

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Islamic Integration of Knowledge (IIOK)

International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT)

Professor MH Biraima (2021)

* Islamization of Knowledge as a strategy:

1- Formulation of the Islamic worldview,

2- Construction of the Islamic methodology,

- 3- Methodology of dealing with Qur'an,
- 4- Methodology of dealing with Prophetic Sunnah,
- 5- Dealing with Islamic heritage,
- 6- Dealing with contemporary human heritage.

* Islamic Integration of Knowledge as an Action Plan:

Definition:

* I define IOK as follows:

The systemic convergence of the main Islamic sources of knowledge (Revelation, Creation), and the sciences derived from them so far, in a multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary processes, in the study of reality (natural, social) at the ontological and epistemological levels, that lead to the emergence of qualitatively new knowledge about the Creator and about His creation.

﴿سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ أَو لَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۝٥٣﴾ (فصلت)

»We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?(53)»

* Concepts to remember: System, Convergence, Emergence, multi-disciplinarity, Inter-disciplinarity, Ontology, Epistemology.

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Fundamental Questions

➤ Knowledge for What?

- 1- To Know Allah (SWT);
- 2- To know who we are;
- 3- To know why He created us;
- 4- To know our relationship to Him;
- 5- To know the rest of His creation;
- 6- To know our relationship to His creation;
- 7- To know how He want us to act in this world;
- 8- To know why we die and what is after death.

➤ **Knowledge from where?**

- 1- From Allah (SWT);
- 2- From Revelation (Qur`an, Sunnah);
- 3- From the Real World;

➤ **What kind of knowledge?**

- 1- Knowledge about the qualities of Allah (SWT);
- 2- Normative knowledge- aught and aught not;
- 3- Descriptive knowledge- what does it look like;
- 4- Causal knowledge- what caused it to happen;
- 5- Mechanismic knowledge- how does it work.

➤ Knowledge how?

* ﴿وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ۗ﴾ (النحل: ٧٨)

«And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect that perhaps you would be grateful(78)» [An-Nahl: 78]

* Three integrated means for acquiring knowledge:

1- Hearing;

2- Seeing;

3- Understanding

➤ Why Islamic integration of knowledge?

- 1- Because knowledge is a cardinal principle in Islam,
- 2- Because created reality is systemically integrated, and integrated reality requires integration of knowledge, **firstly**, by integrating knowledge from the two sources: Revelation, Creation; and **secondly**, by integrating the fragmented human knowledge already derived from these two sources;
- 3- Because the fragmented knowledge of post-modernity allows only a fragmented scope to created reality, and only integrated created reality, together with the holy Qur`an, stand as an evidence of the Creator, Allah (SWT);

- 4- Because the Muslim Ommah needs to re-relate to Allah (SWT) in order to get out from its present abyss, and integrated knowledge is the first necessary condition for the Ommah to re-relate to Allah (SWT) in the modern world;
 - 5- Because we need integrated knowledge to have Iman, and then to use both knowledge and Iman to do good deeds in the created world.
- How to integrate knowledge from an Islamic perspective?
- * Via systemic convergence (multi-disciplinarity, inter-disciplinarity) of the sciences and their sources at the ontological and epistemological dimensions of reality.
 - * The study of Man as an example of integration (see the example at the end of the presentation)

*** The Cardinality of "knowledge" (علم) as one of the Five Wholes (Universals) of the Religion of Islam:**

1- Definition of knowledge in the Qur'an:

- Certainty about the truth of the object under investigation.

2- The components of the Religion of Islam:

* To be derived from the following verse:

﴿لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾ (آل
عمران)

(Certainly did Allah confer [great] favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error).

- 1- The stock of revealed knowledge (علم) about Allah (SWT) and about His creation,
- 2- “Iman” and the ensuing purification of the self,
- 3- The stock of practical prophetic knowledge (السنة القولية) about life on earth,
- 4- Action (good deeds) based on the stock of practical revealed knowledge (السنة العملية)

The Righteous Muslim

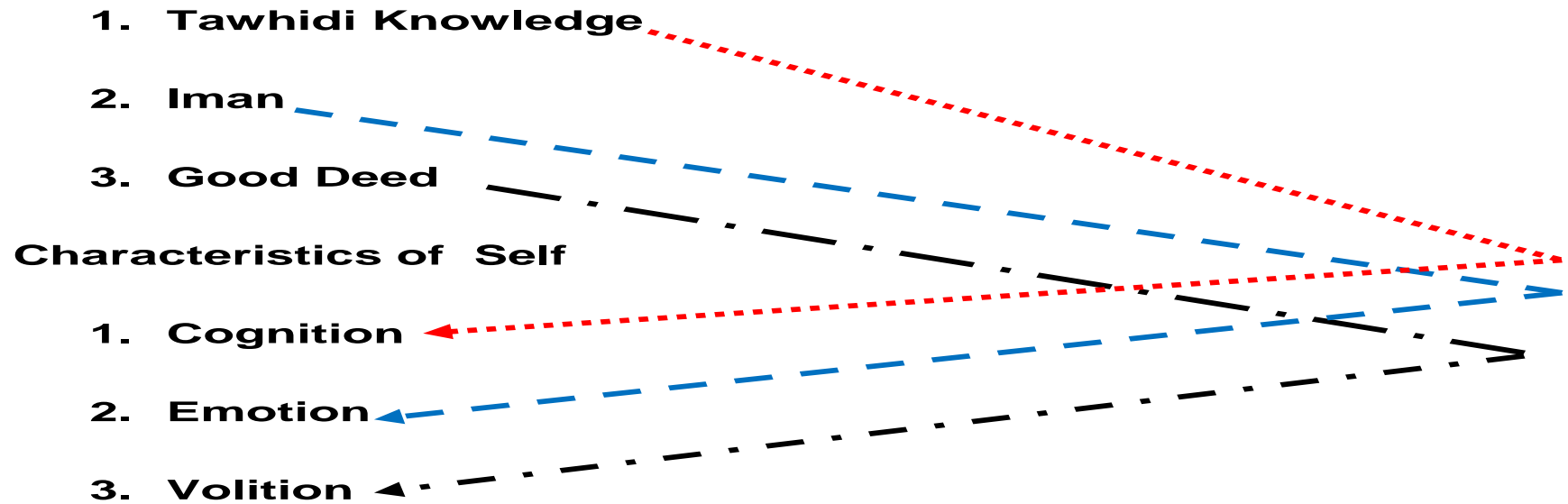
Tawhidi Civilization

Wholes of Normative Islam

1. Tawhidi Knowledge
2. Iman
3. Good Deed

Characteristics of Self

1. Cognition
2. Emotion
3. Volition



3- Fundamental Domain of good deeds

* ﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾ (الكهف، 7).

(Indeed, We have made that which is on the earth adornment for it that We may test them [as to] which of them is best in deed 7).

- * What is it on the earth that Allah (SWT) made it “adornment” to test man for good deeds?

* ﴿الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَقِيَّةُ الصَّالِحَةُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ
أَمَلًا﴾ (الكهف).

(Wealth and children are [but] adornment of the worldly life. But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for [one's] hope- 46).

* “Wealth” and “Children” as the fundamental entities, both for the sustenance of human life and as an allurements to test mankind for good deeds.

3- The Five Necessary Wholes (Universals) of Islam and the Higher Purposes of Sharei`ah Ahkam:

3.1- “Knowledge” (K),

3.2- “Iman” (I),

3.3- “Self” (S),

3.4- “Wealth” (W),

3.5- “Children” (C).

- * The highest purpose of Sharei`ah Ahkam is to preserve these five wholes and their systemic interaction (Tawhidi Social System) at the level of necessity, need and convenience.
- * The developmental dimensions of the concept “preservation”
- * The difference between the Qur`anic meaning and the jurists` technical meaning of Sharei`ah- **religion vs ahkam.**

4- The Systemic Relationship between the Five Wholes of Islam:

- * The Five Wholes (K, I, S, W, C) are not independent of each other, but causally related, with “Iman” as the primary intended goal to be preserved by dynamically controlling the systemic interaction of the other four entities. They have a systemic interactive relationship that results in the creation of the Islamic (Tawhidi) social system as an empirical reality (إقامة الدين). This systemic relationship is also the core of the Tawhidi Worldview, which is a subsystem of the Qur`anic Worldview as we will see below.

- * Redefining the purpose of Sharei`ah Ahkam:
- Preserving the integrity of the Tawhidi social system in terms of its components (K, I, S, W, C), structure, environment, mechanisms and outcomes.

The Qur`anic Worldview (QWV)

- * Defining the concept of worldview
 - A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) that we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.

* The Main Questions of A Worldview

1- What is prime reality—the really real?

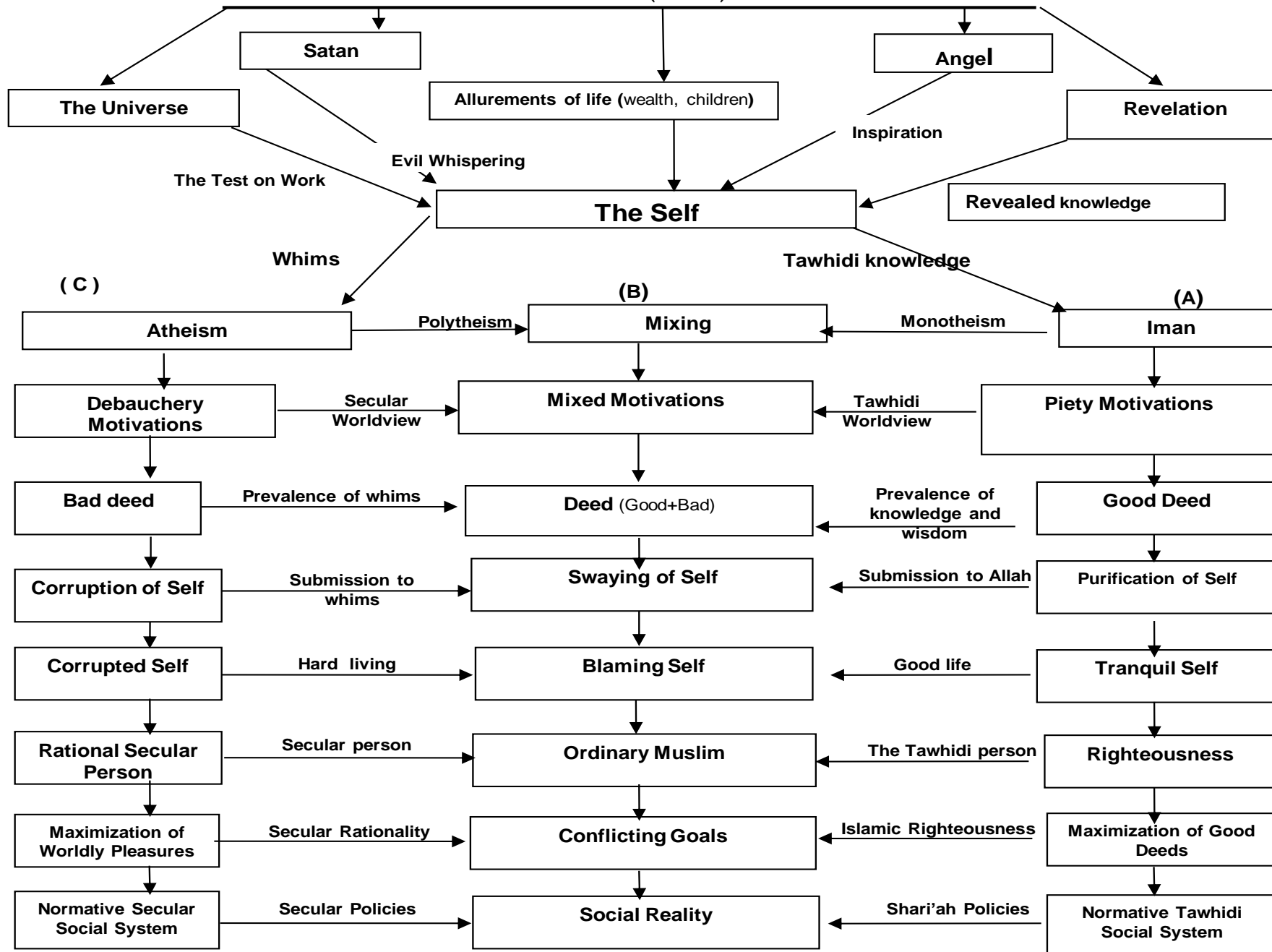
2- What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?

3- What is a human being?

4. What happens to a person at death and after death?
 5. Why is it possible to know anything at all?
 6. How do we know what is right and wrong?
 7. What is the meaning of human history?
- * Answering these questions is a process of theorising.

A Qur'anic Worldview

Allah (SWT)



* The theoretical derivation by the author of this worldview from the wholly Qur`an is available on demand.

* **Notice:**

Firstly, the decisive role of the Five Wholes of Sharie`ah (**K, I, S, W, C**) and their interaction (social phenomena) in the determination of the (QWV),

Secondly, the central role of the human **Self**, with its qualities of “transgression” and “piety” in dividing the QWV into two sub-worldviews, the **Tawhidi Worldview** (column **A**) and the **Secular Worldview** (column **B**).

- The importance of the concept of the human “**Heart**” within the self in QWV.

Thirdly, the fundamental role of the whole “**Knowledge**” in differentiating between the Tawhidi and the Secular worldview. The first is Tawhid-based and knowledge driven, the second is worldly pleasures-based and whims driven.

Fourthly, the decisive role of “**Integration**” of knowledge in QWV.

* The following figures depict the emergent social subsystems of QWV.

Tawhidi Social System

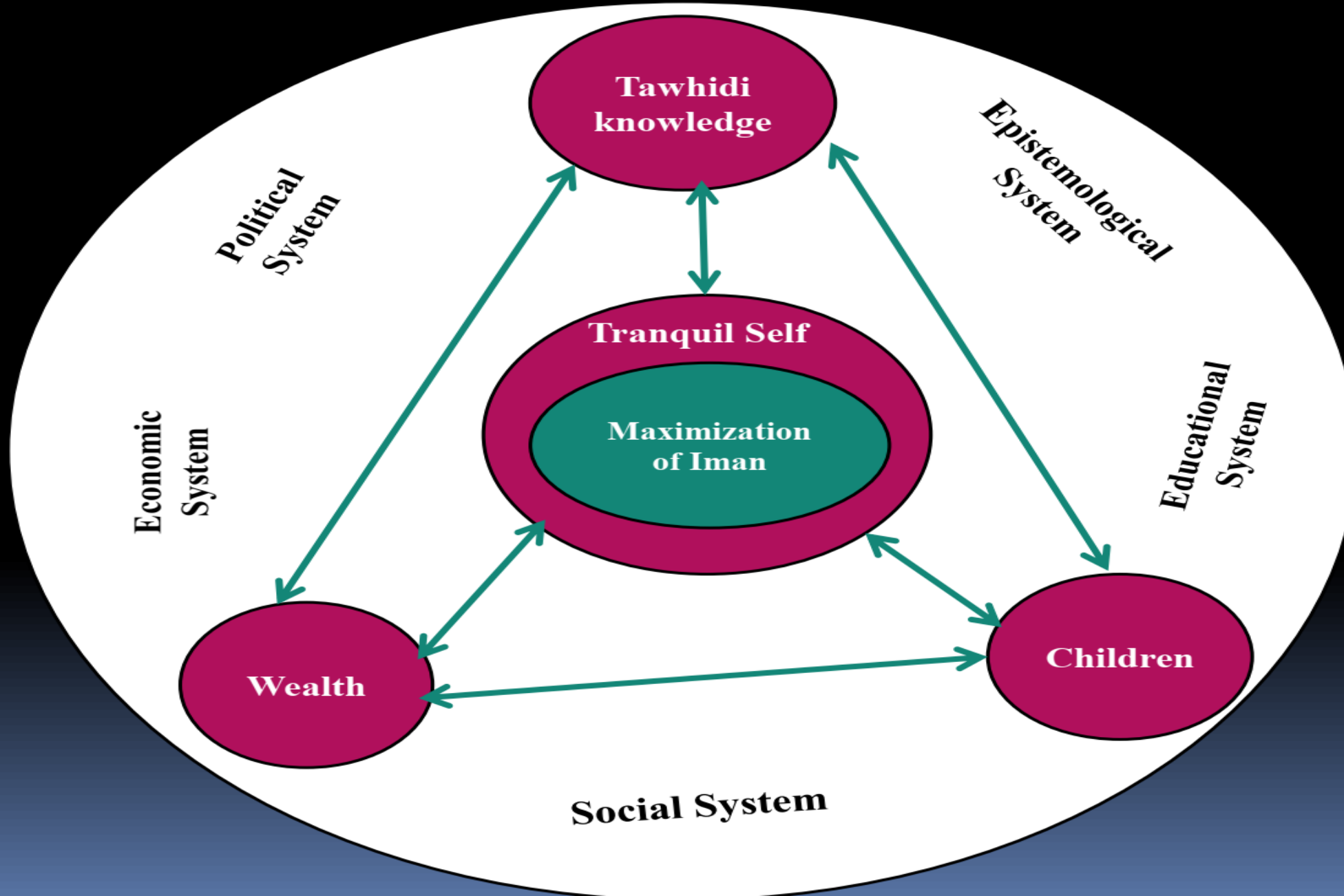
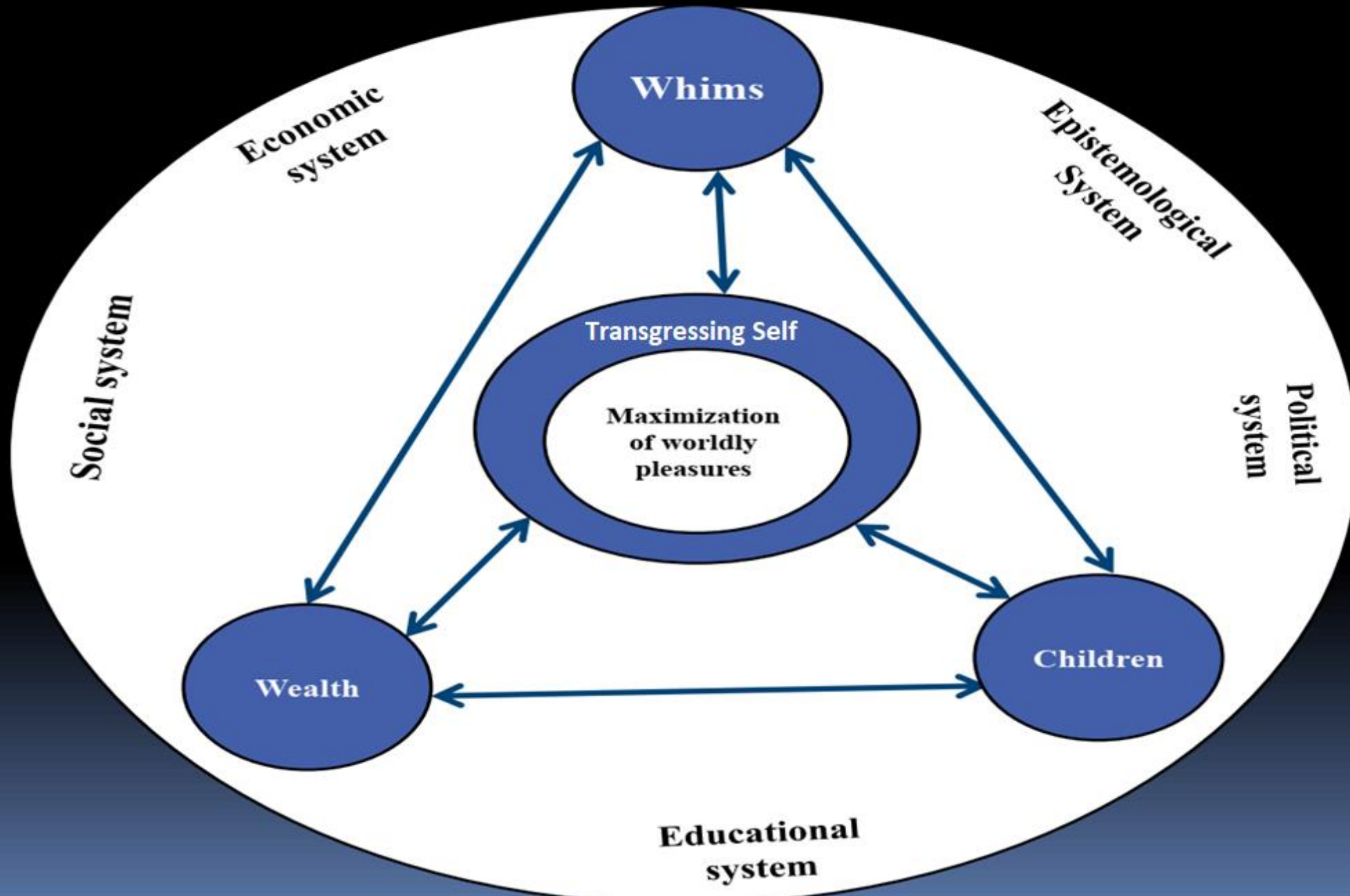


Fig. 1

Secular Social System



Real Social Systems

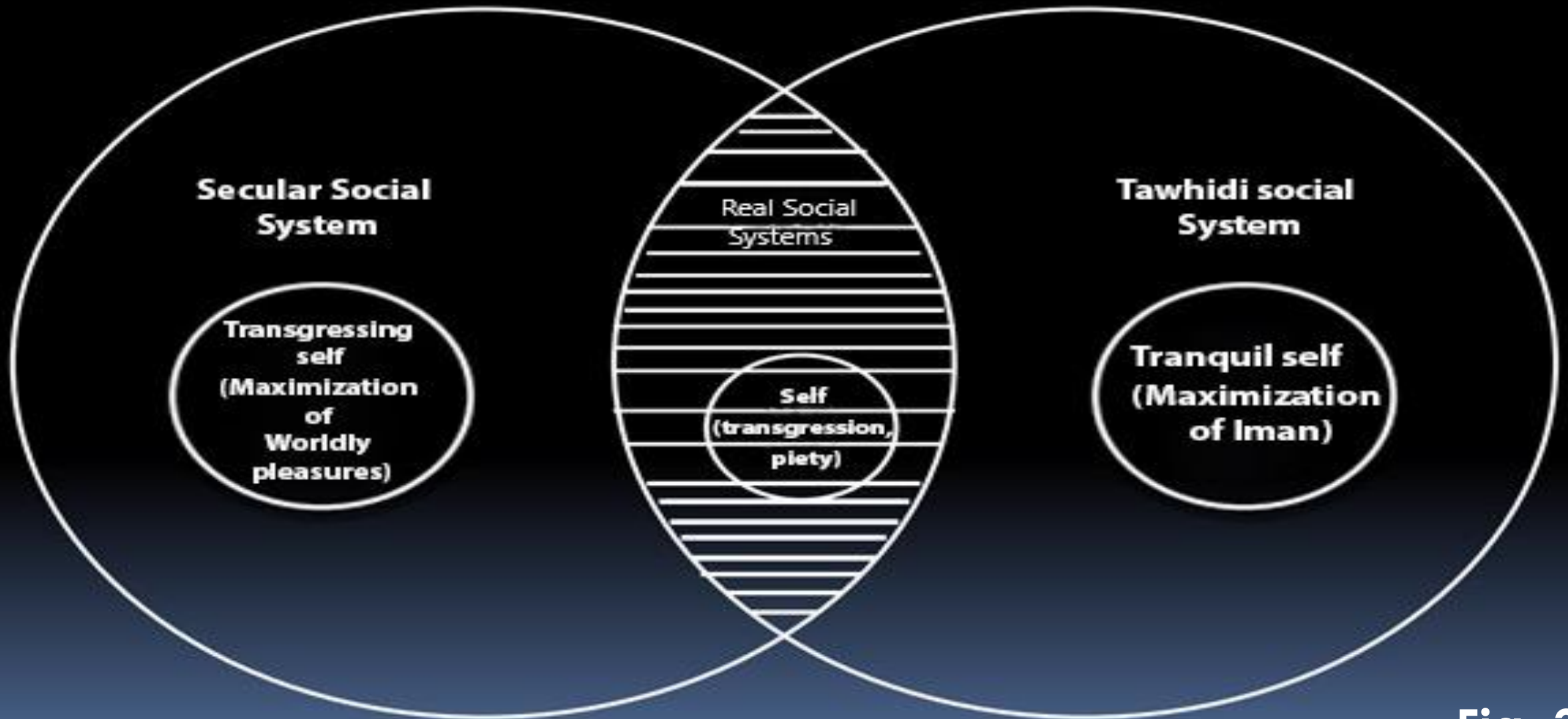


Fig. 3

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* The QWV implies the following types of knowledge:

- 1- Knowledge about Knowledge,
- 2- Knowledge about Allah (SWT),
- 3- Knowledge about Revelation,
- 4- Knowledge about Angels,
- 5- Knowledge about Iman,
- 6- Knowledge about the Cosmos,
- 7- Knowledge about Jinn,
- 8- Knowledge about human Self,
- 9- Knowledge about Wealth,
- 10- Knowledge about Children,
- 11- Knowledge about the systemic interactions between the components of the QWV, internal and external,
- 12- Knowledge about the emergent knew subsystems as a result of these systemic interactions.

* These types of knowledge are necessary for Muslims to be able to abide by the Qur`anic injunction:

﴿وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا﴾ (الإسراء- 36)

(And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned) [Israel: 36]

The QWV as a Worldview of Complex Systems

1- Definition of Relevant concepts

Complex Systems:

- * A system is a complex object every part or component of which is connected with other parts of the same object in such a manner that the whole possesses some features that its components lack- that is, emergent properties.

- * A system may be conceptual or concrete but not both. A conceptual system is a system composed of concepts linked together by logical or mathematical relations. Classifications and theories are conceptual systems.
- * A concrete, or material, system is one composed of concrete things linked together by nonconceptual ties, such as physical, chemical, biological, economic, political, or cultural links. Concrete systems that stand for or represent other objects, such as languages, texts and diagrams, may be called symbolic or semiotic.

Ontology:

- * Ontology as a branch of philosophy is the science of what is, of the kinds and structures of objects, properties, events, processes, and relations in every area of reality. “Ontology” is often used by philosophers as a synonym of “metaphysics” (a label meaning literally: “what comes after the Physics”). Sometimes “ontology” is used in a broader sense, to refer to the study of what might exist; “metaphysics” is then used for the study of which of the various alternative possible ontologies is in fact true of reality.

Epistemology and methodology:

- * Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge is the field of research concerned with human knowledge in general-ordinary and scientific, intuitive and formal, pure and action-oriented. And methodology- not to be mistaken for methodics, or a set of methods or techniques- is the discipline that studies the principles of successful inquiry, whether in ordinary life, science, technology, or the humanities.

Paradigm:

- * Thomas Kuhn gave the word paradigm its contemporary meaning when he adopted the word to refer to the set of concepts and practices that define a scientific discipline at any particular period of time. In his book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Kuhn defines a scientific paradigm as: "universally recognized scientific achievements that, for a time, provide model problems and solutions for a community of practitioners, i.e. what is to be observed and scrutinized, the kind of questions that are supposed to be asked and probed for answers in relation to this subject, how these questions are to be structured, what predictions made by the primary theory within the discipline, how the results of scientific investigations should be interpreted, how an experiment is to be conducted, and what equipment is available to conduct the experiment."

2- Systemism: The Scientific Approach to know the world

- * A systemic mindset stems from “Systemism”, the worldview that the universe consists of systems, in its integrity and its parts, from the atomic scale to the astronomical scale, from unicellular organisms to the most complex species, humans included, and from the physical world of perceptible matter to the conceptual realm of our human mind. “Systemism” offers us the best framework to systematize and infuse order in our everlasting quest to make sense of the world around us and develop and deploy our knowledge about this world in meaningful and productive ways. It also helps us optimize our engagement with others and bring about processes and products that none of us can produce on her/his own independently from others.

System schema

- * We define a system of any sort, in both the physical world and the conceptual realm of human knowledge, in accordance with a four-dimensional schema that specifies the system's scope, constitution, and performance in the context of an appropriate paradigm.

1- The scope of the system:

- a. system domain**, or the field or area in which it exists and is of importance;
- b. system function**, or the specific purposes it is meant to serve in that domain;

2- The constitution of the system:

- a. system composition**, i.e., its primary or pertinent constituents that may be physical or conceptual entities (objects and their primary individual properties) inside the system, and that are relevant to its function, as opposed to secondary entities that may actually be part of the system but that may be ignored because we deem them irrelevant to the system function;

- b. system structure**, i.e., primary connections (interactions or relationships) among primary constituents that determine how the system serves its function;
- c. system environment**, i.e., its primary agents or primary physical or conceptual entities outside the system, other systems included, along with their primary individual properties, that may significantly affect the system structure and function, and that may be separated into two clusters, local in the immediate vicinity, and global in relatively distant or remote areas;

d. system ecology, i.e., primary connections (interactions or relationships) between individual primary agents and constituents, and/or between the system as a whole and its environment, that significantly affect how the system serves its function and affects the environment.

3- The performance of the system:

a. the system processes, i.e., dynamical actions (operations, mechanisms, or maneuvers) which constituents, and/or the system as a whole, might be engaged in, on their own (isolated system) and/or under external influence (of the environment), in order to serve the function of the system following specific rules of engagement;

b. system output, i.e., products, events, or any other effect that the system actually brings about, on its own or in concert with other systems, as a consequence of its ecological interactions and processes, and that may fall within or beyond the scope originally set for the system.

Examples of Systems in the Qur`anic Worldview

1- Man as a complex concrete system:

- 1.1- The human “soul” as a system of divine qualities designed for man;
- 1.2- The human “body” as a material system designed for man;
- 1.3- The human “self” as an emergent system of the fusion of the two systems of body and soul;
- 1.4- Man in his integrity and wholeness as a system resulting from interaction between his components (self, body) and his environment (wealth, children, earth, skies, Jinn, angels) and Allah (SWT) .

2- The Qur`an as a complex Conceptual system of knowledge

* ﴿الرَّ كِتَبٌ أَحْكَمَتْ ءَايَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنِّ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ﴾ (هود)

(Alif, Lam, Ra. [This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then presented in detail from [one who is] Wise and Acquainted(1)» [Hud: 1]

* ﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْءَانَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا﴾ (النساء)

(Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction(82)» [An-Nisaa: 82]

* The Qur`an is conceptual system of true divine knowledge:

2.1- Components of the system: verses of the Qur`an;

2.2- Structure of the system: the Qur`anic worldview;

2.3- Environment of the system: Man and his social systems.

* As an open knowledge system the Qur`an interacts in terms of meaning with other systems.

* We should read the Qur`an as a knowledge system comprehensively through the lens of its worldview.

- * Deriving theories and hypotheses about the world from the holy Qur`an will not affect its reality and integrity because it is preserved by Allah (SWT) from change.
- * Human knowledge derived from the holy Qur`an is fallible, therefore it must be corroborated empirically.
- * Our systemic reading of the holy Qur`an through its worldview should continuously enrich and expand this worldview, thus enriching and expanding our knowledge of the world. This will further expand and enrich our understanding of the holy Qur`an.

The Study of Man as an Example of (IIOK)

* ﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیْ خَلِیْقٌۢ بَشَرًا مِّنۡ صَلٰٓصَلٍۭ مِّنۡ حَمَآءٍۭ مَّسْنُوۡنٍۭۙ ۲۸ۙ فَاِذَا سَوَّیْتُهُۥ وَنَفَخْتُۙ فِیْهِۙ مِنْ رُّوْحِیْۙ فَسَجَدُوۡۤاۙ لَهٗۙ سٰجِدِیۡنَۙ ۲۹ۙ﴾ (الحجر).

«And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "I will create a human being out of clay from an altered black mud(28) And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My [created] soul, then fall down to him in prostration."(29)» [Al-Hijr]

* ﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَّةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ ۚ ۱۲ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ۚ ۱۳ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ۚ ۱۴﴾ (المؤمنون).

«And certainly did We create man from an extract of clay (12)
Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging (13) Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators (14)» [Al-Muminun: 12-14]

* ﴿وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ۚ ۷ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ۚ ۸ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۙ ۹ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ۚ ۱۰﴾ (الشمس)

«And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it(7) And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness(8) He has succeeded who purifies it(9) And he has failed who instills it [with corruption](10)» [Ash-Shams: 7-10]

1- **Ontological integration**

1.1- Constitution of man in his wholeness (Revelation, Reality, Systemism)

* Types and hierarchy of systems:

a. Physical system;

b. Chemical system;

c. Biological system;

d. Spiritual system (divine qualities structured for man)

e. Psychological system;

f. Social system;

- * Integration of these subsystems through interaction such that each level of system depends on systems below and above it.
- * Man in his wholeness is not just the making of the interactions of his systemic components, but also as a result of his continuous interaction with systems of his external visible environment (wealth, children, earth, skies, Revelation) and with the world of the unseen (Jinn, Angels) and above all with his Creator, Allah (SWT).
- * Please, see (fig.4) in the next slide for this ontological reality of man derived from the QWV.

**Domain of Human
Social Action**

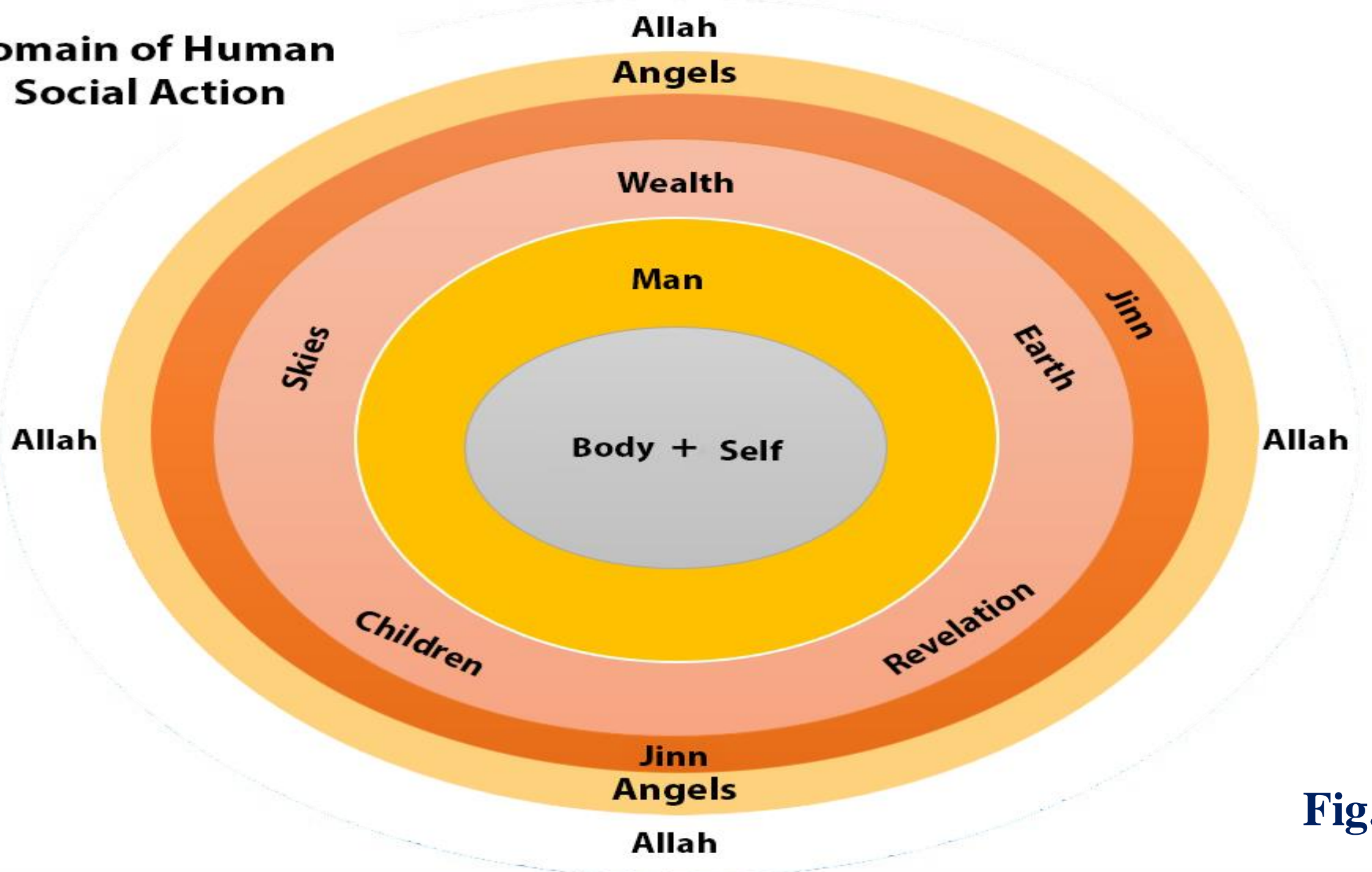


Fig. 4

2-Epistemological Integration

- * Studying man in his wholeness requires studying the systems that constitute him as an integrated whole. This requires not just the concerted collaborate efforts of all the sciences that study systems of natural and social entities but also sciences that deal with metaphysical entities like Jinn, especially “Shaytan”, and Angels, and in what way do they interact with man.

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- * More importantly we need knowledge about the human soul, which amounts to knowledge about the divine qualities; e.g., mercy, knowledge, justice, patience, wisdom, power, hearing, seeing...etc. that, according to our hypothesis, have been created by Allah (SWT) in the form of a soul system specially designed and structured for man as a vicegerent on earth. The components of this soul system are the created divine qualities. The fusion of the soul system and the body system results in the emergence of the “self” as a system the components of which are the soul and some elements from the body, probably water.
- * The system of divine attributes (soul) is infused in all of Allah`s creatures, but at varying degrees of complexity depending on the purpose for which the particular creature is created. This “universal soul” should bring spiritual affinity between man and nature, for all of them make “Tasbeeh” to the Creator.

- * Knowledge about the divine attributes in their absolute efficacy amounts to knowledge about Allah (SWT), which is the domain of the science of Tawhid. Knowledge about the divine attributes in their relative human efficacy requires, beside the science of Tawhid, Sufi knowledge (علم التزكية), psychology and social science...etc.

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- * The soul as a component in the human self posits man as a moral being responsible for his actions and deeds before his Creator, which is the domain of the sciences of Islamic Sharei`ah.
- * All these sciences must be integrated in the study of man in such a manner that his integrity and wholeness as depicted by Revelation are maintained. Ultimately, as a result of multi-disciplinarity and cross-disciplinary adventures new sciences will emerge, old ones will become less important in the study of man and, and, hopefully, the unity of knowledge is achieved because the source of all true knowledge is one, Allah (SWT).

الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات