The Evolution of Early Islamic Ethics

Yasien Mohamed

Abstract

This article reviews Hellenic[1] and Islamic ethics before the middle of the eleventh century. It begins with the ethics of the pre-Islamic Arabs and then describes the ethics of the Qur'an, *hadith* (Prophetic Tradition), *adab*[2], Sufism, theology and philosophy. We attempt to provide here, as far as possible, a comprehensive, but not necessarily exhaustive, overview of the unfolding of Islamic ethics from the period of Prophet Muḥammad to Miskawayh (422/1030), the first Muslim moral philosopher who made a conscious effort to Islamize and integrate Hellenic elements within his ethical treatise and to make it part of the Islamic intellectual legacy. Such an overview is intended to provide an approximate picture of the evolution of Islamic ethical trends, which have modified the old Arabian ideal of *muru'ah* (manliness) into a new ideal of virtuous happiness in this world and in the Hereafter. Hellenic ethics have inspired Muslim philosophers from the time of Miskawayh to develop a more systematic exposition of Islamic ethics, and we hope that this review of the early ethics of Islam will provide a better appreciation of the early sources that have haped the ethics of later Islamic moralists such as al-Raghib al-Isfahani (d. 433/1050) and al-Ghazzali (505/1111), who have had a lasting impact on Muslim thinkers up to today.

Yasien Mohamed is a visiting scholar at the International Institute of Islamic Thought & Civilization at Kuala Lampur, Malaysia.

Early Arab Virtues

A good starting point for understanding the ethics of the Qur'an is the knowledge of ethics in pre-Islamic Arabia. Many of those qualities became transformed and took on a new meaning with the conversion of the pagan Arabs to Islam. The period before the Qur'anic revelation was known in Arabia as the age of "ignorance" (*jahiliyyah*). However, Goldziher[3] argues that the term should be translated as "barbarism" instead, because Muḥammad intended to contrast Islam with barbarism, not with ignorance. Another noun from the same root – *jahl* (ignorance) – refers to the reckless temper of the pagan Arabs; it is the antithesis of *hilm*, which connotes forbearance, patience, clemency and freedom from blind passion. A *halim* (mild-tempered) person is therefore a civilized person in contrast to a *jahil* who is a barbarian. The pagan Arabs were torn between these two qualities of jahl and hilm; they were inclined to hot-blooded impetuosity, and yet admired the quality of *hilm*.

The Qur'an makes reference to this impetuous quality of the pagan Arabs in the verse: "When the unbelievers instilled in their hearts fierceness, the fierceness of paganism, Allah then sent down His serenity upon His apostle and upon the believers, and imposed on them the word of piety, they being more deserving and worthier. Allah has knowledge of everything" (Q.48:26). The expression "fierceness of paganism" (*hamiyyat al-jahiliyyah*) in the Qur'an refers to the haughty spirit of the tribal Arab, to his sense of indignation against the slightest affront to his honor. This fierce disposition inspired many blood feuds in pre-Islamic Arabia. The Qur'anic verse cited contrasts it to the calm, tranquil and forbearing way of religion.[4] Connected to this blind anger is the pagan quality of *muru'ah* or "manliness". This comprehensive virtue connotes the "indignation of paganism", and qualities such as generosity (*jud*) and honor (*karam*) are subsumed under it.[5] *Muru'ah* may be defined as "all those virtues which, founded in the tradition of his people, constitute the fame of an individual or the tribe to which he belongs; the observance of those duties which are connected with family ties, the relationships of protection and hospitality, and the fulfillment of the great law of blood revenge."[6] Muḥammad was the first to teach the pagan Arabs that forgiveness is not a vice, but a virtue, in fact, the highest form of *muru'ah*.[7]

Ethics in the Qur'an

Any kind of Islamic ethics, whether religious or philosophical, is

ultimately based on the Qur'an. It is in this broad sense that the term Islamic ethics is used. Many Muslim philosophers have given Greek ethical concepts an Islamic orientation based on the Qur'an. Others have taken ethical verses of the Qur'an and given them a new meaning from the perspective of Greek ethics. Therefore, in order to appreciate the later development of ethics one should first understand the nature of ethics in the Qur'an. We shall briefly mention some of the ethical virtues and elaborate on others. Although a detailed Qur'anic system of ethics has not been worked out in the modern period, the semantic and theological foundations for such a task have been laid by the work of Izutsu, Rahman and Hourani. Rahman, in his *Major Themes of the Qur'an,* reinterpreted the Qur'an according to the overarching virtue of social justice, but without minimizing the principle of Divine justice. Hourani, in his *Ethical Presuppositions of the Qur'an*, reopened the Mu'tazilite approach to Qur'anic ethics and demonstrated that the Qur'an teaches that ethical value has an objective reality, and that ethics cannot simply be reduced to the commands and prohibitions of God.[8]

The ethical dimensions of the Qur'an are integral to the social context in which it was revealed. That includes both the context of the pagan Arabs and the early companions of the Prophet. The various religious, legal and moral obligations are interconnected as they are subsumed under God's will. However, there is also a teleological dimension where people obey God because He is good, and where they seek, by means of their innate character (*fitrah*), to progress towards happiness and to become the best community to be brought forth for humankind.[9]

Through the impact of the Qur'an, the vengeful spirit of the Arabs was transformed into a positive quality of *hilm*. The polarity between *jahl* and *hilm* in pre-Islamic times was transformed into a new polarity of *kufr*-Islam after the revelation of the Qur'an. The *jahil* was blindly jealous of his honour, and the *kafir* was similarly absorbed with himself. This latter term also means "ungrateful", suggesting the *kafir*'s insensitivity to the signs of God and ingratitude to His blessings. The person called *halim* is self-controlled, moderate and generous. According to Izutsu, *hilm* is a dominant virtue in the Qur'an, where it applies only to man's relation to his fellowman, not to his relation to God. Man's relation to God is that of a servant (*'abd*), and his relation to his fellow man should be determined by *hilm*, by control of his feelings and passions, by remaining calm and undisturbed even when provoked by others. Thus it is not a passive virtue,

but an active power of the soul that enables a person to control his fierce temper.[10] In this connection, it is remarkable that the term *hilm* is never applied to man, but only used as an attribute of God; as one of the beautiful names of God. At the same time, the spirit of *hilm* as a virtue of man is dominant in the Qur'an.

> In a certain sense the spirit of *hilm* dominates the ethos of the Qur'an as a whole. The constant exhortation to kindness (*ihsan)* the emphasis laid on justice (*'adl*), the forbidding of wrongful violence (*zulm*), the bidding of abstinence and the control of passions, the criticism of groundless pride and arrogance – all are concrete manifestations of this spirit of *hilm*.[11]

The following Qur'anic verse refers to *hilm*: *'The servants of the Merciful are those who walk humbly upon the earth, and when the ignorant address them, say, "Peace".'* (Q. 25:63) Socially, *hilm* is the great ethical quality, and metaphysically, man serves God, not his fellow man. *Hilm* is, therefore, at the core of Islamic social virtues, but the Muslim does not derive his courage and serenity merely from the force of his noble character, but from his relationship to his God.[12]

Other ethical virtues in the Qur'an that are also formulated in the spirit of *hilm* are: duty to God (Q. 8:1), moderation (Q. 2:190), forgiveness (Q. 5:199), humility (Q. 17:39), honesty (Q. 17:37), charity (Q. 24:22) and trustworthiness (Q. 5:1). Some of the vices that are condemned are boasting (Q. 31:11-17), blasphemy (Q. 33:57) and slander (Q. 33:38).[13]

In the spirit of *hilm* the Qur'an states, *'Abraham is truly clement, contrite, penitent'* (Q. 11:75). Furthermore, Luqman said, *'O my son, perform the prayer, command the honorable and forbid the dishonorable and bear patiently what has befallen you. Do not turn your face away from people and do not walk in the land haughtily. Allah does not love any arrogant or boastful person. Be modest in your stride and lower your voice; for the most hideous voice is that of asses'* (Q. 31:17-19). The Prophet Muhammad was instructed, *'It was by a mercy from Allah that you dealt leniently with them, for had you been cruel and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So, pardon them, ask Allah's forgiveness for them and consult them in the conduct of affairs. Then, when you are resolved, trust in Allah; Allah indeed loves those who trust [in Him]'* (Q. 3:159).

Goodness (*khayr/salih*) and righteousness (*birr*)

The term *khayr* is a comprehensive one that connotes valuable, beneficial, useful, and desirable, covering both the material field and that of religious belief. The term also connotes wealth, as when a rich man questioned the Prophet "They ask you what they should spend. Say: 'Whatever bounty (*khayr*) you give is for the parents, the near of kin, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer. And whatever good (*khayr*) you do, Allah is fully cognizant of it.' " (Q. 2:211) The term also connotes pious work: 'Perform the prayer and give the alms-tax. Whatever good (*khayr*) you do for your own sake, you will find it with Allah, surely Allah is cognizant of what you do.' (Q. 2:104) The opposite of *khayr* is *sharr,* as in the verse, 'Every living soul shall taste of death, and We test you by evil and good as a temptation and unto Us you shall be returned' (Q. 21:36). The term *salih* (righteous) is less general and more specific than *khayr* and is specifically related to belief, as suggested by the following verse: "Those who believe and do good works are the people of paradise, where they will dwell forever" (Q. 2:82). These good works are stated in the verse, "When you made a covenant with the children of Israel: 'You shall worship none other than Allah; show kindness to your parents, to the near of kin, to the orphans and to the poor, speak to people, perform the prayers, give the alms-tax'." (Q. 2:840). Good works, therefore, include the belief in One God (*tawhid),* pious acts such as prayer, and moral action such as being kind to one's parents, the orphan and the poor. Here too we can see in this verse that belief is inseparable from righteousness.

The word *birr* (righteousness) is similar to *salih.* It suggests, as can be observed from the following Qur'anic verse, that piety is inseparable from social justice and love for others: "Righteousness is not to turn your faces towards the East and the West; the righteous is he who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the prophets; who gives of his money, in spite of loving it, to the near of kin, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarers and the beggars, and for the freeing of slaves; who performs the prayers and pays the alms-tax. Such are those who keep their pledges once they have made them, and endure patiently in privation, affliction and in times of fighting" (Q. 2:177).

Justice and Responsibility[14]

Justice is a supreme virtue in Islam to the extent that it stands in order of priority to belief in the Oneness of God and the truth of the Prophet.[15]

There are many verses in the Qur'an that command believers to adopt this as a moral ideal: "God commands you to deliver trusts to their owners, and if you judge between people, to judge, justly" (Q. 4.58); "O believers, be upholders of justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves, your parents or kinsmen. Whether rich or poor, Allah takes better care of both. Do not follow your desire to refrain from justice" (Q. 4:135); "And let not the hatred of those who debar you from the Sacred Mosque prompt you to transgress. Help one another in piety but not in sin and transgression" (Q. 5:3). "Justice also demands that people should be true in word and deed" (Q. 3:17); "faithfully observe contracts"(Q. 2:177); "weigh goods justly, and not be fraudulent in measure to cause loss to others" (Q. 6:152); "nor unjustly withhold from others what is due to them" (Q. 26: 181-183); "for it would lead to the spread of mischief on earth" (Q. 9:85). The word *qist* is also used to connote justice and equity. *Birr* is used more comprehensively in the Qur'an to connote piety and righteousness, and *qist*, although synonymous with *birr*, is used more specifically to suggest a verdict in a trial (Q. 5:46; 22:48). The words *'adl* and *qist* are also used synonymously to connote impartiality. As verbs they have been used in the context of polygamy: "If you fear that you cannot deal justly (*tuqsitu*) with the orphans, then marry such of the women that appeal to you, two, three or four; but if you fear that you cannot be equitable (*ta'dilu*), then only one, or what your right hands own. That is more likely to enable you to avoid unfairness"(Q: 4:3). The word *'adl* is also the equivalent of *qist* in the sense of legal justice, that is, the exercise of justice in the courts of law, and it is mentioned in the following verses: Q. 4:128, 4:61, 6:153, and 5:105.

If the Qur'an commands men to be just, then it logically presupposes human free will, which according to Fakhry is placed within a particular context of legal duties and eschatological implications. Although free will is not discussed theologically, there are certain verses in the Qur'an which refer to it. Man's responsibility, in the Qur'an, takes the form of accountability to God, as said in verses Q. 16:56, 93; 21:23 and 29:13. Unbelievers and polytheists are answerable to God for their misdeeds and unbelief, as said in the Qur'an: "And you will surely be questioned about what you do" (Q.16:93). Responsibility in turn presupposes freedom of will. The substantive noun *huriyyah* or freedom does not occur in the Qur'an, but appears as an adjective or in a transitive form, as in the verse, "O believers, retaliation for the slain is prescribed for you: a free [man] for a free [man], a slave for a slave and a female for a female" (Q. 2:178). According to

Fakhry, the term *qadar* appears in the Qur'an but more frequently with reference to the predetermination of God (*taqdir*). Only in two cases is *qadar* predicated of man, and then only in the negative sense, in the Qur'anic verses 16:75, 76. Otherwise, the term invariably refers to God's power, and often with reference to God's power to recreate the dead on the day of resurrection (Q. 36:81; 46:33; 75:40). Like *qadar,* another term that denotes capacity is *isti'ah.* However this term is used more in relation to human capacity than divine capacity, and it is this capacity that implies the implication of moral freedom and responsibility. It occurs in the Qur'an mostly in the verbal form, and as a precondition to moral or religious obligation, as for example in the case of the pilgrimage: "It is the duty to Allah incumbent on those who can (*man istita'ah)*, to make the pilgrimage to the House." (Q. 3:97)[16]

Ethics in *Hadith*

As noted in Section 2, the Qur'an does not only call for faith but also for moral action, which is a means to come near to God. Since the Qur'an commands believers to obey God and His Prophet, faith in God and Muḥammad are the essentials of being a Muslim. Furthermore, the Qur'an also considers Prophet Muḥammad to be the standard of moral conduct both in relation to God and in relation to other humans. He is, from the perspective of the Qur'an, a messenger of ethical guidelines and a model of piety.

More detailed information about Muḥammad's moral conduct can be found in the *hadith* (Prophetic Tradition). Like the Qur'an, the *hadith* deals with the ceremonial, ritualistic and ethical requirements of the faith. It provides information on the action, utterance spoken and unspoken approval of the Prophet. As such, Tradition embodies the ethical and the religious consciousness of the Prophet. *Sunnah* (custom) should be distinguished from *hadith* as it refers more to the normative custom of the Prophet, including ceremonial duties and legal practices. The *hadith* as oral communication is part of the *Sunnah*, but the *Sunnah*, which is the religious norm of the Prophet, need not correspond to the oral tradition. Although six books of *hadith* are recognized as authentic by most scholars, the compilations by al-Bukhari and Muslim are considered most sound while the others are of slightly lesser merit. The Shi'ite books trace Traditions only to 'Ali's family.[17]

The Tradition can also be found in the *Sirah* (biography of the Prophet),

and in *adab* literature it deals with good manners, education and culture. A glance at Wensinck's *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition* shows that the topics covered include faith, prayer, religious duties, civil regulations, criminal law, moral admonitions and personal habits. Under moral admonitions, attention is given to the value of knowledge, of good disposition, of avoiding evil and doing good, of the enumeration of virtues and the moral character of the Prophet. It also incorporates obligations to the sick, requirements of trade and borrowing, and the paying of debts. The *Sunnah* is rich in admonitions about personal habits regarding food, drink, clothes, ornaments, cordial greetings, and the proper practice of nursing infants. An example of an ethically-related *hadith* is: 'Servants of Allah are like brothers and it is not permissible for a Muslim to forsake his brother for more than three days'[18] (see below). Other aspects of the *Sunnah* are respect for parents, moderation in spending, hospitality, forbearance, and faithfulness in keeping a trust. Thus, emulation of the moral conduct of the Prophet has become a part of the Muslim way of life.

The *Sirah* is preserved in two outstanding works. One is by Ibn Hisham (218/833), titled *Kitab Sirat Rasulallah* (The Biography of God's Apostle). This text has preserved considerable citations from the *Sirah of Ibn Ishaq*. The other is Ibn Sa'd's *Kitab al-Tabaqat* or *'The Book of Classes'*, which preserves Traditions from al-Waqidi (207/822), an older authority.[19] Some of the virtues ascribed to Muhammad are forbearance (*hilm*), generosity (*sakha*) courage (*shaja'ah*), patience (*sabr*) and good disposition (*husn al-khulq*). Some of Muhammad's ethical sayings that recur often in the *hadith* and the *Sirah* are:

> The generous man who is ignorant is more precious in the sight of Allah than the learned man who is miserly.
>
> The most worthy of you is one who controls himself in anger, and the most tranquil of you is one who forgives when he is in authority.
>
> The best of you are those who are best in disposition, who show kindness and who have kindness shown to them.[20]
>
> None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.[21]
>
> Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day either speak good or keep silent, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be

generous to his neighbor, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his guest.[22]

A man said to the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): "Counsel me". He said: "Do not be angry". The man repeated [his request] several times, and he said: "Do not be angry".[23]

Righteousness is good morality, and wrongdoing is that which wavers in your soul and which you dislike people finding out about.[24]

Do not envy one another; do not inflate prices one to another; do not hate one another; do not turn away from one another; and do not undercut one another, but be you, O servants of Allah, brothers.[25]

Whoever removes a worldly grief from a believer, Allah will remove from him one of the griefs of the day of Judgement. Whoever alleviates [the lot of] a needy person, Allah will alleviate [his lot] in this world and the next.[26]

The Qur'an and the *hadith* are the primary sources of Islamic law and indeed of the ethical principles of Islam, which have been reduced to a set of practical rules embodied in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Many devout Muslims, not content merely with copying the codes of outward conduct, are acutely sensitive to the spirit of the *Sunnah*. They remind themselves to purify their intentions. Some forbidden actions (*haram*) have been defined in *fiqh* literature. They include premeditated murder, adultery, sodomy, the drinking of wine, theft, slander, false witness, disobedience to parents, eating the flesh of swine, hoarding and usury.[27]

Fakhry contends that athough both al-Bukhari and Muslim contain a chapter on *qadar*, this has no relation to human capacity, only to Divine power. For Fakhry, the goodness referred to in the Traditions is more related to the faith and to loyalty to the Muslim community. Both Muslim and al-Bukhari, in a chapter on *Kitab al-iman*, report on Traditions that are important criteria for genuine faith, namely, love of the Prophet, love of God and the Prophet jointly and love of one's neighbor. Al-Bukhari identifies righteousness with faith and good deeds, and Muslim identifies righteousness with good character and unrighteousness with malice (*ithm*). From these Traditions one notes the inextricable relationship between moral virtues and faith, the latter being the source of all moral virtues in

Islam. As regards the systematic, philosophical treatment of freedom and responsibility, this started for the first time with the emergence of *kalam*.[28]

Ethics in *Adab*

Adab is an important source of inspiration for later Islamic ethics, as it was the kind of literature that could easily incorporate philosophical elements without affecting religious sensibilities. Prophetic Traditions can also be found in *adab* literature, particularly those of a religious orientation. *Adab* literature refers here to prose compositions and anthologies, not technical subjects such as calligraphy and literary criticism. The definition of *adab* is an ethical 'high quality of soul, good upbringing, urbanity and courtesy.'[29] The Arabic word *zarf* is also used to connote this meaning of courtesy and elegance. In Sufism, it defines the norms of conduct between the master and the disciples, and in education – the conduct between the teacher and the student. The social sense of *adab* (or *zarf*) was first implied in the Middle Ages and therefore refers to the etiquette of eating, drinking and dressing; the etiquette of the boon companion; the etiquette of disputation and the etiquette of study and teaching (see books on *Adab al-dars, Adab al-'alim wa-l- muta'allim*, and *Tadris*).[30]

From the first century of the *Hijrah* it came to imply the sum of the intellectual sciences, as distinct from the religious knowledge, which make a man courteous and urbane. The third / ninth century *adib*, al-Jahiz, was not only a perfect proponent of Arabic poetry and prose, but also of ethics. His literature centers on "man, his qualities and passions, the environment in which he lives, and the material and spiritual culture created by him."[31] The ingredients of *adab* are 'moral and social upbringing, intellectual education and entertainment.'[32]

Ethical sayings attributed to the Prophet can also be found in *adab* literature that dealt with religious education and moral instruction. The humanistic type of *adab*, that indicates politeness and educates in the arts took on a nationalistic character during the Umayyad period, when an *adib* became one who excelled in the knowledge of the ancient Arab poets. This kind of *adib* was exemplified by the Persian Ibn al-Muqaffa' (142/759), a famous early writer of Arabic literary prose. His most famous work is *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, which in fact is a translation from the Pahlavi version of *An Indian Mirror of Princes*. Its themes are moral improvement and mental refinement. In this text, the prince is portrayed as a worldly and religious leader who is prudent and just, but the ruled are encouraged to be distrustful towards him. According to Daiber, this critical attitude towards

authority revived the values of friendship and the improvement of character. Ibn al-Muqaffa's *al-Adab al-Saghir* also has the same goal: the first part is concerned with rulers, and the second, with friends. However, contact with non-Arab cultures broadened the scope of *adab* to include Arabic poetry and prose, Persian literature of the epic, gnomic and narrative tradition, the Indian world with its fables, and the Greek world with its practical philosophy, especially in ethics and politics.[33]

Another book of ethical instruction is the *'Uyun al-Akhbar* (*The Sources of Traditions*) by Ibn Qutaybah (276/889). The author wrote it from the point of view of the court writer, who is expected to be skilful in facetious remarks and apt literary references on a wide variety of subjects. The book is divided into five parts, dealing with political science, government and law, ethical qualities relating to nobility and natural disposition, social obligations to one's brethren and domestic life about food and women. Here the style is influenced by the then public literary taste that required the writer to first cite from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* before proceeding with other literary techniques. In a chapter on modesty (*haya*), Ibn Qutaybah begins the section with two *hadiths*, namely, "Modesty is part of faith" and "Lack of modesty is unbelief."[34] On the subject of forbearance and anger he begins with several Traditions: "Anger is a coal that burns in the belly of the son of Adam; though his eyes do not see its red color yet his jugular veins are inflated"; When a man made the request, "O Messenger of God, give me advice", the answer was, "Do not be angry." Then the messenger came back to him and said, "Do not get angry", and the third time he said, "Do not get angry."[35] (See below.) On envy (*hasad*) he prefaces a section with a *hadith* which states: 'There are three bad things, quick temper, suspicion, and envy. When someone asked, "How do you overcome these things"? Muhammad replied, "When you are angry, be silent; when you are suspicious, be in doubt, and when you are envious, do not be covetous." This is followed by poetry and statements by ibn al-Muqaffa' and Hasan al-Basri.[36] Didactic morality is a feature of this work, and thus Ibn Qutaybah states:

> This book, even though it be not concerned with the Qur'an and the sunnah and the law of faith or knowledge of *halal* and *haram*, is a guide to lofty conduct, in that it gives direction to the man of noble character and prevents ignoble conduct. There is not merely one way, and no more, open to God, nor is all good comprised in nocturnal vigils or in prolonged fasting, or in the knowledge of *halal* and *haram*.

> Nay, the ways unto him are many, the gates of good are wide, and the prosperity of the faith lies in the prosperity of the sultan. His prosperity, after Allah's blessing, depends upon righteousness and clear understanding.[37]

A good example of *adab* literature that contains many Traditions is the *Kitab Adab al-Dunya wa'l-Din*[38] by Mawardi (450/1058). This text contains five chapters that deal with the virtuousness of the intellect and the blameworthiness of desire; the *adab* of knowledge; the *adab* of religion; the *adab* of this world; and the *adab* of the soul.[39] Brief aphoristic statements illustrate intellectual, religious and ethical themes and quite often poetry illustrates the religious and ethical themes.[40]

Each chapter of the text begins with a *hadith*, followed by passages from the Qur'an, or vice versa, then illustrations from Islamic history, concluding with apt quotations from poets. In the sections on truth (*sidq*) and falsehood (*kadhib*), the author begins with quotations from the Qur'an (Q. 93:54; 16:107) and Traditions. One example is when the Prophet said to Hasan ibn 'Ali, "Repel what causes suspicion with what does not cause suspicion; for falsehood is the basis of suspicion and truth the basis of assurance." After the Traditions, Mawardi usually quotes a few wise sayings, one of which is: "Falsehood is a thief, for a thief is one who steals your property, and falsehood steals your reason."[41]

Nahj al-Balaghah (*The Way of Eloquence*) is another important *adab* text. It contains short sayings, letters, speeches, and sententious opinions, and is traditionally attributed to 'Ali (40/661). It is compiled by Sayyid Radi. Although most sayings could be traced back to 'Ali, the authorship of the work has come into question. Nevertheless, it is considered to be a masterpiece of Arabic literature, as Djebli remarks:

> The powerful assonance of its prose, its sometimes studied rhetoric, its remarkable eloquence, its gripping images, its sober, unpolished and relatively obscure mode of expression, its Bedouin wisdom and sensibility blended with Islamic delicacy and vision – all of these constitute the literary worth of the *Nahj*. This is supplemented by further values, moral and social. In fact, this book has a tireless appeal, full of fervor and sincerity, on behalf of faith in God and in His prophet, of piety, of integrity, of justice, and of rising above the vanities of this world.[42]

Ethics of Early Muslim Ascetics

The moral guidance of the Qur'an and *hadith* provided a foundation for the Muslims' devotional and ethical practices. Apart from the two poles of piety and worldliness there were other, more subtle contrasting qualities of fear and hope, isolation and gregarious living, and rejection or acceptance of positions of judicial authority. Already some early companions were not content with the mere outward observance of the religious Law. They were more concerned with harmonizing the inner state of their souls with the external behavior required by the Law. In their reaction to excessive worldliness, they renounced the world and practised asceticism. These ascetics were called *nasik* (pl. *nussak*). By the third / ninth century the term 'Sufi' was used for this mystical movement.[43]

The early Sufi al-Husayn Nuri (296/908) asserted that Sufism was not primarily concerned with legal practices, but with morality and piety. Since morality is to be conceived in a social context, enlightened Sufis insisted that the true saint was the one who participated in the social and economic life of the society. However, there were those who regarded ascetic seclusion alone as the means of attaining goodness. The Qur'anic concept of *tawakkul* (reliance on God) developed into quietism. This meant that they practised complete resignation to the will of God. Much public criticism of this attitude eventually led to the Sufi view that it was a virtue to earn one's daily bread by one's own hands. Asceticism was considered a virtue but there was dispute about the form it should take. Some thought it meant abstention from what is *haram* (forbidden) while others thought it meant abstention from what is both *haram* and *halal* (permissible). Other virtues that the Sufis cultivated included hope, sincerity, gratitude, trust in God, awareness of His watchfulness, true piety, forbearance, truth, modesty and *futuwwa* (chivalry).[44]

The Sufi was poor (*faqir*) in the sense that he renounced the world as a *zahid* (pl. *zuhhad*), devoting himself to the ardent service of God. His struggle was not only against the world, but also against his lower soul (*nafs*), which was the seat of all evil lusts. The annihilation of the individual ego was marked by absorption in God (*fana'*).[45]

The otherworldly impulse of Sufism was accentuated by the horror felt by the pious at the corrupt secular administration of the Umayyad dynasty. Reaction to political corruption came in the form of either Shi'ite or Mu'tazilite militancy, or in the form of extreme world-denying asceticism,

and both these tendencies sought justification from the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. However, they often deviated from the moral example of the Prophet. In contrast to the Prophet, who regularly fasted but who forbade his companions to fast every day, the Iraqi ascetic Malik ibn Dinar (131/748) refrained from eating such basic things as dates, on the grounds that they were a luxury. Ibrahim ibn Adham (second /eighth century), who lived in seclusion in the Basra mosque, used to eat once every three days. Sahl al-Tustari (283/910), also from Basra, is said to have eaten once every fifteen or twenty-five days. Even more notable in Sufi tradition is the attitude to sexuality, hence the remark by al-Darani, who said: "Whoever marries is inclined towards this world."[46] These kinds of statements are more reminiscent of early Christian piety than of the Arabian Prophet. By the second Islamic century the severe asceticism was tempered by a passionate love of God, as suggested by the verse, "Those who believe have greater love for Allah" (Q. 2:165). This represented the second phase in the development of the Sufi movement. The female Sufi, Rabi'a al-'Adawiyyah (186/802), exemplifies this approach. She is fondly remembered for her unquestioning resignation (*tawakkul*) to God, Who is sure to provide for those who love Him.

The four main practices of self-discipline in Sufism were solitude, silence, hunger and sleeplessness. These were directed at reforming the individual, but they had to be complemented by the moral and social virtues of Islam. Good character became the condition and result of the religious life. It is brought about by discipline and training, and character also brings peace to the soul. Dhu l-Nun was asked who had the least worries in the world; he replied, "The one with the best character." Sufyan al-Thawri said, "Goodness is to do good even to those who have mistreated you." Furthermore, good character is to endure difficulties which ultimately come from God, and these pains are a test for man to purify his self and attain the pleasure of God. Good character is apparent through two main virtues, humility (*tawadu'*) and selflessness (*ithar*). The true Muslim is humble and considers everyone else to be superior to him in faith. When the Divine Light shines in the believer's heart, he becomes humble and obedient to God. Hence, those who are the nearest to God are the humblest. This quality makes them love to serve others in the hope of reward from God. The Qur'an states, "They prefer others over themselves, though theirs be the greater need" (Q. 49:9).[47]

Before the rise of *kalam*, which had little bearing on Muslim conduct, early Sufis were preoccupied with moral purity and self-examination. They

encouraged repentance and the rejection of the world's distractions through abstention (*zuhd*) and poverty (*faqr*). Eventually, this ethical strain in Sufism developed into a systematic teaching of ethico-spiritual stations (*maqamat*) whereby a strict Sufi discipline emerged.[48]

Al-Muhasibi

We have dealt with some general ascetic trends within early Sufism and we now turn to an exposition of the ethical ideas of one representative figure of Sufism, namely, al-Muhasibi, who had a profound impact on the famous Ghazzali (505/1111).

Al-Harith ibn Asad al-Muhasibi (243/857) was born in Basra. At an early age he went to Baghdad, where he spent most of his life, and where he died. Little is known about him apart from his teaching. One of his most important works is *Kitab al-Ri'ayah li-Huquq Allah* (*The Book of the Observance of the Rights of God*). Margaret Smith, who edited this work (London 1941), considers it to be his longest and greatest work.[49]

The Sufis considered the science of the inner self (*'ilm al-batin*) as superior to the empirical sciences, although the latter were considered indispensable for leading a God-fearing life. Al-Muhasibi represented this trend and developed a science of scrupulous introspection.

Al-Muhasibi's influence on Ghazzali is clear from the latter's acknowledgement of him. According to Winter and Smith, al-Muhasibi's influence on Ghazzali is apparent in the realm of ethics and self-discipline. He is known for his admonitions against the vice of self-delusion (*ghurur*) which has the power to nullify man's spiritual efforts. For example, al-Muhasibi states: "How many a one who was diligent in the performance of outward acts of service has become fuel for the flames of Hell."[51]

Ethics in *Kalam* (Theology)

Unlike Sufism, which was mainly concerned with practical ethics – that is, the purification of the soul through religious devotion and moral conduct – speculative theology was mainly concerned with intellectual discussions about human free will and responsibility and the relation between reason and revelation. In this section the views of two main groups of theologians, the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites, are discussed.

Human Capacity and Responsibility

The first attempt to formulate a doctrine of human action was based on Qur'anic verses that emphasize predestination, such as, "To Him belongs

the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He brings to life and causes to die, and He has power over everything" (Q. 57:2), and "Say: 'Nothing will befall us except what Allah has decreed for us'." (Q. 9:51) One of the Prophetic Traditions suggesting predestination is: "Verily the creation of each one of you is brought together in his mother's belly for forty days in the form of seed, then he is a clot of blood for a like period, then is sent to him the angel who blows the breath of life into him and who is commanded about four matters: to write down his means of livelihood, his life span, his actions, and whether happy or unhappy." [52]

Wolfson explains that, as the verses and Traditions on predestination show that there is "no difference between things that happen to human beings and the actions of human beings, so Jahm ibn Safwan attempts to show that there is no difference between things that happen in the world in general and the actions of human beings. All of them, he maintains, are continuously and directly created by God."[53] Before the end of the first century, Ma'bad al-Juhani (49/669) was the first to institute discussion about *qadar* at Basra, and he and his followers (the *Qadarites*) came to reject the fatalistic views of the predestinarians (*Jabarites*). The man recognized as the leader of the *Qadarites* was Hasan al-Basri (110/728). He made a valuable contribution to ethical consciousness as he was inspired by the conviction that moral action presupposes human freedom. He could not agree with the view that all of man's actions are predetermined by God's knowledge and power, for this would render man helpless and incapable of taking responsibility for his own actions. He asserted that guidance comes from God but that error comes from man. Hasan al-Basri was a precursor of Wasil ibn 'Aa' (131/748) and 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd (145/762), who were the earliest representatives of the Mu'tazilites. Unlike the Kharijites who regarded the grave sinner as an infidel, they took a middle position.[54]

The Mu'tazilites maintained that capacity is a precondition of morality. They believed that man is the creator of his own deeds – good or bad – and he is deserving of reward or punishment in the Hereafter for whatever he does. The head of the Mu'tazilite school of Baghdad, Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamir (d.210/ 825), originated the theory of generation and argued that generated actions such as the pleasure caused by eating are of our own doing and are produced by causes that emanate from us. Therefore, we are responsible for them.[55]

The Ash'arite school, founded by Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari (324/935) agreed with the predeterministic view which accepts the notion of divine

omnipotence and omniscience. However, they tried to harmonize divine power with human responsibility by introducing the doctrine of *kasb* (acquisition). A representative of this school, Baqillani (404/1013), articulated this concept in his book, *Tamhid*, and asserted that man is able (*mustati'*) to earn (*kasb*) the credit of his action. Baqillani asserts that man instinctively distinguishes between a voluntary action such as standing up and an involuntary action such as trembling. He also knows that "the two types of action do not differ in point of genus, place or will, but rather in point of the power created in him by God at the very moment of performing the voluntary action."[56]

Reason and Revelation

It is important to take note of the Mu'tazilite and the Ash'arite perspectives regarding the roles of reason and revelation in providing a knowledge of good and evil. The Mu'tazilites held that reason alone can ascertain good and evil. Man's intelligence can intuit these values. The Mu'tazilite 'rationalistic ethics' insisted on the objective nature of good and evil, justice and injustice. Good and evil actions have intrinsic properties which can be known through man's reason. According to the *Ash'arites*, however, man cannot know good and evil merely by his reason, and without revelation.[57]

To elaborate on these two perspectives, we select 'Abd al-Jabbar (414/1025) to represent the Mu'tazilite position, and 'Abd al-Malik al-Juwayni (478/1085) (teacher of Ghazzali), to represent the Ash'arite position.[58]

According to 'Abd al-Jabbar, actions that are morally determined are those that have an adventitious quality (*sifah za'idah*), are identified as either good (*hasan*) or bad (*qabil*), provided that they emerge from the agent's will. He identifies three types of good actions: the permissible, the admonished, and the obligatory. The adventitious quality of an action is a matter of intuitive certainty; it is known aesthetically in the same way that one knows a picture to be beautiful or ugly.[59] Whereas the *Ash'arites* believe that Divine command or prohibition determines the goodness or evil of an action respectively, the Mu'tazilites regard this view as absurd because actions are intrinsically good or bad irrespective of the status of the author. Furthermore, it is its intrinsic nature that makes it suitable for God to command or prohibit the action. This intuitive ethical knowledge of good or bad does not require the support of deductive evidence or of Divine revelation. Revelation does not confirm reason; it only exposes what is

established by reason. It merely restates the obligation of an action. Thus, bad becomes equivalent to the prohibited (*mahzur*), unlawful (*muharram*) or sinful (*ma'siyah*). Conversely, good becomes equivalent to the permitted (*mubah*), the lawful (*halal*), the allowed (*ja'iz*), or the act of obedience (a'ah).[60]

For 'Abd al-Jabbar there are two classes of general truths. Wrongdoing, for example, "is always evil, regardless of the circumstances, the state of mind of the agent, the moral code of the society and even the commands (hypothetically) of revelation." [61] 'Abd al-Jabbar makes it clear that "God does not make religious obligations good by decree, he only reveals their genuine goodness to us." [62] He states:

> Revelation uncovers the nature of these acts of evil or good, which we should recognize by reason. If we had known by reason that prayer is beneficial, guiding us to our duty and to earn reward thereby, through reason we would also know its obligatory status. Therefore, we say that revelation does not necessitate the evilness or the goodness of anything, it only uncovers the character of the act by way of indication, just as reason does, and distinguishes between the command of the exalted and that of another being by His wisdom, Who never commands what is evil to command.[63]

For the *Ash'arites*, good action is what God commands, and bad action is what He prohibits. The founder of the school, Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari, rejected the view that reason stipulates anything as morally or religiously necessary. The knowledge of God could be attained through reason, but it becomes obligatory only through revelation. Likewise, reward and punishment are also necessitated through revelation. This view of obligation was apparently the consensus of the Ash'arite school in the tenth and eleventh centuries. One of their authorities, 'Abd al-Qadir al-Baghdadi (429/1037) divided the actions of responsible agents as obligatory (*wajib*), prohibited (*mahzur*), promulgated (*masnun*), bad (*makruh*) and permissible (*mubah*). By obligatory we understand that which God has commanded as a necessity insofar as its omission is a sin deserving punishment. The prohibited, on the other hand, is what God has prohibited, and its perpetrator is worthy of punishment. The grounds for obligation are God's command and prohibition; if they were absent, the human being would not be liable to obligation. This view is confirmed by al-Juwayni, the teacher of Ghazzali.

Al-Juwayni's criticism of Mu'tazilite ethics is related to epistemology, and in response to their two propositions that, firstly, a rational person can know good and evil by intellectual intuition; and secondly, that true judgements can be inferred from these primary ones through rational study. He responds to the first proposition by contending that the Mu'tazilites dispute among themselves regarding what constitutes intuitively known ethical principles and that their ethical principles therefore cannot be considered to be necessary truths. The Mu'tazilites offer a standard example of a quality attributed to the Brahmans from India who are said to know good and evil intuitively. Al-Juwayni argues, however, that if that is the case, why do they consider the slaughtering of animals evil, while Islam permits slaughtering for purposes of consumption and religious sacrifices?[64] There are counter-arguments to al-Juwayni's objections, but our main concern here is to clarify al-Juwayni's position that the source of value is God, known to man through revelation. Thus, the only grounds for moral goodness or badness are revelation (*sam'*) and the religious Law (*shar'*).

Both the Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites used reason to explain Islamic faith; the difference is that the former gave reason greater priority in the interpretation of revelation,[65] the latter made it subordinate to revelation. Gardet summarizes their position as follows:

> But whereas in Mu'tazilism reason may and should account for its agreement with the Law, in Ash'arism it is the law which defines the limits of reason and controls its activity. In both cases, the religious Law is the bearer of absolute truth-delimited, in view of the Mu'tazilis, by the criterion of 'aql, whereas for the Ash'aris it is only because the Law enjoins him to do so that man may 'reflect upon the signs of the universe.' [66]

The Hellenic Sources and Philosophical Ethics Prior to Isfahani

In this section we will deal firstly with the Hellenic sources of ethics, including the Arabic translations; then we deal with the Arabic/Islamic philosophical ethics before Isfahani.

The Hellenic Sources

Greek material came into the Islamic world either through literary works or

through translation. According to Gutas, the "bulk of the Greek scientific and philosophical works were translated into Syriac as part of the 'Abbasid translation movement during the ninth century."[67] However, the Syriac-speaking Christians, who were indispensable in also translating these works into Arabic, could not have made such rapid progress in the Graeco-Arabic translation movement if it had not been for the support and direction they received from the early 'Abbasid society.[68] Apart from the political elite, the support also came from the intellectual elite, who commissioned the translation of Greek texts into Arabic for their own research. Al-Kindi (256/870), for example, was a patron of philosophy, and he not only commissioned the translations of scientific disciplines, but also wrote his own essays in physics and metaphysics. Hunayn ibn Ishaq (260/873) and his associates were Nestorian Christians who made every effort to master the Greek language and to become familiar with the culture. They maintained a high level of philological accuracy in their translations, and this was partly due to the generous incentives provided by their sponsors.[69]

Hunayn used to translate into Syriac for his Christian colleagues and into Arabic for his Muslim sponsors. The translations were of a high standard, but usually, like other Christian translators, Hunayn used to eliminate all traces of paganism from these works, so for example, he would replace reference to pagan gods by One God.[70]

Significant for philosophical ethics in Islam are a large number of writings attributed to Galen, Porphyry and Aristotle, which were translated into Arabic as early as the middle of the ninth century. Of the ethical works translated into Arabic, it is worth mentioning Galen's *De Moribus*.[71] The Greek original, which is lost, was probably written in Rome between 185 and 192 AD. An Arabic summary, which is based on a translation by Hunayn ibn Isḥaq in 228/842 AD, is available, and was published by Paul Kraus in 1939. The *De Moribus* contains four books on ethics, one dealing with character. Miskawayh used Galen as a source, as Walzer states: "We have a few references to and even some verbal quotations of the fuller text in later Arabic writers, particularly in Miskawayh's *Tahdhib al-akhlaq*."[73] Claudias Galenus (d.c. 200) wrote extensively in the field of medicine, and much of his work was translated into Arabic by Hunayn and his associates. He also wrote much in the fields of logic and ethics, and we are indebted to him for the epitome of Plato's *Republic, Timaeus* and the *Laws*, which were also translated by Hunayn and his school.[74]

The most important Greek ethical text that served as a source for Islamic philosophical ethics is Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*,[75] which was translated by Ishaq Ibn Hunayn (d. 911).[76] According to Ibn Nadim (d. 970), Porphyry (d. 309) commented upon it in 12 books. Porphyry's commentary is lost, but it must have been in existence in the eleventh century, as Miskawayh refers to it in his Tahdhib, and Ibn Nadim confirms that the volumes were translated into Arabic by Ishaq Ibn Hunayn.[77]

Porphyry played a major role in the transmission of Neoplatonism to the Arab world.

No Arabic version of the Platonic dialogue is extant, but an epitome of the last three books (4-6) of the *Ennaeds* was translated into Arabic under the title of *The Theology of Aristotle: A discourse on the divinity commented on by Porphyry of Tyre*, translated by 'Abd al-Masih ibn Na'imah of Emesa and corrected by al-Kindi. According to Peters, the sub-title can be interpreted in two ways: "First toward an original commentary by Porphyry on the Theology and/or Anneads, a commentary that may have been nothing more than that reworking of the *Enneads* which is the *Theology*, and second, in the direction where Ibn Qifti had already pointed, to a Syrian Christian milieu, the kind that produced Ibn Na'imah, as the possible locale for the conversion of Porphyry's abridged Plotinus into the later spurious Aristotle."[79]

Thus, the discourse on the Neoplatonic interpretation of Aristotle had already begun with Porphyry, whose commentary placed the study of Aristotle on a sure footing within Neoplatonism. The harmony between Plato and Aristotle was accepted to varying degrees by all commentators in the Neoplatonist tradition, and the "bulk of the ancient commentators, Christians included, are in that tradition."[80] Although the Greek commentary of Aristotle's *Ethics* had already begun in the second century AD by Aspasius and other Perapatetics[81], one of the best known Christian Neoplatonic commentators of the *Ethics* is Eustratius (1050-1120), who died in the twelve century AD. His commentaries on Books 1 and 6 of the *Ethics* have survived. Eustratius interprets them from his own theological-philosophical perspective. In his commentary on Book 1, he states that, in comparison with the ancient sages who call the end of human life happiness, Christians call it beatitude, which is the "union with God in the indwelling One," and the opening sentence of the *Ethics* reminds the reader that "we are created after the image of God."[82] These kinds of commentaries no doubt facilitated the reception of Aristotle among Arab

philosophers whose perception of Aristotle was not necessarily based on the original text, if we can speak of an original text. An example of such a philosopher is Miskawayh, whose impression of Aristotle is based on Neoplatonic commentaries of the *Ethics*. He cites Aristotle in his ethical treatise, but when comparing with the original text, we find that many quotations could not be traced back to Aristotle's *Ethics*.

From the ninth century on, gnomological collections, embedded with many Greek ethical sayings, had not only a literary but also a moral appeal to the intellectual elite of the time. One of the earliest such collections is *Nawadir al-Falasifah (Anecdotes of the Philosophers)*, translated and compiled by Hunayn ibn Ishaq (260/873). Of a similar nature is a compilation of Alfaz Suqrat's, *Socratic Excerpts* by the first major Arab philosopher, al-Kindi (252/866). Also significant is the compilation of *al-Sa'adah wa'l Is'ad (On Happiness and Making Happy)* by Abu'l Hasan al-'Amiri (381/991) . More substantial in scope is the *Siwan al-Hikmah (The Closet of Wisdom)* by Abu Sulayman al-Sijistani (378/988), which has much ethical material attributed to Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Alexander the Great, Hippocrates and Galen. Far more extensive in compilation is the *Muhktar al-hikam (Selected Maxims)* (440/1048) by al-Mubashshir Ibn Fatik (480/1087). The Greek origins of many of his maxims can be identified with the maxims in the Nawadir and Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*.[83]

Philosophical Ethics in the Arabic/Islamic Heritage

One cannot deny that these early Hellenistic sources played a major role in the thinking of some early Muslim philosophers who not only assimilated their ideas and contributed to the continuity of the Greek philosophical heritage, but attempted to bring the Greek philosophical heritage closer to the Islamic tradition.

Al-kindi is one such example who set the pace for the continuity of the Greek heritage, accepting it and developing it as something not alien to Islam, but compatible with it. Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina followed this trend, and therefore it is not surprising to find that the Neoplatonic and Aristotelian ideas are reflected in their writings. In the same spirit of reverence for the Greek legacy, the Ikhwan al Safa adopted the Neoplatonic doctrines of emanation to explain the origination of the world from the One. A century later, we note that Ghazzali attacked this notion of emanation, which, to him, robbed God of the freedom of choice, and which

endorsed the anti-Qur'anic view of an eternal universe. Thus, later Muslim philosophers such as Ghazzali and Isfahani, who were less in awe of the Greek intellectual legacy and more faithful to the Qur'an, were more critical of these foreign Greek elements, and identifying them, omitted them from the body of Islamic knowledge. We are not suggesting that they were totally against new ideas; they were open to them, but they assessed them critically from the viewpoint of Islam, and assimilated what was compatible with Islam. For example, they adopted the Platonic virtues as something compatible with the Qur'an, but transformed them into a new context.

The context is Islam, and the end to which these virtues lead to is the eternal happiness in the Hereafter. By assimilating these four cardinal virtues, and placing them in an Islamic context, they were able to develop a philosophical ethics in Islam. More of this aspect will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Thus, the Greek thinkers, and particularly Plato and Aristotle, were a source of inspiration for Arab philosophers who attempted to reconcile their work with Islamic tradition. Therefore, Islamic philosophy can be regarded as a creative assimilation of Greek thought by open-minded representatives of the Islamic legacy. In the realm of ethical philosophy, Miskawayh was the first to attempt such a creative synthesis in his seminal work *Tahdhib al-akhlaq (The Refinement of Character)*. Ethical writers such as al-Muhasibi and al-Tirmidhi (285/859) preceded him, but their writings had a more mystical than philosophical orientation. A brief examination of the philosophical writers who preceded Miskawayh follows.

Early Muslim Philosophers: Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, al-Kini and al-Razi

The translation of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* by Ishaq Ibn Hunayn was a turning point in the history of Islamic ethics. Through this translation the Arabs became familiar with the most systematic treatise in Greek ethics. We will show in due course how Miskawayh's ethical thought was partly conditioned by a Neoplatonic commentary on this text.

Al-Farabi[84] (339/950), the founder of Arabic-Neoplatonism, commented on part of the *Nicomachean Ethics,* and this commentary is no longer extant. Fortunately, the *Fusul Muntaza'ah* (Excerpts from the *Writings*

of the Ancients), which deals with the themes of virtues, friendship and happiness, provide us with a fair reflection of this lost commentary. The faculties of the soul were the psychological basis of his ethics, and moral action emerges from the rational faculty, which enables one to distinguish right from wrong. Two moral virtues that feature prominently in his *Fusul Muntaza'ah* are friendship and justice. Friendship is divided along Aristotelian lines: into a natural friendship as in the case of the love of a child, or a voluntary friendship as in the love of partners in virtue, utility or pleasure. Another theme that dominates this text is the theory of evil, which holds that there can be no evil without human free will, and that all cosmic entities are free of evil. The only evil that exists is 'voluntary evil', which consists either in the privation of happiness or in voluntary actions that lead to happiness.[85]

Al-Farabi's ethics should also be understood as a prelude to his politics as reflected in his *Madinah al-Fadilah (The Virtuous City),* where man is defined as a political animal (See chap. 9 below) who needs to co-operate with his fellow man, and to be part of a city-state. Daiber states:

> The cooperation of people, who obey the divinely-inspired philosopher-king, leads to real happiness in the utopian perfect state through virtues, primarily intellectual virtues, and through good deeds by keeping to the law, the Shari'ah. Therefore, the study of politics became a guide to man's good actions and behavior and is necessary as a means to individual ultimate happiness; it enables man to distinguish between good and bad.[86]

For al-Farabi, therefore, man cannot live alone, but he is part of a society of rulers, artisans and guardians, all of whom are dependent on one another. Man must obey the law-giver, the Prophet, and by fulfilling his duties to God and to his fellowmen, he can prepare himself in this world for life in the Hereafter. In contrast with al-Farabi who contends that cities exist to make men good, Ibn Sina holds the view that citizens are made good so that cities can exist.

Al-Farabi divides virtue into moral or intellectual. Virtues or vices are not innate in man, who is rather born with a disposition for them. These dispositions can through habituation develop into a habitus, which once ingrained in the soul may be designated as a virtue. Once a moral quality is ingrained in the soul, it becomes difficult to eradicate. The power of habit is such that some evil habits cannot even be changed, although one can

exercise some control over them. Following Aristotle, virtuous actions are those which are the mean between the two extremes. Happiness does not consist in honor or wealth, but in the realization of man's intellectual potentialities, whereby he is able to attain the level of immateriality, which is analogous to that of the separate substances of the intelligible world. Al-Farabi refers to this condition as the nearness or union with the lowest of these substances, the active intellect. So, although the intellectual virtues are superior to moral virtues, the latter by themselves do not constitute happiness, but they have to be assisted by the active intellect, which is associated with Gabriel, the Messenger of God. [88]

The intellectual virtues are sub-divided into two groups, the theoretical and the reflective. The former includes intuition and wisdom and the latter includes practical reason, prudence, sound opinion. Reflective virtue is pertinent to the study of ethics. Through practical reason we are able to grasp the premises of right action, and through prudence we are able to apprehend the right means to achieve our ethical goal, that is, we will know how best that action should be done. The reflective virtue can also be applied at a higher level to household management and to politics, where one is required to discover the most virtuous end, which is common to all nations.[89]

In his *Kitab al-Tanbih 'ala Sabil al-Sa'adah*, al-Farabi outlines his ethical philosophy clearly, and sets in a logical manner the steps required to develop this reflective virtue, which of course is important for attaining virtue, and happiness as the ultimate goal. This happiness is the ultimate good and it is sought for its own sake.

Al-Farabi follows Aristotle in his description of happiness rather than the Islamic notion of the Beatific Vision as the ultimate end.[90] The author states that the perfection of moral character and the faculty of discernment ,pursued for their own sakes, lead to noble qualities. The key to attaining these noble qualities is through habituation, which may be compared to the learning of crafts. Just as the craft of skillful calligraphy can only be nurtured though habituation and constant practice, so too is the craft of being moral. To become a virtuous person one is required to put into practice the noble qualities.[91]

The author also follows the doctrine of the mean, and states that just as a deficiency or an excess of food could lead to ill-health, so too will a deficiency or excess of an emotion or desire lead to an unhealthy moral character. Another aspect of his ethics relates to the concept of pleasure and

pain. A wicked act becomes easy for us when it is followed by pleasure, and when we perform a virtuous act, then it may be followed by pain, and so we tend to think that pleasure should be the end for every action. Pleasure could be of a sensory or intellectual nature. The latter kind of pleasure could be the pleasure of leadership, of conquest and of knowledge. Although superior to sensory pleasures and wealth, they are lacking in self-sufficiency, and are not always sought for themselves, and therefore cannot constitute happiness. They can however be used as a means for the attainment of happiness if they are properly utilized. Man tends to pursue the pleasures of his senses and to think that this is happiness. It is by contemplation and reflection that we come to realize that these pleasures are mere accidents of the soul, and it is only by prior knowledge of the faculties of the soul that we can properly appreciate man's power of discrimination. By excellence in discrimination we will know what actions are good, and distinguish them from the false ones. And bad discrimination leads to the contrary. Happiness can be attained by the practice of good actions voluntarily, and misery will follow the practice of bad actions. Happiness, therefore, is a matter of the acquisition of good character and excellence of discrimination.[92]

So, therefore, if we reflect upon the outcome of our pleasures, and when we have an inclination for a wicked act, and we think of the evil outcome in the Hereafter, then we realize the pleasure is followed by a harmful result, so we will suppress the pleasure which would otherwise drive us to perform the ugly deed.[93] Most pleasures and pain are of a sensory nature, of an animal level , which can be controlled by simply avoiding the evil act. It becomes more complicated when we are dealing with non-sensory pleasures and pain such as those which deal with emotions such as fear and sorrow.[94] Al-Farabi concludes his book with a section dealing with the path to happiness and the means to attain it. A sound mind is essential for practical morality because it enables one to discern the connection of things, and this can be nurtured first and foremost through the craft of logic (*mantiq*). However, a precondition for the pursuit of any craft is man's common-sense capacity to know general things. This is universal and instinctive to man, such as the knowledge that a man is not a horse. Once a person has this capacity for axiomatic facts, he is ready for the pursuit of the first essential craft, which is logic. Man is after all a rational being (*natiq*), and has the capacity for logic, but the term also implies that man is a language being, with the capacity to formulate meaningful sentences. In view of man's need for articulation and expression of meaning, he also

needs grammar (*nahu*). Grammar then becomes an important science, a precondition, for the cultivation of the skill of logic.[95] These, then are the skills, essential for sharpening the faculty of discernment, without which man cannot know what is right and what is wrong, and cannot choose what is best for him, for his moral character and happiness.

Muslim philosophers who wrote very early on ethics and Islamic psychotherapy are Abu Ya'qub al-Kindi[96] (252/866) and Abu Bakr al-Razi (313/925). The former wrote *Risalah fi'l Hilah li-Daf al-Ahzan (The Art of Dispelling Sorrows),* which apparently reproduces a lost Hellenic treatise that commends the neglect of worldly things and encourages concentration on the intelligible world by imitating God. The author's interest in ethics can also be found in his *Risalah fi Hudud al-Ashya' wa-Rusumiha.* In this work he betrays a knowledge of the Platonic-Aristotelian psychology of soul-body dichotomy and the Platonic tripartite division of the soul and the virtues that emerge from its equilibrium.[98] These ideas of repelling sorrow and the psychology of the soul became recurring themes in the writings of al-Razi, Miskawayh, Ibn Sina and Isfahani.

The physician, al-Razi, considers Socrates as the personification of moderation, knowledge and justice. In his *al-Sirat al-Falsafiyyah, (The Philosophical Way of Life),* he describes a life in Neoplatonic terms as "becoming Godlike as far as man is capable of that." In his *al-Tibb al-Ruhani (The Spiritual Physick),* he describes the Platonic trichotomy of the soul, and how the moral virtues of the soul emerge from the restraint of desire by reason, the only guide to human conduct.[99] The three parts of the soul should guard against any form of defect or excess. The defect of the vegetative soul is to neglect the needs of the body, and its excess is to indulge in pleasure exceedingly; the defect of the irascible soul is to fail to curb the appetitive soul, and its excess is to allow pride and lust to predominate; the defect of the rational soul is to neglect reflection on the marvels of the world, and the reality of the soul as a prisoner in the body, and its excess is to reflect so much on the world that the needs of the body are neglected. The author castigates the hedonists who are ignorant of the true nature of pleasure. He says that they are slaves to their lusts to the extent that they will employ their reason for the satisfaction of their sexual desires, and develop it into a fine art. Passion should be avoided from the outset, before it becomes established in the soul, but once it has afflicted the soul, it may be repressed in three ways. First, to know that the more cares one has the more the anxiety, and therefore to lesson one's cares and

concerns in this world; second, to resign oneself to a loss that is unavoidable, and to learn to accept it to avoid disaster; third, if the above two strategies fail, then one should not be engrossed by a single object of love, but several such objects, so that the loss of the one will be offset by the others.[100]

Ibn Sina[101] (428/1037) did not write much on ethics. His short tract, *Fi 'Ilm al-Akhlaq (On the Science of Moral Character),* deals with the duties of one who cares for his soul. The first duty is to master the sciences. The second is to acquire virtues to cleanse the soul, and to gain knowledge of vices in order to avoid them. By doing his duties man will attain happiness in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Following the familiar Platonic structure of the soul, Ibn Sina considers the faculties of the soul to be the concupiscent, the irascible and the rational. From these faculties, the corresponding virtues of temperance, courage and wisdom emerge. Once each of these virtues has attained its perfection, the fourth virtue of justice arises.[102]

The fundamental presuppositions of al-Kindi and al-Razi are essentially Greek, that is, Platonic, Aristotelian or Stoic.[103] References to the Qur'an and *hadith* are more for literary embellishment than to infuse Islamic ideas into Greek thought. Later Muslim philosophers such as Miskawayh and Isfahani were closer to the Islamic tradition, and they made a conscious effort to Islamize some Hellenic ethical ideas and to introduce, especially in the case of Isfahani, Islamic ethical concepts based on the Qur'an and *hadith.*

Yahya ibn 'Adi (364/974)

Yahya ibn 'Adi was a Jacobite Christian who was born in 893 in the town of Takrit, about a hundred miles north of Baghdad. He emigrated to Baghdad, where he studied with the Nestorian philosopher Matta ibn Yunus and al-Farabi. After their departure from Baghdad, Yahya ibn 'Adi became the leading figure among the Christian and Muslim philosophers. Following his teacher al-Farabi, Yahya also conceived of religious notions as embodiments of philosophical truths; so he would interpret the persons of the Trinity as symbolic representations of Aristotelian ideas.[104]

Yahya wrote one of the earliest ethical treatises called *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq (Refinement of Character).* Yahya was influenced by the Islamic and the Greek-Arabic philosophical texts of his time. While his concept of moderation is clearly Aristotelian, one can also find parallels with Galen's ethics, particularly with respect to the definition of character, the views of

the soul, and virtues and vices. Galen defines character thus: "Character is a condition of the soul which induces man to carry out psychologically conditioned actions without reflection and free choice" (*al-khulqu halunl -nafsin daciyata l-insani ila an yafala afal al-nafsi bila rawiya wa-la ikhtiyarin).* Yahya gives the same definition with slightly different wording. [105] Yahya adopts Galen's position on the divisions of the soul into three faculties, the rational, the concupiscent and the irascible. They both give emphasis to the rational soul as the aspect that makes man truly human. This tripartite division was also adopted by Muslim philosophers, some of whom Islamized these terms by replacing them with terms from the Qur'an.[106]

The *Tahdhib* is a complete essay, undivided by chapters, on the refinement of the soul and the pursuit of virtue. Yahya's text is not a lengthy, but is written in concise, plain Arabic. Although it is a small work, its significance lies in the fact that it was one of the earliest on the subject. The author was one of the most important Baghdadi teachers in the fourth/tenth century and he influenced many of his pupils. The influence of the *Tahdhib is evident in the work of Miskawayh, who gave his ethical treatise the same title.* Despite the importance of the work, modern scholars, including de Boer, Walzer and Donaldson, gave little or no attention to it.[107] Fakhry at least devoted one chapter to it.

The *Tahdhib* is not original, but it is the earliest we have in Arabic dealing with the subject of ethics specifically. It is faithful to the Greek tradition, and there are no attempts to introduce Christian elements into it. Although influenced by his teachers, Yahya does not share the view of al-Farabi that the king should be a philosopher.[108] As demonstrated by Takriti, who compared key sentences from both texts, the Tahdhib is also important for the impact it had on Miskawayh.[109]

Ikhwan al-Safa'

An association called the *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa'* (Brethren of Purity) was founded in Basrah. This anonymous group of men were the authors of the *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa* (The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity). *The Epistles* became known in 473/1080. Members came from every class: noblemen, merchants, viziers, jurists, governors and men of letters. These fifty-one *Epistles* constituted an encyclopedia of knowledge in philosophy, theology, metaphysics, cosmology, and the natural sciences, including botany and zoology. The authors were intellectually curious about the Greek, Persian and Indian civilizations, and their open-mindedness

also extended to the recognition of truth in other religions. The *Epistles* represent Neoplatonic ideas and also reflect the intellectual currents flowing from the Ismaili's.[110]

Man's happiness in this world is a secondary goal of the *Epistles*. Its primary goal is the happiness of the soul in the Hereafter. To re-ascend to heaven after death, the soul must purify itself from the defilement of matter that weighs it down. The *Epistles* is gradually aimed at inculcating this purifying knowledge, and the legitimate Imam has the duty of guiding the ascent of souls. These souls must cling to him. Since they draw near to the Imam who has true knowledge, they draw near to God. The *Epistles* do not only encourage people to pursue knowledge, but also to act in accordance with it. Purification must begin with the endeavor to attain the four virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. Furthermore, *The Epistles* stress the importance of acquiring knowledge, having healthy opinions, acquiring good character, and performing good deeds. The sciences that were studied are broadly as follows: the practical sciences that prepare one for a particular profession, the juridical sciences (including the Qur'an, *hadith* and *tafsir*), and the philosophical and prophetic sciences which lead the souls 'progressively to the goal of the sciences and wisdoms, and to the first purity.'[111]

The Ikhwan's view of man echoes the Qur'anic story that God desired a vicegerent in the world to carry out a trust. The angels refused this trust, but man accepted it to emulate God and because he was created for it. But Faruqi argues that this divinely endowed capacity does not compel man to pursue a certain code of conduct; the choice lies, in fact, with man. Islamic morality is 'clothed with all kinds of promises and threats to win over man's consent and adoption.'[112] God, according to the Ikhwan, equipped man with instincts for the welfare of his body, and with reason for the welfare of the soul. The body wants eternity in this world and the soul wants eternity in the Hereafter. The soul in the body is compared with the man in his house. The body requires food for nourishment, but the soul requires knowledge for its nourishment. Since the soul is far more important, its nourishment should be sought first; thus, all human activity, they say, should be aimed at the nourishment of the soul.[113]

Knowledge for the Ikhwan is identified with virtue. It makes the miser generous, the weak strong, the lowly magnificent, and the proud humble. Satan is the personification of evil, blind belief and ignorance. Virtue emerges from the rational soul, which is guided by true knowledge and

sound beliefs. True education of family, neighbors and the young involves the purification of the soul from immoral qualities and ignorance.[114]

In the spirit of Plotinus, the Alexandrian school, and the Pythagorean tradition, the Ikhwan recognized the fact that since the good life cannot be lived in isolation from the world; it can also not be isolated from knowledge. The fifty-three *Epistles* cover all the branches of knowledge, ranging from mineralogy and botany to ethics and religious law. All these sciences have an ethical goal, the highest science being the knowledge of God, the lowest, knowledge of worldly phenomena. Mathematics, for example, is aimed at the guidance of souls, to raise a person from the level of the senses to the level of the intelligible. Some sciences are nobler than others; those that pertain to the Law are the noblest, for they lead to the knowledge of God and the welfare of man. Man should direct his effort to the pursuit of the highest science, that is, the rational science, and its related subject of ethics. Like Plato and Aristotle, the Ikhwan urged the exercise of reason, but they emphasized that it conform to the divine Law (*namus*).[116]

The Epistles also deal with anthropological and cosmological aspects. The former deals with diverse traits which make up man's character and his vocation as the vicegerent of God. The latter deals with man's relation to the universe, and how his faculties correspond to different parts of the universe. (See Chapter 3).[117]Another aspect worth mentioning is the evolutionary principle reflected in their writings. The animal kingdom is structured on the basis of an evolution of the value of a species. The elephant and horse rank high because of their nobility of disposition and memory, and the apes are of a lower rank although they have a closer physical resemblance to man.[118] In the Neoplatonic perspective, the highest level of every species is connected to the lowest level of the species that is above it. And the highest level of man is linked to the lowest level of the angels.[119]

The Ikhwan's perspective on predestination is based on Neoplatonic cosmology and popular astrology and they tend to attribute terrestrial phenomena to the influence of the stars. To them, faith meant to accept one's fate joyfully – a fate that is determined by the stars (*ahkam al-nujum*). The Divine decree is the Divine foreknowledge of these determinations.[120] Thus, although God created man with an innate receptivity to any kind of learning, individuals' different inclinations for different crafts correspond with the differences in human natures, which are determined by the stars.

This is why the ancient Greeks, wanting a child to grow up to learn a particular craft, would on a special day offer a sacrifice to the idol representing the planet that determines that craft. Because of these innate inclinations towards certain crafts, people are more receptive to some crafts than others[121] (See Chapter 9). In agreement with the Jabarites, the Ikhwan state that God is the source of all power, including the power he creates in man, which, according to them, does not constrain man's power to act, wickedly or righteously. The Devil stirs man's passion, but man's actions are not completely determined. And yet, all actions are within the foreknowledge of God.[122]

Moral traits are defined by the Ikhwan as aptitudes pertaining to "each of the organs of the body, whereby it is able to readily perform certain actions, works or arts, or to acquire certain sciences or moral qualities, or political courses of action, without reflection or deliberation." [123] The moral qualities of courage, temperance and justice are acquired through education, philosophy and the revealed law. The aptitudes of the absolute man are identified with the "universal soul" that is able to receive the moral traits. This absolute man is the vicegerent of God on earth, who has certain qualities, which include his body with four humors and nine temperaments, a spirit that God breathed into him, and a soul with both a spiritual and an animal aspect. The existence of different moral and psychological traits, however, is due to certain external factors. These are the differences in humour and temperament, climate and geographical conditions, meteorological and astrological conditions, and cultural and religious education.[124]

Moral traits are either innate or acquired. Some pertain to the vegetative soul (identified as the concupiscent faculty), others to the animal soul (identified as the irascible faculty), and others to the human soul (identified as the rational soul). The first soul is distinguished by its desire for food; the second its desire for revenge; and the third its desire for knowledge.[125]

The Ikhwan identify eight classes of people, each comprising a series of virtues. Readers are eloquent and humble; *hadith* scholars are pious and honest; jurists avoid envy, arrogance and the deprecation of rivals; Qur'anic commentators have a mastery of language and insight into the hidden meanings; warriors have religious fervor and courage; and the pious masses have contentment, avoid boasting, and constantly think of death.[126]

The Ikhwan compare man's life on earth with the foetus. Just as life in the womb is temporary before entry into the world, the life of this world is

also temporary before entry into the Hereafter. We are required to perfect the soul in this earthly life by abstaining from physical pleasures, avoiding evil, and being sincere with others. These acts are important for welfare in this world and the next, and a mastery of both religious and worldly knowledge is important for mastery of happiness both in this world and in the Hereafter.[127]

The Ikhwan were averse to *kalam* speculation, and more concerned with moral behavior akin to the Sufis. They shared the Sufi idea of companionship and friendship, but their allegiance was to the Imam, not the Shaykh. The Ikhwan were contemptuous of the body. The noblest action was absorption in God (*fana'*), and the highest happiness was in the Hereafter.[128] They differed with the Sufis who believed in a path that leads to the direct knowledge of God without intermediaries. But they believed that knowledge of God could be acquired, and astronomy and numbers played a key role in the knowledge of the unseen.[129]

The Ikhwan were also characterized by universalism. They did not adhere to a specific school of thought, but embraced all schools. Their leaning towards Shi'ism and Mu'tazilism is evident, for example, in their denial of the vision of God in the Hereafter. Their strong philosophical orientation is seen in the manner in which they combined Greek philosophy with the *shari'ah*.[130]

Miskawayh

The Neoplatonic cosmology of the Ikhwan was adopted by Miskawayh (422/1030), the first Muslim philosopher to write a systematic ethical treatise, who combined Greek ethics with Islamic teaching. Isfahani (approximately 443/1050 – see chapter 2) and Nasir al-din al-Tusi[131] (673/1274) made similar attempts. Interestingly, they were all Persians.

Miskawayh was the first to create a synthesis of the Aristotelian and Platonic strands and to combine them with Islamic teaching. He appears to have been an important source for Isfahani, who wrote in Arabic, and al-Tusi, who wrote in Persian. Through Isfahani, Islamic philosophical ethics was introduced into the Sunni Muslim world, and through al-Tusi it was introduced into the Shi'ite Muslim world. Our concern here is the impact of Miskawayh on Isfahani.

The philosopher and historian Miskawayh was born in Rayy in 320/932. He was a secretary and librarian under the viziers al-Muhallabi (340-52/950-63), Abu'l Fadl Ibn al-'Amid (353-60/951-70), Abu'l Fath (360-

66/970-76), and finally under the Buyid, 'Adud al-Dawlah (372/983). Miskawayh was a contemporary of leading figures such as Sulayman al-Sijistani,[132] Al-Tawhidi, al-'Amiri, and al-Sahib ibn 'Abbad. According to Yaqut, Miskawayh died on 9 Safar 421/16 February 1030.

In combining Greek ethics and Islamic Tradition, Miskawayh's *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* (Refinement of Character) was pioneering in the field of Islamic philosophical ethics. His metaphysical treatise, *al-Fawz al-Asghar,* deals with psychological matters pertinent to ethics. His ethical work bears the same title as Yahya ibn 'Adi's ethical work, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq.* The two works share similarities in structure and content (see above). Miskawayh's treatise was edited and translated into English by Constantine Zurayk, and a French translation by M. Arkoun was published in 1988.[133]

The *Tahdhib* is an Arabic ethical text of a didactic nature, that accommodates intellectual strands as diverse as Greek, Iranian and Arabic-Muslim. Arkoun states that Miskawayh's contribution should be understood within the context of the intellectual generation that worked in Buyid Persia and Iraq from about 350/961 to 430/1039. Buyid princes, viziers, and intellectuals of all schools participated in the cultural and intellectual life of this period and consequently contributed to a veritable Renaissance of Islam. Arkoun identifies the emergence of a philosophical adab, which tended to be less philosophical in its metaphysics, and more didactic in nature. The themes of the *Tahdhib* therefore relate more to the practical problems of life, and as such, it becomes more accessible to the reader. The *Tahdhib* is a text that deals with subjects like the search for supreme happiness, domestic economy, the education of children, and the moral therapy to overcome sadness and the fear of death.[134] About Miskawayh's effective and accessible style, Arkoun states:

> He always succeeds in avoiding the use of technicalities that discourage the reader and the pedantry that obscures the subject. He combines serious philosophical discourse, scientific competence and concern with didactic communication, whereby these writings recall the best modern Arab prose writers. It may be objected that what he loses in profundity and acuteness is what he gains in explanatory, and even persuasive effectiveness; but one should not lose sight of the fact that the socio-political functions of philosophical *adab* are as necessary and fruitful as the deeper but less accessible research of the great names of *falsafah*. It is through philosophical *adab* that religious reason was able to assimilate certain contributions of philosophical knowledge without provoking the rejection constantly repeated by the jurist-theologians who were champions of 'orthodoxy'.[135]

Walzer states that Miskawayh was more a philosopher by conviction than an original thinker like al-Razi: "His own original contribution to moral philosophy is slight. He evidently united materials of quite different origins in the seven chapters of his treatise, and used some discretion in selecting the most relevant texts from the tradition at his disposal, relating that tradition to the moderate neo-Platonic worldview which permeates the whole work."[136] Winter holds a similar view, stating that Miskawayh was not popular for his originality, but for "synthesizing Platonic, Aristotelian and Islamic ideas on the moral life, which were cast in a pleasing Arabic style and adorned with quotations from sources as varied as Homer, Aristotle, Galen, Pythagoras, al-Kindi, al-Hasan al-Basri, and the Qur'an."[137] Nevertheless, Miskawayh's ethical treatise became a model for Muslim philosophers after him.

Miskawayh considered philosophy and religion complementary, and although he was a Muslim philosopher, he was open to new ideas and therefore assimilated Aristotelian ethics, Platonic psychology, Galen's physiology and Bryson's economic and educational thought. He attempted to integrate these ideas within the broad framework of Islam. It was a synthesis that "inspired all sages nourished on Greek science, Persian *adab* and monotheistic religious sensibility."[138] Thus, Miskawayh's treatise clearly reflects the Hellenic moral ethos and provides new information about the ethics of late Greek antiquity. It mentions the philosopher-physician Galen (199 AD), the Neopythagorean Bryson, the Neoplatonic Porphyry, and the names of Aristotle and Plato. Miskawayh mentions and cites from Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*, but it is unlikely that he cited the original text, as he was more concerned with the transmission of ethical ideas than with the verification of his sources.[139] Walzer states:

> Whereas Miskawayh in chapters 3-5 of his treatise reproduces selections from a Neoplatonic commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle, he utterly disregards the foundations of Aristotle's Ethics in the remainder of his work. He prefers to base his argument on the Platonic trichotomy of the soul into a rational, spirited and appetitive faculty or part of the soul and on Plato's four cardinal virtues, temperance, valour, justice and wisdom. It was not uncommon in Hellenistic and later Greek ethics to follow this line.[140]

To reiterate, Platonic psychology is accepted by the Arab philosophers who preceded Miskawayh, including al-Kindi, al-Razi and Yahya ibn'Adi.

They adopted the theory of the tripartite division of the soul, which filtered easily into later Islamic literature. This was later adopted and Islamized by later Muslim philosophers. We cannot identify the original source from which Miskawayh gained this idea of the division of the soul and its virtues, but Walzer suggests that Miskawayh followed Plato and Galen closely.[141]

A distinctive feature of Miskawayh's ethics is that to each of the four primary Platonic virtues are assigned secondary virtues: six virtues are assigned to wisdom (*hikmah*), twelve to temperance (*'iffah*), nine to courage (*shaja'ah*) and more than eight to justice. Vices corresponding to these primary and secondary virtues are described with the Aristotelian definition of "virtue as the mean between two faulty extremes."[142] Thus, there are two vices associated with each virtue. Miskawayh provides a list of vices from the two extremes of wisdom, but not of temperance, courage and justice.[143]

Concerning the impact of the *Tahdhib*, de Boer states: "The Platonic-Pythagorean features of the theory, ie. its dualistic psychology and its hyper-physical morality found special favor among the mystics, while on the other hand the scholars of *hadith* and *fiqh*, as well as the dialectical theologians and the rationalist writers, gave the preference to the Aristototelian elements."[144] The text influenced later scholars, including al-Raghib al-Isfahani, Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and al-Dawwani (908/1502) in his *Akhlaq Djalali*. Miskawayh started the process of Islamization of ethics, and al-Isfahani developed it further, integrating some harmless Hellenic elements into the worldview of Islam. Al-Tusi made it clear that his intention was to recast the *Kitab al-Taharah* (another name for Miskawayh's *Tahdhib*), and to supplement it with chapters on household management and politics. The influence of al-Tusi is reflected in the *Akhlaq Djalali*.

Except for the contributions of Madelung, Daiber, Fakhry and Rowson, the scholarly study of Isfahani's ethics has been neglected. Constantine Zurayk, Muhammad Arkoun and Timothy Winter assume that the Tahdhib was the primary source of philosophical ethics for Ghazzali's (505/1111) ethics, but they have overlooked the ethical contribution made by Isfahani, whose *Kitab al-Dhari'ah ila Makarim al-Shari'ah* (The Means to the Noble Qualities of the Law), became an important source for Ghazzali's ethics, especially as reflected in the *Mizan al-'Amal*.[145]

It is hoped that this review of the religious, philosophical and Sufi' strands in the evolution of Islamic ethical thought will not only provide a comprehensive picture of Islamic ethics before the middle of the eleventh

century, but will also remind researchers in the field that the past legacy is important for an understanding of the present attempts to write on Islamic ethics. So in order to evaluate, for instance, the Arabic ethical treatise of Ahmad Amin, we should be able to note the extent to which his ethics is a continuity from the classical past, and the extent to which it is offering something new for the future.

Notes

1. We refer here to Greek ethical works in Arabic translation.
2. See section 4 below for a definition of *adab* (courtesy, literature).
3. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies* (London, 1967) vol. 1, p. 202f. The author cites pagan Arab poetry to show that the term *jahil* connotes something different from what is generally presumed. Note the following verse: 'The wild man amongst us is ferocious (*jahil*) in the defense of his guest; the ferocious man is mild (*halm*) when insulted by him [the guest]' (p. 205).
4. T. Izutsu, *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran* (Tokyo, 1959), p. 24f.
5. D. M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London, 1953), p. 4; Izutsu, *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran,* p. 23.
6. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies,* vol. 1, p. 22.
7. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies,* vol. 1, p. 25; cf. R. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam* (Cambridge, 1969), p. 193f. – where the author affirms that the Qur'an stressed the positive side of *muru'ah*, which is omitting revenge in favor of forgiveness.
8. Denny, 'Ethics and the Qur'an: Community and World View' in *Ethics in Islam* (Malibu, 1985), p. 104.
9. M. F. Denny, 'Ethics and the Qur'an, p. 108.
10. C. Pellat, 'Hilm' in *Encyclopedia of Islam,* new ed., IV, p. 390-392; cf. Denny, 'Ethics and the Qur'an'.
11. T. Izutsu, 'God and Man in the Koran' (Tokyo, 1959) p. 216.
12. Denny, 'Ethics and the Qur'an', p. 115.
13. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London, 1953), pp. 14-17.
14. T. Izutsu, *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran*, pp. 210-215; M. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden, 1991), pp. 14-15; B. H. Dar, 'Ethical Teachings of the Qur'an', *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (Wiesbaden, 1963), vol. 1, p. 162f.
15. Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Freedom, Equality and Justice in Islam*, Petaling Jaya, 1999, p. 147.
16. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 21.
17. J. Robin, *Hadith, Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed. p. 23-28; cf. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, p. 60f; Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, p. 24f., for a distinction between Sunnah and hadith; Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam,* p. 196.

18. Wensinck, p. 297; al-Bukhari , *Isti'dhan*, 9; Adab, 57, 62/trans. Donaldson, p. 64; Muslim, *Birr*, 23, 25, 26; Adab, 47.
19. On Sirah, see *Encyclopedia of Islam*, III, 369b; Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, 68f.
20. Cited and translated by Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, p. 70.
21. E. Ibrahim and D. Johnson-Davies (trans.), *al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith* (Lahore, 1979), p. 56. This hadith was narrated by Muslim and al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hamza Malik ibn Anas.
22. Ibrahim and Johnson-Davies (trans.), *al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith*, p. 60. This hadith was narrated by Muslim and al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayrah.
23. Ibrahim and Johnson-Davies (trans.), *al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith*, p. 62. This hadith was narrated by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah.
24. Ibrahim and Johnson-Davies (trans.), al-Nawawi's Forty Hhadith, p. 90. This hadith was narrated by Muslim on the authority of al-Nawwas ibn Sim'an.
25. Ibrahim and Johnson-Davies (trans.), *al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith*, p. 112. This hadith was narrated by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah. Only the first part of the hadith is being quoted here.
26. Ibrahim and Johnson-Davies (trans.), *al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith*, p. 114. This hadith was narrated by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah. Only the first part of the hadith is being quoted here.
27. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, p. 203.
28. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 228. Kalam (Islamic scholastic theology) literally means 'speech', but applied to Theology, it refers to the Divine Speech.
29. H. Kilpatrick, 'Adab', *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* (London, 1998), p. 56; See chap. 10, sec. 4.1., above.
30. F. Gabrieli, 'Adab', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed. , I, p. 175f.
31. Gabrieli, 'Adab', p. 175f.
32. H. Kilpatrick, 'Adab', *Encyclopedia of Arabic literature*, p. 56.
33. Gabrieli, 'Adab', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, I, p. 175; On Ibn al-Muqaffa', see *Encyclopedia of Islam*, III, p. 883a; Ibn Muqaffa, *al-Adab al-Saghir wa-l Adab al-Kabir* (Beirut, 1964).
34. Ibn Qutaybah, 'Uyun al-akhbar, p. 278; cf. H. Daiber, 'Political Philosophy', History of Islamic Philosophy, eds S. H. Nasr and O. Leaman, (London and New York, 1996), 2, 841-885, p. 842.
35. Wensinck, 523; al-Bukhari, Adab, 76; Tirmidhi birr, 73; Ibn Qutaybah, *'Uyun al-Akhbar*, p. 282.
36. Ibn Qutaybah, *'Uyun al-Akhbar*, 2, pp. 8, 87f.
37. *'Uyun al-akhbar* (ed. Brockelman), p. 5, cited (and translated) by Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, p. 236.

38. The scribe of this work, Muhammad ibn Sadaqah, apparently completed this work in 534/1140.
39. Mawardi, *Adab al-Dunya wa'l-Din* (Cairo, 1955).
40. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant* (Leiden, 1970), p. 269f.
41. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, pp. 83-85.
42. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, p. 94f.; cf. M. Djebli, 'Nahj al-Balaghah', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed. p. 903f.
43. See P. J. Awn, 'The Ethical Concerns of Classical Sufism', II, *The Journal of Religious Ethics* (1983) 240-263, p. 241f.
44. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, p. 212f.
45. L. Massignon, 'Tasawwuf', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed., X, Fascicules 167-168, 311-317, p. 311f.
46. Winter, T. J. (tr.), *al-Ghazzali on Disciplining the Soul-Kitab Riyadat al-Nafs-and on Breaking the Two Desires-Kitab Kasr al-Shahwatayn*-Books 22 and 23 of the *Revival of the Religious Sciences-Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Cambridge 1995).
47. Winter, *al-Ghazzali on Disciplining the Soul*, p. 32f.
48. 'Akhlaq', *Encyclopedia Iranica*, I, 1975, p. 720.
49. R. Arnaldez, 'al-Muhasib' in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed., VII, p. 467.
50. R. J. McCarthy, *Freedom and Fulfillment*, Boston, 1980, p. 90. Ghazzali mentions the names of a few Sufis that he consulted including al-Muhasibi.
51. al-Muhasibi, *Kitab al-Wasaya*, (Beirut, 1986); trans. M. Smith, p.148; Winter, *al-Ghazzali on Disciplining the Soul*; M. Smith, 'The Forerunner of al-Ghazzali', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1963, pp.65-78.
52. Muslim, Sahih, IV, Qadar, /trans. Ibrahim and Johnson-Davies, *al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith*, p. 36. This hadith was narrated by Muslim and al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayrah. Only the first part of the hadith is quoted here.
53. H.A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, p. 606.
54. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London, 1976), pp. 98-100
55. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam*, p. 36f; cf. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, p. 209, for the Shi'ite view of responsibility which is more in harmony with the Mu'tazilite view that God is free of all evil action as His acts accord with wisdom and righteousness, and that evil comes from man alone.
56. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam*, p. 53.
57. Abrahamov, *Islamic Theology: Traditionalism and Rationalism* (Edinburgh, 1998), p. 36.
58. Although an Ash'arite, Isfahani supports the view that reason can know the universals of good and evil, but not the particulars which can only be known by *revelation*. See Isfahani, *Tafsl al-Nash'atayn wa-Tahsl-al-Sa'tayn*', Ed. A. Najjar, Beirut,1988, pp. 117-120; Cf. identical passage in al-Ghazzali, *Ma'arij al- Quds fi*

Madarij Ma 'rifat al-Nafs, Beirut, 1988, pp. 73-74 by Al-Ghazzali Man also knows good or evil intuitively. The power of intuition is innate, it stems from his *fitrah*, his innate nature for goodness. It is the power of immediate perception of the simple and undeniable truths of an action. For the ethical and psychological implications of *fitrah*, see, Yasien Mohamed, *Fitrah: The Islamic Concept of Human Nature* (London, 1996), pp. 97-110.

59. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, pp. 32f.; cf. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 101f.
60. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, pp. 32-5.
61. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics*, p. 103.
62. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics*, p. 103f.
63. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics*, p. 104. The author cites from the *Mughni*.
64. Hourani, *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics*, p. 125-130.
65. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 38f.
66. L. Gardet, *'Ilm al-Kalam'*, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, (1960) 1, p. 1146.
67. Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture* (London and New York, 1998), p. 22.
68. Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture* (London and New York, 1998), p. 22.
69. Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*, pp. 133-141.
70. G. Strohmaier, Hunayn ibn Ishaq, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed, III, 1986. p.576f.
71. A. Badawi, *al-Dirasat wa-Nusus fi-l-Falsafah wa-l-'Ulurn 'inda-l-'Arab* (Beirut,1981), p. 192. For a translation of this passage, see F. Rosenthal, *The Classical Heritage of Islam* (London, 1992), pp.87-88. See also, R. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, pp.142-163.
72. Richard Walzer, *Greek into Arabic* (Oxford, 1963), p. 142-144. The Arabic text (p. 27) with a preface (p. 24) also in Arabic, has been published. See, Kraus, *'Kitab al-akhlaq Li Julinus'*, *Bulletin Faculty of Arts*, Egyptian University, V (1939); cf. Rosenthal, *The Classical Heritage in Islam*, p. 85-94, for a translation of the text into English.
73. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, p. 143; Y. Mohamed, 'The Ethical Philosophy of al-Raghib Isfahani', *Journal of Islamic Studies* (1996) 6 (1) 51-75, p. 58f., for a textual comparison showing the influence of Galen on Miskawayh and Isfahani. See note below on the influence of Galen on Yahya ibn 'Adi.
74. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 63.
75. Interestingly, some of the earliest Greek commentaries on Aristotle's works are on his *Nichomachean Ethics*, of which the earliest is that of Aspasius of Athens from the first half of the second century AD, covering Books 1-4, 7 and 8. See Richard Sorabji, 'The ancient commentators on Aristotle', *Aristotle Transformed*, ed. R. Sorabji, New York, 1990, 1-30, p. 16.
76. Dunlop, *The Nichomachean Ethics in Arabic*, Books 1-VI', Oriens, 15 (1962) 18-34.

77. Ibn Nadim, *al-Fihrist* (ed. Flugel), 2 vols, Leipzig, 1871-1872; cf. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 65; Zurayk, *The Refinement*, note, p. 199.
78. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 65.
79. F. E. Peters, 'The origins of Islamic Platonism: The School Tradition', *Islamic Philosophical Theology* (New York, 1979) 14-45, p. 17.
80. Richard Sorabji, 'The ancient commentators on Aristotle', p. 3.
81. H.P.F. Mercken, 'The Greek commentators on Aristotle's Ethics', *Aristotle Transformed*, p. 407.
82. H.P.F. Mercken, 'The Greek commentators on Aristotle's Ethics', *Aristotle Transformed*, p. 416.
83. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 61 ff.
84. Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Tarkhan (339/950) is an Islamic philosopher who integrates the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle. Some of his works on Aristotle were translated into Latin in the Middle Ages. He adapted the theories of Plato's *Republic* in his *Risalah Fi Ara' Ahl al-Madinah al-fadilah.*
85. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 83ff.
86. Daiber, 'Political philosophy', p. 849.
87. Daiber, 'Political philosophy', p. 853.
88. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 81f; cf. Muhammad Shahjahan, 'Risalah al-Tanbih 'ala Sabil al-Sa'adah: critical edition with an introduction', *The Islamic Quarterly*, 39 (3) 1995, 129-143, p. 145. Shahjahan is of the opinion that this text has been associated with logic, but that it is actually relevant for ethics. We agree on this point. He also states that the text has not yet been carefully edited. We disagree as we have before us two editions of the text, one edited by J. Yasin (1985) and the other by S. Khalifat (1987). See Bibliography.
89. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 82f.
90. Muhammad Shahjahan, 'Risalah al-Tanbih 'ala Sabil al-Sa'adah', p. 142.
91. al-Farabi, *Kitab al-Tanbih 'ala Sabil al-Sa'adah*, ed. J. Yasin, Beirut, 1985.
92. Muhammad Shahjahan, *Risalah al-Tanbih 'ala Sabil al-Sa'adah*, pp. 142-144.
93. al-Farabi, *Kitab al-Tanbih*, p. 69.
94. al-Farabi, *Kitab al-Tanbih*, p. 72.
95. al-Farabi, *Kitab al-Tanbih*, pp. 80-84.
96. AbuYusuf Ya'qub ibn Ishaq (256/879) was the first important philosopher in Islam and student of the Sciences and Medicine. Born in Kufah, al-Kindi was known in Europe as the 'Philosopher of the Arabs'.
97. Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariyya al-Razi, known in the West as Rhazes. He was a Persian physician, and his Arabic works in the field of Medicine were later translated into Greek and Latin.
98. Hans Daiber, 'Political Philosophy', *History of Islamic Philosophy*, 2, p. 844.

99. Daiber, 'Political Philosophy', p. 846.
100. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 73f.
101. Abu 'Ali Husayn ibn 'Abd Allah Ibn Sina was a physician and philosopher and one of the renowned intellectual figures of the Middle Ages. His most influential treatise was the *Canon of Medicine*, which remained a basis for teaching medicine in Europe into the seventeenth century.
102. Fakhry, Ethical Theories, p. 85f; for more information on Ibn Sina and al-Farabi's ethics, see C. Butterworth, 'Ethics in Medieval Islamic Philosophy', Journal of Religious Ethics, 1983, 11: 224-239.
103. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories in Islam*, p. 67-77.
104. Joel, L. Kraemer, *Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam. The Cultural Revival during the Buyid Age*, 2nd rev. ed. Leiden, New York and Ko ln, 1992.
105. For Galen's translation, see Rosenthal, *The Classical Heritage in Islam*, p. 85; for Galen's Arabic, see Yahya, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* , ed. Takriti, p. 203; cf. Yahya, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* , p. 70, the sentence reads: inna l-khulqa huwa halun li-nafsin yaf'alu af'alahu bila rawiya wa-la ikhtiyarin.
106. Yahya, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* (Paris, 1978), ed. Takriti, pp. 204, 208, 224f, on al-Farabi's influence and the thinkers who adopted this division of the soul.
107. Yahya, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, p. 223f.
108. Yahya, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* , ed. Takriti, p. 256.
109. Yahya, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, p. 266ff. Takriti also pointed out differences in their thought. The differences are partly due to the fact that Miskawayh was governed by Islamic doctrines and quoted verses from the Qur'an and hadith.
110. Cyril Glassé, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (London, 1989), p. 78.
111. Marquet, *'Ikhwan al-Safa, Encyclopedia of Islam*, (1971), new ed. , III, p. 1074.
112. I. R. Faruqi, 'The Ethics of the Brethren of Purity', *The Muslim World* (1960), Vol. 50, p. 115 f.
113. Faruqi, 'The Ethics of the Brethren of Purity', p. 116.
114. Faruqi, 'The Ethics of the Brethren of Purity', p.117.
115. Ahmad Mahmud Subhi, *al-Falsafah al-Akhlaqiyyah* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 302.
116. Faruqi, 'The Ethics of the Brethren of Purity', p. 120f. Faruqi states that namus is not a concept to be found in Plato and Aristotle. The chapter on justice below, how ever, reveals that the Arabic Aristotle uses the term namus (law); but that Miskawayh and Isfahani associated this law with the shari'ah. Faruqi claims that the concept was unknown to Plato and Aristotle, and that for the Ikhwan it is not the shari'ah, but the Divine command which calls man to the recognition of One God, His worship, and the replenishment of the earth.

117. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 96-98; cf. *Ikhwan al-Safa', Rasail Ikhwan al-Safa'*, ed. Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, 1-4 (Cairo 1928), II. p.334 f. where man, the small world (*'alam saghir*) has a dual nature of body and soul, the body is analogous to the city and the soul, to the king.
118. Faruqi, 'The Ethics of the Brethren of Purity', p. 118f.
119. Subhi, a*l-Akhlaq al-Islamiyyah*, p. 303.
120. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 97f.
121. *Rasa'il*, p. 290-292.
122. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 99.
123. Cited in Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 95
124. Fakhry. *Ethical Theories*, p. 95.
125. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 95.
126. Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, p. 96.
127. A.M. Subhi, *al-Falsafa al-Akhlaqiyyah* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 303.
128. Subhi, *al-Falsafat al-Akhlaqiyyah*, p. 304.
129. Subhi, *al-Falsafat al-Akhlaqiyyah*, p. 308.
130. Subhi, *al-Falsafat al-Akhlaqiyyah*, p. 305 f
131. Nasır al-Din al-Tusi (d. 673/1274) was an astronomer, mathematician, and astrologer born in Tusi, Persia. His ethical work is *al-Akhlaq al Nasiriyyah (The Nasirean Ethics)*
132. J. Kraemer, *Philosophy in the Renaissance of Islam: Abu Sulayman al-Sijistani and his Circle* (Leiden, 1986) p. 267ff.
133. M. Arkoun, 'Miskawayh', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed., VII, p. 143.
134. Arkoun, 'Miskawayh', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 143; cf. J.L. Kraemer, *Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam. The Cultural Revival during the Buyid Age* (Leiden, 1986), pp. 222ff., 242ff., 253ff.
135. Arkoun, 'Miskawayh', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 144.
136. R. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, p. 220 f.
137. Winter, *Discipline of the Soul*, p. LIV.
138. Arkoun, 'Miskawayh', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, new ed., VII (1993) p. 144.
139. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, p. 220f; cf. *Mohammad Nasir bin Omar, Preliminary Remarks on Greek Sources of Muslim Ethics: Miskawayh's experience*. Omar argues that Miskawayh consulted the Arabic translation of the *Ethics*, but our investigation showed that many of Miskawayh's quotations which he attributes to Aristotle could not be traced to the *Nichomachean Ethics*.
140. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, p. 221.
141. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, pp. 221, 143; cf. Y. Mohamed, *The Ethical Philosophy of al-Raghib al-Isfahani*, p. 58f., for a comparison between Miskawayh and Galen.

142. D. M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics*, pp. 127-33; Fakhry, *Ethical Theories*, pp. 107-30; Daiber, Review of Zuraik's edition of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* in *Orientalische Literaturzeitung*, pp. 370-73.
143. R. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, p. 222f.
144. De Boer, 'Ethics and Morality', *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (1912), 5, p. 508.
145. Winter does not cite the *Mizan* in his notes as he questions its authorship. However, according to Sherif, it is authored by Ghazzali. This view is further confirmed by L. Massignon, M. Bouyges, G.F. Hourani, A Badawi, and O. Bakar. See O. Bakar, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam* (Kuala Lumpur, 1992), pp. 165-166; Mohamed, *The Ethical Philosophy of al-Raghib al-Isfahani*, p. 51-75; M. A. Sherif, *Ghazzali's Theory of Virtue* (Albany,1975), p. 17; De Boer, *Ethics and Morality*, pp. 501-513, where there is no mention of Isfahani.