings of his knowledge from me.’” Additionally, the student *adab* should not refer to the teacher in the second person singular. Rather the student should address the teacher using the expressions “My master!” or “My teacher!” Reflecting the relationship the student has in light of the rank the teacher possesses.

The relationship the student has with the teacher continues even after the teacher passes away. Consequently the *adab* a student is to cultivate extends to the teacher even after he or she has passed away. Ibn Jamā‘ah, as the **fourth** *adab*, recommends the student to, “pray for the teacher during his life, and to look after his children, close-relatives, and those beloved to him after his death. The student should regularly visit his grave, seek forgiveness for him, give in charity on his behalf. [Additionally, the student should] adopt the manner of religious practice and character of his teacher. [The student should] observe his teacher’s habits in imparting knowledge and religious teachings, pattern his motions and rests on his teachers in his daily habits and acts of worship. He should cultivate his (the teacher’s) *adab* in his soul and not abandon taking his teacher as a model [in this affair].” Ibn Jamā‘ah sets out the view of the teacher being the archetype of *adab* the student must cultivate his self and embody. This relationship does not end with the life of the teacher and the student, after the death of the teacher, is a continuation of the teacher’s way of being.

For the remaining *ādāb*, I will provide them in list-form as the preceding discussion suffices us from having to explore each of them in detail.

5. The student should be patient with any coarse behavior that ensues from the teacher or bad character. This should not impede him from keeping his close company and having a good opinion of him. The student should interpret the teacher's actions that appear incorrect in the best of ways.
6. The student should thank the teacher for developing any virtue he has and for censuring any deficiency he has.
7. The student should not enter upon the teacher without his permission, except if it is a public gathering.
8. The student should sit in front of the teacher embodying *adab*, in the manner a child sits in front of a reciter to learn or sit cross-legged with humility and submission, tranquility and calmness. He should pay attention to the teacher focusing his gaze on him. He should face him with his total being, attempting to understand the teacher's words such that he will not be in need of repeating his words a second time.
9. The student should address his teacher in an excellent manner to the extent possible.
10. If the student heard the teacher mention a ruling on a particular issue, or an unfamiliar useful point, or related an incident, or recited some poetry that he already knows, the student should give his attention to the teacher as if he is learning it at that moment, desiring it, and happy about it as if he has not heard it before.
11. The student should not precede the teacher in explaining an issue or answering a question from him or someone else. He should not express his knowledge of it nor his knowing about it before his teacher [having mentioned it].
12. If the teacher hands him something, he should receive it with his right hand.
13. If the student is walking with his teacher, he should be in front of him (the teacher) in the night, and behind him during the daytime.

The *Ādāb* of the teacher in relation to his lessons.

1. If the teacher sets out to a lesson, he should purify himself from ritual impurity, and filth. He should clean himself and wear scented oils, adorn the best attire that is appropriate for him and his contemporaries.
2. When the teacher exits his house, he should supplicate with the authentic prayer of the Prophet (God bless him and grant him peace), "O God! I seek Your protection for leading astray or being led astray, from committing a misstep or being made to commit a misstep, oppressing or being oppressed, from treating one ignorantly or being treated ignorantly."
3. The teacher should sit being seen to all in attendance.

4. The teacher should recite a portion of the God's, the Exalted, book before beginning research and teaching.
5. If there are a number of lessons, the teacher should start with the most noble [sciences] and so forth, and the most important [of the sciences] and so forth.
6. The teacher should not raise his voice more than what is needed nor lower his voice to the extent that the objective is not achieved.
7. The teacher should protect his gathering from vain speech.
8. The teacher should rebuke anyone who is excessive in his inquiry, displays recalcitrance during his debates, or [displays] bad *adab* or unfairness after the truth is manifest.
9. The teacher should hold to fairness in his study and speech, listen to the issue from its questioner correctly – even if he is young of age. If asked about an issue that he does not know, he should say, 'I do not know about the issue' or 'I don't know' for saying 'I don't know' is knowledge itself.
10. The teacher should show love and affection to an unknown student attending his [lesson].
11. It is customary for the teacher to say at the end of each lesson 'and God knows best.'
12. The teacher should not hold a position of teaching if he is not qualified for it, and should not mention anything in the lesson he of which has no knowledge.

The *Ādāb* the Teacher is to Cultivate in Relation to His Students

The intention of the act is the central focus of the first few *ādāb* of the teacher in relation to his students. Although Ibn Jamā'ah has addressed the *adab* of cultivating the correct intention on part of the teacher and the student before, in this context, the Ibn Jamā'ah's focus is now the intention of the act of teaching in relation to the student. The teacher is to cultivate multiple intentions in himself, and at the same time is to cultivate these intentions in his student as well. As the **first** *adab*, the teacher to cultivate in teaching is intend to do so solely for, "the pleasure of God, spreading Sacred knowledge, reviving the [practice of the] Sacred Law, the continuous manifestation of the truth and the obscurity of falsehood, the continuous good state of the community by the abundance of scholars, availing oneself of the reward, and acquiring the rewards of whom the knowledge benefits of future generations, the blessings of their prayers for him and them

invoking mercy on him, being included in the transmitters of Sacred knowledge between them and the Messenger of God (God bless him and grant him peace), and him being part of the group who convey the revelation of God and His commandments” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 47). The **second** *adab* is for the teacher to focus attention to the intention of the student and initially, “not to let the insincere intention of the student be a reason for him not teaching the student. For a good intention of the student is hoped for by virtue of the blessings of Sacred knowledge.” The teacher is to cultivate correct intentions in the student after developing an intimate relationship with student. Ibn Jamā‘ah explains that the teacher is to make known to the student that, “by virtue of a good intention will attain the lofty rank of knowledge, works, the emanation of spiritual knowledge, various types of wisdom, illumination of the heart, expansion of the chest, successful decisions, obtaining the truth, good states, correctness in speech, and high, lofty stations on the Day of Resurrection.” By this, the teacher will correct the student’s intention in the act of learning.

The relationship the teacher is to cultivate with the student is to draw him close and to personally take interest in his learning. The teacher is to encourage the student to spend most of his time learning, and is to want for his student what he wants for himself, and abhor for his student what he abhors for himself. Thus as the **fourth** *adab* Ibn Jamā‘ah states the teacher is to be, “concerned with the interests of the student, to deal with him the way he would deal with his most cherished child with tenderness, care, being good to him. The teacher is to be patient with any coarse behavior of the student that might occur” (Ibn Jamā‘ah 1974, 49).

During the lesson, the teacher is to, “deal gently with the student by delivering the lesson in a simple manner, and being gentle in helping the student understand [the lesson].” Regarding the manner of delivering the lesson, Ibn Jamā‘ah explains that the teacher should, begin by providing the proper conception of the topics [of inquiry], then explain them further with examples and providing its proofs. The teacher should restrict himself to only providing the proper conception of the topics [of inquiry], then explain them further with examples for a student who is not able to comprehend its proofs,” taking into consideration the intellectual capacity of the student when delivering the lesson. “The teacher should clarify for the student subtle ideas and the bases of the topics of inquiry. [Additionally, the teacher should mention] the foundations and derivatives of the topic of inquiry, and mistaken understandings regarding the topic’s ruling, reference, transmission in good way far from disparaging any of the scholars.”

After the lesson has ended, the teacher should pose various questions to the students and test their understanding and retaining of what was taught. The teacher should praise the students for their correct answers and re-teach students who did not understand the lesson. Ibn Jamā‘ah explains that rationale behind the *adab* of posing questions by the teacher stating, “the student might feel shy of saying ‘I do not understand’ either due to burdening the teacher to repeat [the lesson] or a lack of time or being shy of the other attendees or not resulting in delaying the other students’ recitation.”

In terms of a teacher showing their love for students during a lesson, Ibn Jamā‘ah advises the teacher, “not to display in the presence of students his preference in love or care of some students over others.” However, if some students do possess qualities such

as being more hardworking or possessing higher *adab*, then “the teacher should display his preferential treatment and preference of them. He should make clear that his preferential treatment is for these reasons.” It is expected that this will drive other students to possess the same qualities.”

The final group of *ādāb* Ibn Jamā‘ah has for the teacher focus on the teacher caring for the students’ *ādāb* and their inward and outward character traits. This covers any act of the student that is considered offensive or unlawful in the Sacred Law in addition to any act that constitutes bad *adab*. The teacher is to take into consideration the personal qualities of the student when redirecting them. Thus, the teacher should restrict himself to merely gesturing if that is enough for the student to desist from the act. If not, then the teacher can verbally redirect the student and use harsh words if required. Ibn Jamā‘ah states, “In general, just as the teacher instructs students regarding the religious interests when dealing with God, the Exalted, he also instructs them regarding their worldly interests when dealing with people in order to completely [achieve] the merits of both states.” The teacher is expected, “to strive to achieve what is in the best interest for [his] students, bringing their hearts together, and aiding them using what is ready available to him such as his social status, his wealth when he is able to.” Finally, the teacher is to be humble when engaging his students and all who seek his guidance. This entails referring to his students, especially those who excel, with their agnomen or with what they most loved to be called. The teacher should meet them with, “a cheerful countenance, displaying happiness, love, informing them of his love.”

This section is comprised of the remaining *ādāb* in relation to different objects as described by Ibn Jamā‘ah in list form.

The *ādāb* of the student in relation to his lessons, recitation in study circles, and what he should adopt in regards to his teacher and fellow students.

1. The student should set out first with the Book of God Almighty. He should memorize it and strive to perfect its exegesis and all of its sciences.
2. The student should, in the early stages of his studies, avoid being occupied with [studying] the differences of opinions of scholars, or of people, in creedal and scriptural matters.
3. The student should precisely authenticate what he has recited before putting it to memory.
4. The student should set out to [attend] sessions of *ḥadīth* audition (*samāʿ*) early on and not delay it and the study of the its sciences, analyzing its chain of transmitters, its transmitters, its meaning, the rulings [it contains], points of benefit, various dialectical readings, and its biographical aspects.
5. The student should master primers before attending to lengthier works.
6. To continuously attend the gatherings of his teacher – sessions of teaching and recitation – rather all of his gatherings that the student is able to attend.
7. When the students attends the gathering of the teacher, he should greet those present with a voice that all can hear and single out the teacher with an enhanced greeting and welcome.
8. The student should display *adab* with those attending the gathering of the teacher.
9. The student should not shy away from questions regarding what is not clear to him, and seek to understand what he has not comprehended.
10. Keep in mind his turn [in the lesson]. The student should not step ahead without the consent of whose turn it is.
11. The student should sit in front of this teacher in a particular manner.
12. When the student's turn comes, he should first request the teacher's permission to begin his lesson.
13. The student should encourage other students towards study and guide them to ways that likely lead to it.

The *Ādāb* in Relation to Books: The Tools of Knowledge.

1. The student should acquire books he needs.
2. The student should lend books to those who will not ruin them.
3. The student should not place a book on the ground spread out.
4. The student should examine the book he is borrowing when he takes possession of it and when he returns it.
5. The student should be in a state of ritual purity when copying any book of the religious sciences, facing the direction of prayer, with purity of body and clothes, and use pure ink.
6. The student should avoid thin script when copying a text. Script is a signification, and the best script is the one that is clearest to read.

7. When a student is correcting a book and comparing it to an authenticated manuscript or [reading it] to a teacher, the student should include all of the vowels, place dots on each letter, clarify obscure words, and examine words that have been altered.
8. If the student wants to write a note in the margins, he should place a line in the location slightly in the direction of the note.
9. It is acceptable for the student to write footnotes, useful comments, and important points in the margins of a book that he possesses.
10. It is acceptable to write chapter headings, biographical notes, and sections headings with red ink.
11. Placing a line above a word (*al-darb*) is preferable to erasing a word, particularly in books of *ḥadīth*.

The *Ādāb* Relating to the School Living Quarters for Advanced Students.

1. To the extent possible, the student should select a school for himself whose endower is more scrupulous and most free of blameworthy [religious] innovations.
2. The teacher in the endowed school should be: a leading scholar and of high moral excellence and religious practice, intelligence, awe and majestic, modest, upright, of good repute with scholars, tender towards the weak, keeps close company with the advanced [students], encourages beginning students, keeps students who are not serious away, supporting those in research, avid to bring about benefit, continuously teaching.
3. The student should know the conditions of the endowed school and give what it is due.
4. If the endower stipulates that only those teaching in the school can reside in the school's living quarters, then no one else should reside in the living quarters.
5. The student should not be engaged in socializing or fraternizing when in the quarters.
6. The student should honor those who reside in the school living quarters greeting [others] with peace, expressing love and respect, and observe neighborly rights and the duties of companionship and brotherhood in religion and craft for they are [all] scholars, teachers, and students of Sacred Knowledge.
7. The student should select as a neighbor one who possesses the most righteous spiritual state, most dedicated towards learning, most excellent nature, unblemished reputation in order to support him in what he is engaged in.
8. If the student's residence is in the masjid area of the school, or in a location where people gather, and his coming and going is on his mat and bedding, then he should be careful when rising up to it of anything falling from his sandals.
9. The student should not take the gates of the masjid as a place of sitting.

10. The student should not look at the resting place of anyone through the openings of the door or the like.
11. The student should arrive to the place of the lesson early and demonstrate the appropriate *adab* when attending the lesson: attending in the most excellent of manners and in the optimal forms of purity.

Ontologically, the soul possessing *adab* is a relational self. *Adab* is always shown and demonstrated *to* a particular being and is reflecting the recognition of the proper place and rank that being holds in the order of creation. It is these relationships and the correct action that follows from the rights of the rank each being holds in relation to other beings that constitute the *adab* possessing soul. Ibn Jamā'ah's *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi'*, representing a mature stage of the practice's manuals of *adab*, reflects the relational aspect of *adab* in the anatomy and content of the text. The anatomy of the text reveals that *adab* is to be cultivated on part of the teacher and the student. For both there are objects in regards to which they are to cultivate *adab*. This is accomplished by comprehending the rank teachers and students hold in the order of creation, knowledge which only revelation can provide. Thus, a student and a teacher are to cultivate *adab* towards God, their own selves, their teachers and students, lessons, the tools of learning, fellow students, their time, and other beings in creation. Relationality is a fundamental component of the *adab* possessing soul.

CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

I have attempted, in the preceding chapters, to put forward a solution to the current situation in Islamic educational institutions in the Western world. Describing this situation as an antinomy, Merry has identified the crisis facing Islamic educational institutions in the West along the lines of a gap between the philosophy of education, if there is any, and the practice on the ground, and the struggle of Islamic schools “to define what an Islamic education entails that is uniquely distinctive to Islamic schools” (Merry 2006, 43). The lack of a distinct Islamic philosophy of education that incorporates the distinctive elements of an Islamic education has generated multiple attempts amongst Muslim educators that generally fall into the universalist and particularist camps as discussed in chapter 1. Facing the multiplicity of voices and the long history of educational thought in Islam, both approaches have been unable to provide Muslim educators with an approach to retrieve the distinctive characteristics of Islamic education that accounts for the history and multiplicity of voices. I see both of these points being related; the latter being a cause of the former for without a clear understanding of the distinctive features of Islamic education, essentially a vacuum is created whereby dominant philosophies and practices of education will inform Islamic educational institutions in the West, thus rendering them in many cases as virtually identical to secular institutions. The two pressures of the nation-state, with its imperative for schools to produce citizens with political virtues, and the demands on the Muslim community in

the West to integrate liberal values have also resulted in this lack of a distinctive institutional identity. The trend of mission statements of Islamic educational institutions, and other religious institutions, being developed more in terms of social roles and skills that are often identical to secular educational institutions in democratic societies, rather than theological and salvific virtues grounded in the Islamic tradition bears this out.

In this dissertation, I have employed MacIntyre's rich conception of a tradition to identify the distinctive elements of Islamic education. The MacIntyrean tradition has provided us with important tools and frameworks in this inquiry. Importantly, it also accounts for the multiplicity of voices and the historical dimensions one encounters when endeavoring on this inquiry. By conceiving of education as a practice within the greater Islamic tradition, where a practice is "any coherent and complex form of socially established human activity" (MacIntyre 1984, 187), we are able to identify its internal and external goods along with standards of excellence for that practice. These goods and standards have been argued and identified the practice's authoritative community since the practice's inception thus connecting a practitioner to the history of the practice.

The goods of a practice are precisely what has been missing from educational discourse amongst Muslim educators in the West. Understanding the historical situatedness of the practice of education provides Muslim educators with an understanding of the goods over which debates in the community of practitioners have been taking place. The authoritative discourse embedded in each practice allows Muslim educators to identify which voices represent Islamic educational discourse and which voices are not part of that community of practitioners. We have seen that this is achieved by an understanding of the internal goods of the practice of education. For if the internal

goods of a practice are not achieved, then the practice is not in good order and is a sign that the standards of the practice are not being met by the practitioners.

When exploring the authoritative discourse of the practice of education in the Islamic tradition, it was demonstrated that the *adab al- 'ālim wa-l-muta 'allim* genre of literature was a major constituent of the authoritative discourse of the practice of education in the Islamic tradition. From this genre, Ibn Jamā'ah's seminal work *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi ' wa-l-Mutakallim fī Ādāb al- 'Ālim wa-l-Muta 'allim* was identified to be the text studied for this inquiry. This selection was based on Ibn Jamā'ah's own career as an educationist and the reception of his work amongst practitioners of education in the Islamic tradition. Additionally, he was writing at a time when the field of education was in a mature, developed form. Thus, his work is representative of a highly developed period of Muslim educational thought. It was argued in this dissertation that according to Ibn Jamā'ah, the highest internal good of the practice of education as conceived of in the Islamic tradition is the cultivation of the soul that possesses *adab*. Importantly, *adab* is to be understood as a habitus, thus placing it as a quality of the soul. In this, education is conceived of as the cultivation of *adab* in the soul. Education according to Ibn Jamā'ah is the cultivation of the self.

Goods, Ends, and the Relational Self

One of the central claims of Charles Taylor in his work *Sources of the Self*, is that modern senses of the self are not comfortable with the notion of the good. Every human being has goods or ends that they deem to be desirable to attain and work toward. The modern self is a project to develop an identity without a framework or sense of the good.

For Taylor, there are goods and ends that are ordinary, which all of us seek out on a daily basis. Yet there are also goods and ends “which are worthy or desirable in a way that cannot be measured on the same scale as our ordinary ends, goods, desirabilia. They are not just more desirable, in the same sense though to a greater degree, than some of these ordinary goods are. Because of their special status they command our awe, respect, or admiration” (Taylor 1989, 20).

How one makes sense and arrange these goods is a central concern of the modern project of the self. It is here where Taylor introduces the notion of hypergoods, which are “goods which not only are incomparably more important than others but provide the standpoint from which these must be weighed, judged, decided about” (Taylor 1989, 63). All of us, whether we adhere to a comprehensive framework we hold to be true or not, recognize that some of our good are hypergoods, Taylor claims. Two observations are important to make here: (1) not all goods have the same valency, and (2) some goods constitute the basis which other goods are assessed. For Taylor, it is these hypergoods that constitute form our very identity and serve as a horizon which all other goods are arranged and assessed.

When assessing the identity of the self that the practice of education in Islam aims at cultivating, I have retrieved the understanding of the education as the cultivation of the self as argued by Plato in his work *Alcibiades*. By examining the highest good, or the hypergood in Taylor’s terminology, I argue that we can identify the distinctive features of Islamic education. It has been argued that Ibn Jamā‘ah’s conception of the highest good of the practice of education in the Islamic tradition is soul that possesses *adab*. Importantly, it has been observed that the soul that possesses *adab* is relational in that

adab is always cultivated in relation to some being. This being can be in animate or inanimate and it is the rank this being holds that determines the *adab* a person is to demonstrate towards it. It is this dimension of the self – its relational dimension – where the most distinctive features of Islamic education can be identified. Currently in the West, the liberal-democratic conception of the self is assumed in educational discourse. However, there have been challenges to the autonomous self from different philosophical schools. The relational self has been discussed by Confucianists philosophers of education³¹ and by feminist philosophers as well. More recently, feminist philosopher of education, Nel Noddings, has developed her ethics of care, rejecting ethics of principles, grounding it, instead, in the ideal conception of ourselves as the one-caring. The ethics of caring involves the one-caring and the cared-for. Noddings elaborates the act of caring stating that “for (A,B) to be a caring relation, both A (the one-caring) and B (the cared-for) must contribute appropriately. Something from A must be received, completed, in B. Generally, we characterize this something as an attitude. B looks for something which tells him that A has regard for him, that he is not being treated perfunctorily” (Noddings, 2013, 19). Such is the relation that serves as the fundamental constituent caring self. This relation involves two entities as the ideal self is incomplete if only the one-caring is involved. Yet at the same time, each person is the one-caring and the cared-for. In emphasizing the fundamental nature of this relatedness, Noddings states that this relatedness, “which connects me naturally to the other, reconnects me through the other to myself. As I care for others and am cared for by them, I become able to care for myself” (Ibid., 49).

³¹ See for example Jiang, Xinyan. "The Concept of the Relational Self and its Implications for Education." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 33, no. 4 (2006): 543-55.

Noddings takes the relation between beings to “ontologically basic” in her conception of the caring self. What this entails is that the self is constituted primarily through its relations to other beings. A relation for Noddings “may be thought of as a set of ordered pairs generated by some rule that describes the affect – or subjective experience – of the members” (Noddings 2013, 3-4). In the context of the caring self, the members of the ordered pairs are the one-caring and the cared-for. It is the experience of each member that is generated when the relation between the two members are caring and cared-for that Noddings takes to be ontologically basic to all human experience. How one acts as one-caring is determined by the social roles one holds. The way a mother embodies the one-caring will be unique to her role as a mother. Similarly, the way a teacher embodies the one-caring will be specific to the person’s role as a teacher and their relationship to a student.

The relational dimension of the self is constituted by the possession of *adab*. Noddings’ notion of relationality is contingent upon the social roles a person holds. Thus if a person is a mother, father, teacher, or employee the relation each member has is what serves as the basis of care demonstrated. The relationality of the *adab* possessing soul, although determined by the social role, yet that social role itself is grounded in a hierarchical order of creation. This order of creation generates a rank for each being in the created order which in turn generates rights by virtue of the rank a particular being holds. These rights differ in relation of one being to another.

Ibn Jamā‘ah demonstrates this sense of relationality by first establishing the rank of religious knowledge and scholars in the order of creation before entering into any of the *ādāb* on the part of the teacher or the student. He starts this section with the Qur’ānic

verse “God will raise those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge in vast degrees,” [58:11] indicating the high rank knowledge and scholars hold in the order of creation. Equally important Ibn Jamā‘ah’s conception is idea that religious scholars are inheritors (*al-waratha*) of the prophets of God. The prophets holding the highest rank of all created beings in the order of creation, and consequently scholars of the religious sciences being inheritors of this prophetic knowledge occupy a similar high rank and position; although not considered as prophets. Understanding the rank religious sciences hold in regards to the other sciences and the rank the scholars of these sciences hold in relation to scholars of the other sciences allows one to comprehend the rights owed to them both, thus allowing correct action to ensue on the part of the person possessing *adab*. Ibn Jamā‘ah establishes the same in this first section of his *adab* manual for teaching and learning of the religious sciences.

After establishing the rank and position knowledge, scholars, the acts of teaching and learning hold in the order of creation, Ibn Jamā‘ah organizes his manual on *adab* in terms of the relation between two beings and the requisite *adab* required by that relation on the part of each being. Consequently, we see him organizing the *ādāb* along the various constituents of the practice of education: the teacher, the student, instruction, the lesson, the various sciences, course of study, fellow students, books, instruments of learning, composing books, and residential quarters. The teacher and the student have *ādāb* that relate to themselves and the role they play in the social order as a teacher or a student of the religious sciences. The relations govern the *ādāb* required in relation to their own soul from specific intentions they are to cultivate to the virtues they are to acquire and the vices they are rid themselves of. The *ādāb* each is required to cultivate in

relation to their lessons, books, and all of the other constituents of the act of learning are all determined based on the rank of scholars and knowledge elaborated in the first section of the manual. The rank of scholars and knowledge entails certain rights and the *ādāb* Ibn Jamā‘ah outlines in his manual serve as the correct action a person is to undertake that reflects the cosmic rank of scholars and knowledge. Here we see that the relationality is determined by the theological and metaphysical commitments in the Islamic tradition, and these commitments serve as the constellation of various goods which further inform the internal and external goods of the practice of education in the Islamic tradition all of which determine the nature of the relational dimension of the soul that possesses *adab*. The soul that possesses *adab* is embedded in this constellation of goods and the hierarchical order of reality. It is in this constellation of goods and hierarchy that provide us with the distinctive features of the practice of Islamic education.

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