



Mediaeval Theology of Education: Embracing Philosophy, *Kalām*, and Sufism

Fadlil Yani Ainusyamsi

State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, Indonesia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9857-4667>

Didih Syakir Munandar

Faculty of Tarbiyah, Universitas Islam Darussalam (UID) Ciamis, Indonesia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5097-2911>

Dede Darisman

Faculty of Tarbiyah, Universitas Islam Darussalam (UID) Ciamis, Indonesia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8359-4104>

Husni*

Faculty of Tarbiyah, Universitas Islam Darussalam (UID) Ciamis, Indonesia
Email: husni1967@iaid.ac.id (Corresponding author)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9931-2754>



<https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.105.513>

Abstract

This work focuses on a crucial subject in mediaeval religious discourse within the realm of education. The objective of this study is to gain a comprehensive comprehension of educational theology during the mediaeval Islamic era and intellectual culture. This will be achieved by examining the innovative, influential, and inherently intricate philosophical, *kalām*, and sufism ideologies, which have not been fully recognised until now. This study employs a discourse analysis methodology, which is commonly utilised to examine both oral and written conversation. This work provides a comprehensive analysis of the contributions made by mediaeval scholars to the field of educational theological discourse, focusing on the areas of philosophy, *kalām*, and sufism. The study's findings demonstrate that mediaeval scholars effectively reconciled philosophical, theological (*kalām*), and mystical (sufism) perspectives in the field of educational theology. This was particularly evident in their treatment of the human nature, which they portrayed as both possessing free will and being subject to fate. This accommodating stance becomes remarkable, particularly because the content and approach of philosophy, *kalām*, and Sufism are frequently perceived as highly distinct or even conflicting.

Keywords: Educational theology, mediaeval Islamic era, *kalām*, sufism, ideology.

Introduction

An essential topic in the field of educational theology is the discussion surrounding humans as individuals with the capacity for autonomous decision-making, contrasted with humans as individuals who are bound to believe in predetermined fate. The concepts of God's predestination, determinism, and human free choice are subjects of intense discussion in religious discourse. This research aims to provide a critical analysis of the contributions made by mediaeval scholars who emphasised philosophy, *kalām*, and Sufism to the discourse of philosophy, theology, and mysticism. It focuses on subjects that are highly



significant in these fields. Mediaeval scholars are recognised for their ability to effectively reconcile philosophical, theological (*kalām*), and mystical (sufism) perspectives, particularly when it comes to matters concerning human subjects. This is considered a significant topic in educational theological discussions (Cillis, 2014: 1). The amalgamation of diverse viewpoints is beneficial for establishing the fundamental principles of an all-encompassing educational theology (Husni & Bisri, 2024).

The intellectual discourse surrounding the concepts of predestination, determinism, and human free choice among mediaeval Muslim scholars had significant ramifications for numerous areas of thought. The matter, which originally pertained to theology (Griffel, 2009), subsequently encompassed educational, economic, cultural, and political concerns. The intellectual discourse can be identified in the scholarly writings of mediaeval scholars (Fancy et al., 2023). This elucidation of their work aims to astutely engage and harmonise diverse forms of knowledge, offering incisive arguments pertaining to educational theology. Specifically, it delves into theories of creation, emanation, causality, the nature of God's knowledge, and God's will, while also demonstrating how scholars employ these theories. Mediaeval scholars aimed to align their theoretical framework more closely with orthodox perspectives while still incorporating the philosophical ideas of Aristotle, Neoplatonism, and mysticism (Gutas, 2006).

In order to comprehend the divergent yet essential approaches of mediaeval scholars in harmonisation or compromise, it is imperative to consider the historical, social, and political circumstances in which they resided and operated. The mediaeval scholars' efforts to harmonise the Ash'ari theological perspective of God with Neoplatonic emanationism were motivated by both their belief in the legitimacy of such a reconciliation and their desire for their speculative system to gain acceptance within mainstream Islam during that era (Cornell, 2006). Emanasionisme Neoplatonik berpendapat bahwa Tuhan memancarkan diri-Nya untuk menghasilkan pikiran pertama. Kesadaran awal juga memancar untuk menghasilkan esensi kosmis. Alam semesta empiris muncul dari jiwa universal (Husni & Hayden, 2024).

An important concern in educational theology revolves around the dual character of humans as autonomous beings with the ability to make choices, and as individuals who are required to have faith in the power of God (Pereboom, 2016). Furthermore, it is essential to differentiate between the belief in predestination, the perspective of natural determinism, and the concept of human freedom, which is frequently debated among scholars of educational theology. The first category pertains to instances of speech that highlight God's direct activity in the preexisting world, particularly in regards to the concepts of creation *ex nihilo* and creation by an eternal God (Ritter, 2018). The second perspective posits that human existence is shaped by the environmental circumstances in which it occurs. Meanwhile, the latter is employed in relation to speech that highlights the concept of innate human freedom without any involvement from God as an intrinsic characteristic (Fodor, 1996). Our course this not only involves evaluating secondary sources and examining ethical and theodicy issues connected to free will, predestination, and determinism, but also includes analysing primary sources to delve into the varied and intricate ideas of mediaeval scholars. The examination of primary sources does not adhere to a rigid chronological sequence (Lester, 2017), as this approach aims to effectively communicate the collective perspective of mediaeval historians' thoughts and guide attention appropriately.

Within the realm of educational theology, mediaeval Islamic academics derived their ideas from the primary sources of Islam, namely the Koran and Hadith. The Koran, as the primary foundation of Islam, was disclosed to the Prophet Muhammad by God via the messenger Gabriel. The second primary source is Hadith, which comprises a compilation of traditions documenting the statements and actions of the Prophet Muhammad. The Koran and Hadith contain numerous texts that expound on the concept of predestination (Cohen-Mor, 2021).



Predestination is a theological belief that asserts that every event in the cosmos has been predetermined by God, particularly in relation to the ultimate destiny of an individual's soul (Hoover, 2015). Predestination is a theological notion that pertains to the connection between God and His creation. The concept of predestination is distinguished from other conceptions, such as chance and free will, by its religious nature (Jackson, 2009). The concept of predestination posits that God's will supersedes all things and that all occurrences are beyond human agency. The concept of predestination is explicitly mentioned in several verses of the Koran, such as Q 6.17, Q 87.1-3, Q 42.49-50, Q 33.38, Q 40.68, Q 54.50, Q 6.125, 59, Q 81.27-29, Q 34.3, Q 63.11, and Q 15.4-5. This idea is further supported by God's frequent references to events being "written" or recorded in books before they actually happen, as mentioned in Q 57.22. These lines from the Koran highlight the notion that all occurrences on earth are governed by God's predetermined plan that dates back to ancient times. According to orthodox belief, this eternal inscription, engraved on a "preserved sheet" (*Lauh al-Mahfudz*) and securely stored in Heaven by a guardian Angel, encompasses all the divine decrees of God's will. According to Q 36.12, these decisions serve as the fundamental model for all things, both in the past, present, and future, and they are the governing principles that regulate all of creation. Throughout the history of Islamic thinking and civilization, the concept of predestination has held more prominence compared to the notion of human freedom.

Methodology

This study employs a discourse analysis methodology. Critical analysis is a commonly employed approach to examine both oral and written communication. The focus of this study is the written form of language, based on its specific qualities. This discourse analysis focuses not only on the linguistic aspect but also on the accompanying context. The books under study are the literary works of mediaeval Islamic scholars, with a particular focus on Ibn Sīnā, Al-Ghazālī, and Ibn 'Arabī. Notable works by Ibn Sīnā that are worth examining include *Dānish Nāma-i 'alā'ī* (The Book of Scientific Knowledge) (Morewedge, 2015), *Kitāb al-Shifā'*, *Kitāb al-Najāt* (Ibn Sīnā & Rahman, 1981), *Kitāb al-Hidāyah* (Ibn Sīnā & Abduh, 1974), *Risālat al-Adhawīya fī'l-Ma'ād*, *Risālat al-Qada'* and *Risālat al-Qadar* (Cillis, 2014: 1). In addition, the study also includes references to works by Ibn Sīnā that are characterised by their mystical content and style, such as *Risālat fī'l-'Ishq*, *Hayy b. Yaqzān*, and *Risālat al-Tayr* (Wisnovsky, 2003). Al-Ghazālī's works that should be examined include those that are explicitly influenced by Sufi implications, such as *Mishkāṭ al-Anwār* (Al-Ghazālī, 2014), *Ihya' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (Al-Ghazālī, 1956), and *Maqasid al-Asnā fī Sharh Ma'ānī Asmā' Allāh al-Husnā* (Al-Ghazālī, 1967). The prioritisation of these works is grounded on the underlying assumption that the identification of commonalities between Ibn Sīnā, Ibn 'Arabī, and Al-Ghazālī is most effectively achieved through the lens of mysticism. Sufism, in particular, serves as a shared foundation for Al-Ghazālī, conveying a distinct philosophy characterised by principled and inflexible Asy'arial dogmas (Ess, 1999). In addition to these works, other texts such as *Al-Iqtisād fī'l-'Itiqād* and *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* are also examined. Additionally, Ibn 'Arabī's notable works encompass *Fusūs al-Hikam* (Ibn 'Arabī, 1946) and his most significant masterpiece, *Futūhāt al-Makkiyyah*, which is divided into four volumes (Ibn 'Arabī, 1959).

General Ideas of Mediaeval Theology of Education

The scope of this study is restricted to three specific mediaeval Islamic scholars: Ibn Sīnā, Ibn 'Arabī, and Al-Ghazālī, as explained in the preceding approach section. This constraint is of utmost significance as it directs the investigation towards the subject matter of educational theology.

An major subject in Ibn Sina's educational theological thinking is the discussion of determinism. Ibn Sina discusses natural determinism as opposed to God's predestination,



particularly by examining relative notions and the concept of necessity (*wujūb bi' l-ghayr*) (Goodman, 1992). Ibn Sīnā extensively incorporated and developed teachings from other philosophical schools, including Platonism, Neoplatonism, Aristotelianism, Mu'tazilite, and Asy'ariyah (Cillis, 2014: 2). The analysis employed in this study is founded on the examination conducted by philosophers in order to formulate a novel viewpoint on *qadā* and *qadar* that reconciles deterministic and 'libertarian' elements (Ess, 1973). Ibn Sīnā's reconciliation of the concepts of *ibdā'* (origin) and *ḥayd* (emanation) involves describing God as a Necessary Being, devoid of any intentional nature but possessing subject power, as emphasised by *kalām* (Ibn Sīnā & Abduh, 1974). The central concept is the notion of prime matter, which constitutes one of the four causal principles in Aristotelian philosophy (Cook, 1980). Primary matter is defined as necessitating the notion of liberty in regards to its function in establishing the presence of substantial compounds. The issue of primary matter specifically pertains to Alfred Ivry's viewpoint (1974). Ivry argues that matter plays a crucial role in influencing events. On the other hand, Catarina Belo has a competing perspective, emphasising the superiority of form over matter, as discussed in Cillis' publication (Cillis: 2014:2).

In order to assess the impact of the material on the subject of determinism, it is imperative to scrutinise arguments pertaining to the differentiation between possibility and prospective, passive and active acceptance, and notably, privacy concerns. Ibn Sīnā's perspective on matter and evil incorporates elements from Aristotelian, Plotinian, and *Kalām* philosophies. These elements are combined to explain the concept of primary matter, which is not only seen as a recipient but also as an Aristotelian 'substance' that is responsible for change and its ultimate existence. This existence is dependent on God (Shah, 2007). In addition, it is noteworthy to mention that Ibn Sīnā employs Koran hermeneutics to demonstrate that his stance on matter and evil is firmly based on the teachings of the Koran (Leaman, 2008). Ibn Sīnā highlights that certain concerns, which are heavily impacted by Aristotelian and Neoplatonic ideas, such as the concept of *'isyān al-mādda* (material disobedience) and the ontological nature of evil, are distinctly 'Islamic' conceptions that may be found in Islamic revealed sources (Cillis, 2014:2).

Ibn Sīnā's thinking is frequently criticised for suggesting that God's omnipotence is weakened, as he asserts that God's knowledge is limited to universal aspects rather than specific details (Morewedge, 2015). Additionally, Ibn Sīnā often connects God's understanding of the universe to his concept of divine determinism, highlighting the influence of material potential on both notions (Melchert, 1997). There is speculation that Ibn Sīnā substituted the Ash'ari perspective on God with a belief that God, who possesses limited understanding of specific details, does not exert "direct" influence over material compounds (Frank, 1984). Similar to the Mu'tazilite perspective, Avicenna believes that God can delegate the power to created entities to do activities. Avicenna also thinks that God can 'entrust' matter with the ability to cause things to happen in a way that determines future outcomes. It is imperative to examine Ibn Sīnā's unorthodox approach to the Qur'anic notions of reward and punishment and demonstrate how he "naturalised" these concepts in order to address the problem of theodicy (Makdisi, 1962).

The notion of human free will, traditionally examined through philosophical and theological lenses, was also investigated through a mystical approach by examining the connection between freedom, intellectual capabilities, and the inherent human drive for perfection (Ibn Sīnā & Rahman, 1981). The study focuses on the domain of divine and human accountability, primarily examining the concept of love, and secondarily exploring the principles of an esoteric form of mystical philosophy that heavily relies on angelology. The purpose of this is to demonstrate the correlation between Neoplatonic and Aristotelian beliefs regarding free choice and determinism with the Sufi viewpoint. This study examines Al-Ghazālī's intellectual environment and asserts that he successfully harmonised the theory of emanation with the idea of creation, taking a distinct approach from Ibn Sina's



perspective (Al-Shamsy, 2008). Al-Ghazālī interprets the emanative setting largely from a gnoseological perspective, so questioning the notion that emanation is entirely incompatible with the 'traditional' concept that God is the Creator, as asserted by his Ash'ari companions. Furthermore, it is evident that Al-Ghazālī's complex work, *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, presents his perspectives on free choice and predestination in an intricate manner (Cillis, 2014: 3).

Ash'ari theological matters, such as the idea of God as the one Creator, the all-encompassing nature of God's will, the essence of God's justice, and the problems of theodicy, were progressively influenced by philosophical and mystical solutions (Endress, 1990). This is the outcome of a sequence of deep engagements with different philosophical frameworks linked to Al-Ghazālī. Upon examining Al-Ghazālī's reinterpretation of the Ash'ariyah theory of acquisition (*kasb*), the analysis proceeds to delve into the notion of humans as 'forced choosers', highlighting that despite its firm grounding in Ash'ariyah principles, Al-Ghazālī's discourse remains situated within a philosophical framework, particularly concerning the influence of human nature (Al-Ghazālī, 2014). Al-Ghazālī's perspectives are presented in his works *Maqṣad al-Asnā fī sharh Ma'ānī Asmā' Allāh al-Husnā* (Al-Ghazālī, 1967), *al-Iqtisād fī l-'Itiqād*, and *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*. Even in works where the Ash'ari perspective on God's predestination was dominant, the incorporation of Aristotelian reasoning aimed to refute the philosophical contradictions that had caused Al-Ghazālī to adopt various philosophical concepts. The text commences by examining the intellectual milieu in which Ibn 'Arabī functioned (Cillis, 2014: 3).

An examination of this theoretical framework, which evaluates various aspects including the position of Sufism in the 12th century, allows for an explanation as to why Ibn 'Arabī's approach was comparatively less extreme than that of Ibn Sīnā and Al-Ghazālī (Endress, 2006). In order to explore his ideas, he engages in theoretical discussions that revolve around the core concepts of the 'unity of being' theory (*wahdat al-wujūd*) (Lipton, 2018; Sharify-Funk & Dickson, 2013). To simplify matters, it is essential to go into the Akbarian perspective on topics such as the names, qualities, and knowledge of God, as well as the concept of immutable entities (*a'yān thābita*). In Ibn 'Arabī's philosophy, the expression of God's eternal tendencies is considered to be the element that is most closely associated with the concept of destiny. This study also aims to elucidate the essence of human beings as devotees of God in order to address the notion of freedom through a mystical interpretation of 'slavery' (Ibn 'Arabī, 1946, 1959). Subsequently, it was realised that the Akbarian system, which is said to be rooted in theosophy and monism, necessitated a method and route to attain complete liberation as individuals aimed to come closer to God (Ibn 'Arabī, 1959).

Educational Theology Based on Philosophy, *Kalām* and Sufism

Islamic theological thought, from its inception, was marked by cultural variations that limited the influence of notable scholars to specific areas of study. This frequently leads to the incorrect idea that the Islamic faith is incapable of developing efficiently. For instance, *kalām* or speculative theology, which originated in the eighth century, encountered resistance from its inception. Theoretical dispute might arise due to the intrinsic nature of *kalām* discourse. According to Oliver Leaman, the latter position is inherently dialectical and thus susceptible to being used against another position. It originated to address early discussions on anthropomorphism, the nature of divinity, atomism, and the nature of reality among the Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyah, and Maturidiyah proponents (Leaman, 1999). The proponents of *kalām* were frequently categorised as 'Rationalists' and were often juxtaposed with hadith scholars. Traditionally, there has been a sharp division between the perspectives of mutakallimūn and muhaddithūn due to the prevailing belief among scholars that, when it comes to topics of theology, the use of reason should be balanced and measured. Although both approaches utilise rationality, they differ only in their application



of rational inquiries, which exposes the lack of productivity in intellectual categorization operations (Cillis, 2014: 3).

The inclination towards categorising has also resulted in academic research making an excessively severe differentiation between *kalām* and philosophy. The *kalām*'s use of rational argument to organise and defend its theoretical ideas was indeed similar to that of philosophers. However, it is important to note that theologians were generally critical of Islamic philosophers because their concerns and approach were disconnected from the actual problem at hand. The study of theology in its purest form. In the early days of *kalām*, which Richard M. Frank viewed as a philosophical rather than a theological science, Islamic theologians did not show much interest in distinguishing their 'theological' activities from other fields such as grammar, logic, jurisprudence, philosophy, and Sufism (Endreß, 2006). Furthermore, during the seventh and eighth century, theologians engaged in novel and intricate investigative endeavours that frequently employed philosophical reasoning to refine their concepts and approaches.

Occasionally, theological debates were employed to tackle political matters, such as deliberations that raised doubts about the Umayyad government's legitimacy following the *Shiffin* war (35 AH/675 CE). The Umayyad caliphs held the belief that all deeds, even errors, were predetermined by the will of God. This concept was maintained as it provided a means for the caliphs' immoral conduct to remain without consequences, as wicked deeds were deemed acceptable due to their perceived divine sanction. The *Qadariyah* sects from Damascus and Basra, including Ma'bad al-Juhanī and Ghaylān al-Dimashqī, criticised the Umayyads' stance and raised doubts about the possibility of adopting a different viewpoint on the issue of God's predestination (Cillis, 2014: 3). They advocated the belief that humans exhibit voluntary actions based on their own choices, which later became a defining feature of the Mu'tazilite religion. The West Javanese, led by Jahm ibn Safwān (d. 128 AH/746 CE), strongly criticised *qadar*'s beliefs. These West Javanese were proponents of rigid predestination and were supported by traditionalists and the Ash'ariyah.

The Koran, which was associated with the rivalry between the caliphate and the ulama over religious authority in Islam, compelled most *kalām* theologians (except for a few instances like that of Ahmad ibn Hanbal) to adopt a compromising stance in order to reconcile essential religious matters with political interests (Cooperson, 2001). All of these organisations effectively merged profound theological matters, such as predestination, with philosophical inquiries, such as the temporal nature of the world or the everlasting nature of God's will. Moreover, they utilised these arguments to directly address political disputes.

By the eleventh century, *kalām* theologians started to focus on the explicit components of Aristotelian metaphysics, which aimed to study the fundamental nature of reality (Cillis, 2014: 4). By the conclusion of the 5th A.H./11th century CE., Sunni Islam had achieved stability and formed its 'orthodoxy', structuring itself around a recognised legal school and three primary theological 'schools' (represented by the Ash'ariyah, Maturidiyah, and Mu'tazilah). After the establishment of the theological framework of Sunni Islam, the Aristotelian perspective became ingrained, emphasising the idea of causality. This meant acknowledging the effectiveness of secondary causes, separate from God, and the consistency of nature. The latter concept, which suggests that nothing in nature occurs without purpose, clashes with the Islamic belief that God is the sole agent with free will. According to this belief, God's creation of the world was an act of kindness, not an obligation dictated by His nature. In Islamic theology, God is believed to possess boundless power and the ability to do miracles. According to the Ash'ariyah school of thought, God has the freedom to intervene at any moment and shape the fate of all things. This perspective reached its height in the fourth/tenth century (Cillis, 2014: 4). *Kalām*'s interest in Aristotelian metaphysics became apparent when Islamic philosophers started exploring the potential of establishing the credibility of philosophical research without relying on the Islamic



framework. Ibn Sīnā (d. 428 A.H./1037 CE) was committed to differentiating between the domains of theology (God) and metaphysics (creatures). On the other hand, Ibn Rushd (Averroës) (d. 595 A.H./1198 CE) was primarily concerned with purifying the philosophical body of work by separating philosophy from its explicitly theological elements, thus reviving Aristotle's purely philosophical framework.

In response to this situation, during the mid-tenth century, religious perspectives, particularly those upheld by the *ahl al-sunnah wa'l-jamā'ah*, and backed by their established political and legal institutions, engaged in intense conflicts with philosophical rationalism, particularly regarding its universal authority and the credibility of reason. Theologians likewise encountered uneasiness and opposed the authority of philosophers in order to uphold the superiority and genuine authority of Islamic Revelation over reason (Cillis, 2014: 4). Islamic philosophy was inevitably influenced by the dialectical nature of speculative theological discourse in these circumstances. The *falāsifa*, who were convinced of the validity of certain philosophical arguments from other cultures, found themselves compelled to reconcile the apparent contradictions between ideas originating in Greek thought and apply them to Islamic thought. This led to a need for compromise between philosophy and theology (Ziai, 2008). According to Ian Netton, the idea of including the study of fundamental principles common to all creatures in metaphysics does not mean that metaphysics would become purely theological. However, it is evident that Muslim philosophers like Ibn Sina were highly interested in ensuring that their philosophy aligned with the beliefs and authorities of Islamic religion and politics (Netton, 2002). This situation elucidates the endeavours of al-Kindī (d. 259 AH/873 CE) to validate philosophy as a manifestation of universal wisdom, capable of achieving a peaceful reconciliation between the doctrines of ancient philosophers and Arab-Islamic understanding. Al-Fārābī (d. 339 A.H./950 CE) argued that theology, as a 'particular science,' is a component of the broader field of First philosophy (metaphysics).

Philosophers believe that reconciling philosophy and theology is not an insurmountable challenge (Schlebusch, 2023; Odey et al., 2023; Zhakupova, 2023). Several philosophers, such as Thomas Aquinas, Al-Ghazali, Al-Farabi, Avicenna, Averroes attempted to reconcile theology and philosophy. The universal nature of Peripatetic metaphysics was designed to address the common characteristics that all creatures possess by virtue of their existence. Metaphysical science contemplates religious issues, such as the concepts of existence and unity (Cillis, 2014: 4). Without a doubt, the intellectual culture of *mutakallimūn* and *falāsifah* inevitably converges with metaphysics, leading to its classification as a divine science. Although it is undeniable that numerous theological discussions had a profound philosophical nature, it is equally true that philosophy sprang from what were once theological conflicts. During the first to eighth centuries, the Arabs successfully conquered Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia (Iraq), and Persia (Iran), thereby encountering well-established cultures, traditions, and beliefs. Alexandria, which was conquered in 20 A.H./641 CE, had transformed into a hub of diverse cultural influences, encompassing Greek speculative philosophy, Christian beliefs, and Jewish religious traditions.

This is the birthplace and cradle of Neoplatonic beliefs. Neoplatonism attracted the interest of several groups of scholars, particularly theologians, who were first fascinated by its emphasis on the unity and transcendence of God. Neoplatonism also highlighted the existence of a supreme Principle that may emanate from the descending order of all beings. While the *mutakallimūn* disapproved of the Neoplatonic notion of emanation (*fayḍ*) due to its inconsistency with the Islamic concept of creation, they did acknowledge certain benefits associated with it. Ultimately, this approach enables us to trace the creation and replication of all entities down to a single entity. Neoplatonic emanation was intriguing to philosophers as it provided a way to depict a world where the harmonisation of immaterial essences originated from the One and descended through a sequence of intellects. This implicitly acknowledged the reconciliation between the Islamic concept of God as Creator and the



principle, derived from Greek metaphysics, that 'ex uno non fit nisi unum' or *lā yasdur 'an al-wahid illā wahid* (from the One only one can arise). Furthermore, the Neoplatonist ideology, which suggests that the soul is meant to go back to its original celestial home after being purified from earthly desires (partially influenced by Plato's theory of memory), strongly appealed to Islamic mystics, theologians, and philosophers (Cillis, 2014: 5).

Throughout its history, Sufism has demonstrated an inherent receptiveness and inclination to find common ground, aligning itself with the intellectual and theological principles of mainstream Islam (Karamustafa, 2007). During its early stages, Sufism was largely regarded as a way to personally experience monotheism. Sufi adherents were able to individually explore their pursuit of knowledge without being tied to any one religious institution (Mayer, 2008). Nevertheless, the initial autonomy experienced by Islamic mystics was quickly jeopardised by the emergence of disputes among Sufis. Conflicts arise, such as in the understanding of the notion of *'ishq*, the profound reciprocal love between God and the mystic (Cillis, 2014: 5). The theory of *'ishq*, in contrast to the more moderate concept of *mahabbah*, posits that certain persons are loved by God without any discernible reason, implying that the Sufis who are endowed with *'ishq* are specifically chosen by divine intervention. Ghulam Khalil, a Hanbali jurist who adhered to mysticism, strongly criticised the utilisation of this concept by mystics due to its evocation of an inappropriate and intimate manner of discussing God.

The inherent elitism of the concept of *'ishq* is also seen in the notion of repentance. Repentance, seen as a transformative moment of turning towards God and gaining direct connection with Him, reinforced the Sufis' belief that their spiritual experience was superior to that of regular believers and on par with that of the prophets. The notion that God engaged in direct communication with the mystics, by means of comprehending the authentic interpretation of the Koran, led to conflict between Sufis and other Muslim communities (Cillis, 2014: 5). Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī (d. 261 AH/874 CE or 264 AH/877–8 CE) and Hamdūn al-Qassār (d. 271 AH/884 M.) are considered exponents of antinomian spirituality. The Sufis criticised any kind of spiritual showiness (*riyā'*) and believed in focusing inwardly on spirituality, as seen in the Malāmatīyyah creed of Nīshāpūr. On the other hand, the extravagant practice of self-discipline resulted in the establishment of religious organisations called *khānqāh*, which were supported by mystics like Abū 'Abd Allāh Muhammad Ibn Karrām. However, the authorities dismissed his theological teachings because they were based on physicalist principles. In the third and ninth centuries, scholars and reformers started to oppose extreme forms of asceticism. They criticised aspects of mysticism that were influenced by the Plotinian emanative attitude, which resulted in pantheistic and monistic beliefs. This can be observed in the ideas put forth by Sufis like Ibn Mansūr al-Hallāj (died 309 H./922 CE) (Cillis, 2014: 5).

While the conflict between mystics, theologians, and jurists did not follow a distinct pattern, the Sufis felt compelled to protect their practices and beliefs, particularly when their teachings started to be publicly announced. During the period between the fourth and tenth centuries, collections of Sufi books expressing religious beliefs started to emerge. These compilations aimed to prove that Sufism was based on the teachings of the Koran and Hadith, making it consistent with Islamic 'orthodoxy'. Sufism's survival hinged on its capacity to establish that its message was firmly rooted in the teachings of the Koran and its directives, and that Sufism was an indispensable component of Islam, crucial for fostering the vigour of the religion. Thinkers like Abū Tālib al-Makkī (d. 386 AH/996 CE) and Abū'l-Qāsim ibn Muhammad al-Junayd (d. 298 AH/911 CE) commented on this approach (Cillis, 2014: 6). The latter, specifically, aimed to liberate Sufism from accusations of incarnation and monism. They emphasised the subjective nature of the mystical experience of *fanā'* (dissolution or end of existence) and advocated for a shift towards a conscious creator (*sahwī*) instead. Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, who lived around a century later, had a specific goal of defending Sufism. He aimed to show that the teachings and practices of



Sufism aligned perfectly with the dominant Ash'ari theology of that era. This information is explained by Alexander Knysh (Cillis, 2014:6).

Abū Hāmid Al-Ghazālī and Muhyidīn Ibn 'Arabī played significant roles in promoting the recognition of Sufism as an essential component of Islam. The former accomplishes this objective by fully affirming the importance of mysticism in Islam as a thriving theocratic civilization. The latter associates the ascetic lifestyle of the Sufis with a life of rigorous obedience to religious commandments and legal responsibilities achieved by externalising esoteric experiences through exoteric actions.

During the 5th/11th century CE, Sufism had evolved into a distinct movement with unique qualities and inclinations. It was known for its exceptional ability to bring about transformation and guide humanity towards new ways of attaining knowledge of God (*ma'rifat Allāh*). These methods differed from the dialectic approach of *kalām* theology or the universal focus of metaphysics. Ayman Shihadeh explains that Sufism prioritises personal experience in order to attain gnosis, even when mystical experiences are connected to theological matters like monotheism (Shihadeh, 2007). Walking the mystical road entails attaining personal experiences of the divine via ethical and spiritual exertion and discipline, with the aim of eradicating all manifestations of ego consciousness.

The perspectives of Ibn Sīnā, Al-Ghazālī, and Ibn 'Arabī on these matters have undoubtedly been influenced by Islamic traditions rooted in Qur'anic verses that uphold the concepts of divine predestination and human accountability for their actions, with the latter being the natural outcomes of human free will (Cillis, 2014: 7). The study of this problem has been significantly influenced by the hadith literature, which primarily supports the notion of predestination. This perspective denies human control over their acts and emphasises God's absolute power. This educational theological concept, based mostly on the beliefs of the Ash'ariyah, centres around the discussion of free will and predestination, focusing on the notion of God's omnipotence. It asserts that God is the ultimate source of both good and evil actions (Cillis, 2014: 9). The Ash'ariyah hold the belief that God's creation is devoid of any underlying cause (*sabab*), rendering it inevitable. They also assert that God is not constrained by any compulsion or obligation towards humanity. According to their doctrine, everything God orders is considered morally correct, while whatever He condemns is unquestionably morally wrong.

Although the Ash'ariyah hold the belief in predestination, they acknowledge the presence of a power that enables humans to acquire the deeds predetermined for them by God, therefore attributing a type of accountability to them (Cillis, 2014: 10). Generally, the Ash'arites made a distinction between activities that are required, like shaking, and actions that are voluntary, like eating. They held the belief that all human behaviours are caused by forces that were created. According to Abū' al-Hasan al-Ash'arī, God grants mankind the ability to exert force (known as *quwwah muhdatsat*) via which they might act as the immediate cause of an activity. Al-Ash'arī defines *qudrah* as the inherent ability to cause an action to occur when that action actually takes place. Human activity is understood to be driven by human agency and a simultaneous act of will (Cillis, 2014: 10).

Richard M. Frank challenges the aforementioned view by highlighting the ambiguity of the verb 'happen' (*waqa'a, yaqi'u*) (Frank, 1992). According to al-Ash'ari, it can be inferred that God does not bring events into existence by the force of human action. Frank contends that human actors can only be regarded agents of action because there is simultaneity between individual instances of produced power and particular happenings. God bestows onto the human actor a temporary power of causation, known as the 'power of resultant causality', which is only activated when the action is realised. Thus, humans are regarded as *muktasib*, individuals who actively manifest their deeds by acquiring them (*kasb*) through the power bestowed upon them by God. *Qudrah*, a concept attributed to God, serves as evidence for



al-Ash'ari that humans possess the ability to act solely by virtue of being the place where the force, created by God specifically for action, manifests. Although humans can be viewed as the agent and instigator of their activities, God is nonetheless regarded as the ultimate originator of human causality. The rationale for this is that human activity is regarded as the direct result of the generated capacity to act, which in turn serves as a secondary cause employed by the Creator to accomplish its effects (Frank & Gutas, 1988). The power of humans does not have any impact on the occurrence of an action. Its only influence lies in the relationship between the action and the human subject, as determined by God who created it.

Typically, the Ash'ariyah approach to understanding the concepts of *qada'* and *qadar* is based on this conjecture. In order to highlight the supreme authority of God's decrees, *qada'* is thereafter equated with God's creation, encompassing both the genuine and the futile. According to the Ash'ariyah, *Qada'* is a decree made by God before time began. This decree encompasses the existence of everything and is accompanied by God's judgement (*hukm*), which ensures that everything will have an eternal position in God's awareness (Cillis, 2014: 11). *Qadar* refers to the divine decision of God that determines certain actions or events, ensuring that all beings transition from non-existence to existence in alignment with God's genuine will. By means of *qadar*, God possesses the ability to define the size and limitations of all beings. *Qada*, however, is linked to the everlasting divine will and is categorised as one of the qualities of existence (*sifāt al-dzat*) due to its simultaneous existence with God. *Qadr*, however, is associated with God's particular or transitory volition (also known as God's will, *irādah*) and, as one of the characteristics of action (*sifāt al-fi'l*), is regarded as a dependent existence.

The Ash'arites developed a version of atomistic occasionalism to demonstrate God's complete omnipotence and His active involvement in both the creation and continuous existence of everything. Within the Ash'ariyah school of thought, al-Bāqillānī (d. 403 AH/1013 CE) played a significant role in the discourse surrounding atoms and accidents (Cillis, 2014: 11). He used al-Ash'ari's categorization of atoms as 'indivisible portions' (*al-juz' alladhī lā yatajazza'a*), and he distinguished between primary and secondary accidents. The former is distinguished by attributes of existence (*akwan*) such as movement and stillness, combination and location, which are inherent to the body, while the later, encompassing qualities like taste, smell, and length, is regarded as detachable from the body. Al-Bāqillānī describes atoms as entities that acquire one attribute from each of the several categories of attributes. He also asserts that atoms possess their own inherent reality, which serves as the fundamental basis for the existence of these attributes.

A vast majority of Ash'arites believe that atoms only gain their sensory 'attributes' when they are substances, or when they are grouped in bodies. The Ash'ari discovered the most distinctive feature of the atom—its perishable nature—by rejecting Aristotelian principles about the universe, which hold that matter is infinitely divisible, and by criticising the Aristotelian worldview, which is dominated by mechanically occurring causal processes. This allowed them to fully realise their intention to portray God as the ultimate Provider and Sustainer of existence (Cillis, 2014: 11).

Adhering to al-Ash'ari's assertion that 'everything in the world came into existence through God's command, and ceased through His command to stop it', the Ash'arites held that mishaps, akin to atoms, could be naturally destroyed and that they fell into the category of 'things', temporary, in this world, as mentioned in the Koran. While bodies are considered as depending on the accident of duration (*baqā'*), which implies the existence of other accidents because it is incapable of having duration in and of itself, their endurance is understood as dependent on the accident of becoming (*kawn*). Bodily or accidental durability must be attributed to a distinct theory of durability beyond chance due to this infinite dependency (Cillis, 2014: 11). The Ash'ariyah connected this idea to God's self-



imposed decision to either perpetuate life or wipe out the final remnants of the planet at His will. Consequently, the existence of atoms and accidents, which are said to occur within atoms, depends on God's resolve to continue the creative process for as long as He pleases. The idea that two bodies could ever act in concert is denied, and the explanation offered for the changes that occur naturally in bodies is that they are the product of God's decision to stop causing the same accidents in different bodies.

In addition to their personal reliance on the voluntarism of an all-powerful God, their rejection of all transitive actions between bodies also suggests a rejection of the actual efficacy typically associated with natural law. The Ash'ariyah reject the idea that effects must follow their immediate causes because they believe that God is not constrained by natural rules and instead produces individual occurrences throughout time (Cillis, 2014: 12). This viewpoint basically says that things are intrinsically deterministic and that the predictability of cause-and-effect linkages is not at all necessary. This is equivalent to claiming that, although being free and able, God decided to only follow tradition and bring cause and effect into harmony. The Mu'tazilites and Ash'ariyah reinterpreted Aristotle's "naturalistic" discussion of the atomic problem, demonstrating Islam's innovative endeavour to bring philosophy and theology together. Even when the philosophical presumptions did not seem to perfectly "fit" with their theology, the Mu'tazilites were nonetheless able to establish a philosophical foundation for their theology as evidenced by their war against occasionalism (Cillis, 2014: 12). When the relationship between atomism and anti-causality is considered, it becomes evident that the Ash'ari devotion to atomism is a much simpler decision.

It is fascinating to examine educational theology, which has its roots in Mu'tazilah thought and emphasises human freedom, in contrast to this doctrine of predestination. This theological perspective is based on the idea that divine predestination does not govern human behaviour. They used a philosophical metaphysics of atoms and accidents, commonly known as "occasionals," to arrive to this conclusion. By differentiating between primary and secondary atoms, the Mu'tazilites adjusted the theory of atomism to their view of human ability for free action, based on the belief that everything in the world is made up of atoms (*jawāhir*) and accidents (*a'rād*) (Cillis, 2014: 8). Mu'tazilite occasionalism is undoubtedly influenced by the Aristotelian perspective that arises from the union of substance and form. It views matter as a different kind of material from form, viewing form as a self-sustaining substance (particularly, the substrate on which change occurs). Aristotle believed that matter and form combine to make the body (*ajsām*), which is composed of atoms. According to the Mu'tazilites, atoms make up the body as well, but unlike Aristotle, they are not divisible. The atomistic theory of the majority of Mu'tazilah was based on the fundamental tenet that the *jawhar* could not sustain itself on its own and was merely a carrier of accidents. They thought that in order to make a body, atoms and the accident itself had to be joined because they were both powerless (Cillis, 2014: 9).

Despite this viewpoint, the Mu'tazilites were able to maintain their support for human causation because of the concept of accident. By emphasising the transience of an accident and its duration, they were able to infer a certain durability from it. For example, Abū al-Hudhayl falls into the category of lasting accidents, which includes colour, life, and knowledge, and the category of perishable accidents, which includes volition and movement. In an attempt to exonerate God of the blame for the creation of evil, Mu'ammār (d. 215 AH/ 830 CE) maintained that although mishaps should be assigned to the 'activities' of the body alone, God should be credited with the body's existence as a collection of atoms. He holds that God cannot be said to produce accidents directly, only indirectly, through the body's natural action that causes the accident.

It might be argued that the Mu'tazilites were successful in incorporating their interpretation of atomism into their idea of free human action in the universe. They hold people



accountable for accidents that they believe happen as a result of human activity on any and all of God's created bodies. According to the Mu'tazilites, people can cause mishaps by, for instance, hurling stones, which can hurt someone if they do so (Cillis, 2014: 9). The Mu'tazilites commonly interpreted the concept of the power to act as an isolated happenstance that rendered the holder of such capacity a prospective agent. This potential suggests that the object of power may change from its current state to something else entirely. It is evident that the Mu'tazilites are referencing the Aristotelian concept of *qudrah*, which refers to "the potential to become other" (Cillis, 2014: 9). The Mu'tazilites made explicit reference to Aristotle's theory of cause and effect, which holds that the laws of motion and rest are inherent to all existing objects. Nature is associated with a principle and a catalyst for transformation in the things it is built upon. Subtly, the Asy'ariyah belief that beings lacked inherent potential was denounced by the Mu'tazilites. Indeed, the Ash'arites held that things were nothing more than what they were, that is, whole and fulfilled in every instant of their existence, and that it was difficult to say that material beings contained any principle of existence within them. They rejected the notion that those who were already alive had inherent qualities that could affect how they would develop in the future because they felt this would restrict God's creative work of predestination.

Conclusion

This article provides a critical analysis of the contributions made by three mediaeval scholars: Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazālī, and Ibn 'Arabī. It does this by focusing on significant subjects in the study of philosophy and theology of education. The necessity of situating important educational concerns within the traditions of *kalām*, *falsāfah*, and *tasawuf* is impacted by the educational theological thought of mediaeval scholars who were able to compromise philosophy, theology, and mysticism. It is believed that mediaeval scholars were successful in bringing together three disciplines that had previously been at odds and in making their concepts novel, significant, and essentially more complicated than had previously been recognised. The way mediaeval scholars reasoned about predestination, determinism, and human free will succeeded in illuminating the superiority of a way of thinking that accepts a range of ideas and viewpoints that most researchers consider to be incompatible.

References

- Al-Ghazālī, A. H. M. (1967). *Maqasid al-Asnā fī Sharh Ma'ānī Asmā' Allāh al-Husnā*. Qahirah: Maktabah al-Nahdhah al-Mishriyyah.
- Al-Ghazālī, A. H. M. (2014). *Mishkāt al-Anwār*. Qahirah: Maktabat al-Qāhirah al-Ḥadīthah.
- Al-Ghazālī, A. Ḥamid M. (1956). *Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. Qahirah: Maktabah al-Nahdhah al-Mishriyyah.
- Al-Shamsy, A. (2008). The Social Construction of Orthodoxy. In T. Winter (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology* (pp. 105–107). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cillis, M. De. (2014). *Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought: Theoretical Compromises in the Works of Avicenna, al-Ghāzālī and Ibn 'Arabī*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Cohen-Mor, D. (2021). *A Matter of Fate: The Concept of Fate in The Arab World as Reflected in Modern Arabic Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cook, M. (1980). The Origins of *Kalām*. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 43, 32–43.
- Cooperson, M. (2001). *Two Abbasid Trials: Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Hunayn ibn Ishāq', al-Qantara* (pp. 375–93). pp. 375–93.
- Cornell, E. (2006). A Surviving Neoplatonism: On the Creed of the Bektashi Order.



Conversations with a Mürsit. *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 17(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410500399078>

Endress, G. (1990). *The Defense Of Reason: The Plea for Philosophy in the Religious Community*, *Zeitschrift fuer Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften Majallat Ta'rikh al-'Ulūm al-'Arabiyya wa'l-Islāmiyya* (pp. 1–49). pp. 1–49.

Endreß, G. (2006). Reading Avicenna in the Madrasa: Intellectual Genealogies and Chains of Transmission of Philosophy and the Sciences in the Islamic East. In J. E. Montgomery (Ed.), *Essays Richard M. Frank* (pp. 371–422). Leuven: Frank.

Ess, J. (1973). The Beginnings of Islamic Theology. *The Cultural Context of Medieval Learning, Proceedings of the First International Colloquium on Philosophy, Science, and Theology in the Middle Ages*. Dordrecht, Boston: Reidel.

Ess, J. (1999). Sufism and Its Opponents'. In F. D. Jong & B. Radtke (Eds.), *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics* (pp. 26–9). Leiden: Brill.

Fancy, N., Stearns, J., Brentjes, S., Şen, A. T., Trigg, S., Gardiner, N., ... Haq, S. N. (2023). Current Debates and Emerging Trends in the History of Science in Premodern Islamicate Societies. *History of Science*, 61(2), 123–178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00732753231154690>

Fodor, G. (1996). *Some Aspects of the Qadar Controversy*, *The Arabist, Budapest Studies in Arabic* (pp. 58–9). pp. 58–9.

Frank, R. M. (1984). Bodies and Atoms: The Ash'arite Analysis. In M. E. Marmura (Ed.), *Islamic Theology and Philosophy* (pp. 39–53). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Frank, R. M. (1992). The Science of *Kalām*. *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 2(1), 370–376.

Frank, R. M., & Gutas, D. (1988). The Science of *Kalām*. In *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition* (Vol. 2, pp. 14–6). Leyden and New York: Brill.

Goodman, L. E. (1992). *Avicenna*. London and New York: Routledge.

Griffel. (2009). *Al-Ghazālī's Philosophical Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gutas, D. (2006). *Intellect without Limit: The Absence of Mysticism in Avicenna*. Brepols: Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale.

Hoover, J. (2015). Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought: Theoretical Compromises in the Works of Avicenna, Al-Ghazālī and Ibn 'Arabī. *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 26(4), 516–518. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2015.1053274>

Husni, H., & Bisri, H. (2024). Inclusivism and Exclusivism: Responses of Prospective Islamic Religious Teachers towards Islamic Sects. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 80(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9361>

Husni, H., & Hayden, W. (2024). The Epistemology of Ta'dib in Islamic Civilizational Discourse: Reviving and Reconstructing Contemporary Muslim Scholars' Views. *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, 19(1), 181–197. <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol19no1.14>

Ibn 'Arabī. (1946). *Fusūs al-Hikam*. Qahirah: Dar al-lhya al-Turats al-Arabi.

Ibn 'Arabī. (1959). *Futūhāt al-Makkiyyah*. Qahirah: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah al-Kubrā.

Ibn Sīnā, & Abduh, M. (1974). *Kitāb al-Hidāyah li-Ibn Sīnā. Naṣṣ 'Arabī Falsafī lam Yusbaq Nashruh*. Qahirah: Maktabat al-Qāhirah al-Ḥadīthah.

Ibn Sīnā, & Rahman, F. (1981). *Avicenna's Psychology: An English Translation of Kitāb Al-Najāf*. London: Hyperion Press.



- Ivry, A. (1974). *Al-Kindī and the Mu'tazilah: A Reevaluation', in Al-Kindī's Metaphysics*. Alban, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Jackson, S. A. (2009, July 9). Ash'arism and Black Theodicy (S. A. Jackson, Ed.). *Islam and the Problem of Black Suffering*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195382068.003.0004>
- Karamustafa, A. T. (2007). *Sufism: The Formative Period*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Leaman, O. (1999). *A Brief Introduction to Islamic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Leaman, O. (2008). The Developed *Kalām* Tradition (part I). In T. Winter (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lester, J. (2017). *Discourse & Conversational Analysis Research Group*. London: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473997240>
- Lipton, G. A. (2018). Ibn 'Arabi and the Metaphysics of Race. In G. A. Lipton (Ed.), *Rethinking Ibn 'Arabi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190684501.003.0005>
- Makdisi, G. (1962). Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History I: The Ash'arite Movement and Muslim Orthodoxy. *Studia Islamica*, 17(1), 49.
- Mayer, T. (2008). Theology and Sufism. In T. Winter (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology* (pp. 258–87). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Melchert, C. (1997). The Adversaries of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. *Arabica*, 44.
- Morewedge: (2015). *The "Metaphysica" of Avicenna (ibn Sīnā) A Critical Translation-Commentary and Analysis of the Fundamental Arguments in Avicenna's "Metaphysica" in the 'Dānish Nāma-i "alā" ("The Book of Scientific Knowledge')*. London: Routledge.
- Netton, I. R. (2002). *Muslim Neoplatonists: An Introduction to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity (Ikhwān al-Safā)*. London: Routledge Curzon.
- Odey, E. A., Asuquo, O.O., Amokaha, G. S., Onah, G. A., Obo, E.O. (2023). Symbol in African Religion and Philosophy: the Tiv Experience. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 104(2), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.104.211>
- Pereboom, D. (2016). Libertarianism and Theological Determinism (K. Timpe & D. Speak, Eds.). *Free Will and Theism: Connections, Contingencies, and Concerns*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198743958.003.0007>
- Ritter, A. (2018). Collaboration and Interdisciplinarity: The driving Force of Industry 4.0. *ZWF Zeitschrift Fuer Wirtschaftlichen Fabrikbetrieb*, 113(3), 170–172. <https://doi.org/10.3139/104.111884>
- Schlebusch, J. A. (2023). A Historiography of Victory: R.J. Rushdoony's Christian Philosophy of History as Constitutive of his Postmillennial Theopolitics. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 104(3), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.104.38>
- Shah, M. (2007). Trajectories in the Development of Islamic Theological Thought: The Synthesis of *Kalām*. *Religion Compass*, 1(1), 430–54.
- Sharify-Funk, M., & Dickson, W. R. (2013). Traces of Panentheism in Islam: Ibn al-'Arabi and the Kaleidoscope of Being. In L. Biernacki & P. Clayton (Eds.), *Panentheism across the World's Traditions* (p. 0). Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199989898.003.0008>
- Shihadeh. (2007). *Introduction' in Sufism and Theology*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University



Press.

Vanderjagt, & Pätzold, D. (1991). *The Neoplatonic Tradition: Jewish, Christian and Islamic Themes*. Cologne: Dinter.

Wisnovsky, R. (2003). *Avicenna's Metaphysics in Context*. London: Gerald Duckworth.

Zhakupova, A., Tazhibayeva, S., Dosmailova, A. & Zhampeisova, Z. (2023). The Role of Zhusypbek Aimautov in the Development of Philosophical and Theological Concepts in Kazakh Literary Criticism. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 104(3), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.104.332>

Ziai, H. (2008). Islamic Philosophy (Falsafa). In T. Winter (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology* (p. 68). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Conflict of Interest Statement: *The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.*



This article is open-access and distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Licence CC BY: credit must be given to the creator, the title and the license the work is under. This license enables reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon material in any medium or format, so long as attribution is given to the creator.