

Characteristics of Social Ethics: Conceptual Graduation and Relevance in Islamic Teachings

Mr. Mohmet Yusuf Pacel

MS, Ilahiyat Fakultesi,
Akdeniz University, Antalya, Turkiye.
pacelbey65@gmail.com

Dr. Sajida Hanif

Lecturer, Department of Islamic Studies,
Lahore College for Women University, Lahore
sajida.hanif@lcwu.edu.pk

Abstract

Islamic ethical system is formed by the teachings of the Qur'an and explained by the Prophet (S.A.W.) through actions and words. This paper aims to offer analytical study of Islamic ethics based on the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. The paper also attempts to offer an introductory exposition on the conceptual framework and scope of Islamic ethics. To present the conceptual framework and scope of Islamic ethics, the Qur'anic terms and the Prophetic pronouncements related to the subject are exposed, and the opinions of the Muslim exegetes of the Qur'an as well as the opinions of Muslim jurists related to the subject are unveiled.

Keywords:

Islamic ethics,
principles, scope,
analysis

1. Introduction

The term khuluq (character) is definitely Quranic, so that it antedates Greek terms in the Islamic world such as ethos. Of the two occasions of its *occurrence* in the Quran, the more often cited is "and you (Muhammad) have an exalted level of character (khuluq)" (68: 4). It denotes the meaning of one's innate individuality; such as character, natural disposition, temper, nature, manners and even one's customs and religions. The term khuluq (its plural: Akhlaq) which usually occurs in the expression makarim Al-Akhlaq (noble qualities of character)

appears to be very popular in the titles of many books that deal particularly with religious ethics in Islam, such as the Makarim Al-Akhlaq of Ibn Abi Al-Dunya (d. 894). In his introduction to the Makarim Al-Akhlaq of Ibn Abi Al-Dunya, states that there are no works in whose titles the expression makarim Al-Akhlaq has been traced while in another study of his, the Makarim Al-Akhlaq by Ibn Abi Al-Dunya Muslim World, Bellamy (1963) has concluded that treatise makes no quotations from the 'Books of Indians', the Greek philosophers, the Sassanian kings or Persian wise men such as Buzurjmihir; nothing even from Ibn Al-Muqaffa' or any of the more recent writers in the Arabo-Persian tradition.

2. Literature Review

In classical Islam, khuluq was normally defined as a state of the soul which determines human actions. This state is neither the soul nor the action, since the soul is innate while character is a state of the soul that causes the soul to perform its actions. The state is acquired by training and practice while the soul is inborn and part of man's nature. That is to say, the soul represents an ontological structure not indeed a thing but something as real (and real in the same way) whereas character is something that can be described as a human achievement. One can be said to make one's character but one has one's soul by virtue of one's existence.

It was Al-Farabi (d.950) who was among the earliest great Muslim philosophers to acknowledge the interrelation of the state of the soul with human action for the stresses:

The states of the soul by which a man does good deeds and fair actions are the virtues and those by which he does wicked deeds and ugly actions are the vices (Al-Farabi, 1961, 1985a, b) Then his Christian student, Yahya Ibn 'Adi took a similar view, defining khuluq as: A state of the soul by which man performs his actions without thought or deliberation Yahya's definition is in agreement with that of his contemporary, Miskawayh (1966) who also defines khuluq as: A state of the soul which causes it to perform its actions without thought or deliberation. Almost the same definition of character is later elaborated by successive writers on ethics in the Islamic world, such men as Al-Ghazali (1966), Al-Tusi (1964) and others.

3. Research Gap

There is a considerable number of books and research conducted about the about Islamic ethics but there was still the aspect of characteristics of social ethics and their conceptual graduation in the light of Islamic teachings to be explored. That's why the above mentioned topic is selected for the research.

4. Limitations of the Research

The research includes just the characteristics of social ethics and other dimensions are excluded due the time limit and operationalization of the research topic. The gradual process for the creation of such characteristics is also discussed in detail.

5. Research Questions

1. What are the characteristics of social ethics?
2. What is the conceptual graduation needed for the formulation of characteristics which are essential for the social ethics?
3. Is there any relevance needed for character building?

6. Arguments and Discussion

6.1. Islamic Ethics: A conceptual analysis

The Arabic term: *akhlaq* (singular, *khuluq*) is laterally translated into English as "ethics".¹ *Khuluq* comes in the *Qur'an*, two times, (al-Shu'ara: 137, and al-Qalam². According to the Muslim exegete of the *Qur'an*, al-Qurtubi (d.1273 C.E),³ the word *khuluq al-awalin* as mentioned in the *Qur'an* means: "their ancient customs and it includes religion, character, ideology, or doctrine."⁴ Another Arabic word which is employed as a literally interchangeable to *akhlaq* is *adab*. *Adab* means manner, attitude, behavior,⁵ and the etiquette of putting things in their proper place.

Though these two terms are in some cases used as interchangeable words in Arabic language, some scholars argue that there are some essential differences between *akhlaq* and *adab* in terms of application and source.⁶ This is because; *akhlaq* (ethics) indicates the "moral philosophy", while *adab* (morality) signifies the actual practices of moral philosophy. In this case, the former address the theoretical background of human conducts, while the later is more on the actions and manners. The later addresses what is the proper, or improper, behaviour of man, while the first addresses why such actions are proper or otherwise. As

such, these two terms are complementary terms, and in some cases serve as interchangeable words, that describe what man ought to do.

Conceptually, *akhlÉq* includes two meanings; *first* *akhlÉq* (ethics) means the science (*Ñilm*) that deals with the standards of right and wrong of human conducts, particularly “what humans ought to do”.⁷ Ethics as science refers to the study of the ethical conduct and behaviour; and in this case, ethics means the human effort of studying moral standards and conducts to ensure that man possesses the right understanding of moral behaviour.

Second, *akhlÉq* means “good character” or good human behaviour (*al-akhlÉq al-fÉilah*). In this understanding ethics is the human character that prescribes to refrain from immoral conducts such as cheating, corruption, discrimination, lying, stealing, murder, assault, slander, rape, fraud, and etc., and enjoins virtues of honesty, compassion, sincerity and loyalty.⁸ As such, Islamic ethics (*akhlÉq*) are those universal standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans *ought to do* as taught by the Qur’an, and demonstrated in the exemplary life (actions and words) of the Prophet (s.a.w).⁹ In this sense, *akhlÉq* (ethics) “subsumes all actions that are characterised as *Ñamal ÎÉlií* (virtuous deeds) in the terminology of the Qur’an”.¹⁰

It is important to underline few things about the definition of ethics in the Islamic perspective; *first*, ethical actions are those conducts which are characterized as *Ñamal ÎÉlií* (good deeds). Good conducts (*Ñamal ÎÉlií*) are those conducts which are in line with the primordial human nature (*fiírah*). Islam holds the belief that human beings are born with good character (*fiírah*) that disdains from immorality and instils morality,¹¹ thus good morals are equivalent to human nature.¹² When the Prophet (S.A.W) was asked how to determine the moral quality of human conducts, particularly, how to know which human conduct is right and which one is vice, he replied: “righteousness (*al-birr*) is a kind of human disposition (*husnul khuluq*) and vice (*ithm*) is what rankles in your heart and you disapprove that people should come to know of it.”¹³ In this understanding, as man's nature is good, not evil in the view of Islam, Islam holds that a person will not feel comfortable to do things which are not in line with human nature such as stilling, lying and corruption.

Therefore, actions which are in accordance with the primordial character of man, such as equality, integrity, telling the truth, and etc., are known as *ÎÉliíÉt* (proper), while human conducts which are not in accordance with human nature, such as discrimination, envy, *akhlÉq*

selfishness, and etc., are categorized as *sayyi* "Ét (improper). In this understanding, (ethics) is equated with human nature (*fiġrah*), unless the human nature is corrupted.

Second, in chapter 78 verse no. 4, the Qur'an equates ethics and religion,¹⁴ while in chapter 30 verse no. 30, the Qur'an, likens human nature (*fiġrah*) to religion (*din*);¹⁵ as such, religion and ethics are part of the human primordial disposition (*fiġrah*).¹⁶ In Islam, having good morality is seen as a reflection of religious faith, while lack of good morality is a sign of weak religious faith; hence, proper personality is a rudimentary part of faith in Islam. The Prophet (s.a.w) said: "the best among you are those who have the best manners and character."¹⁷

Third, the Qur'anic account of human character consists of two dimensions of the human persona; the first dimension includes those positive attributes of man, such as *al-bayan* (intellectual discourse),¹⁸ *al-ġlm* (knowledge and understanding),¹⁹ *al-taqwim al-ġasan* (natural disposition)²⁰ and *al-nazar and al-itibar* (reflective power),²¹ and the Quran associates these attributes with the human nature (*fiġrah*). The second dimension is the negative behaviours of man such as *dġa ġif* and *al-ya ġus* (weak and easy give up),²² *ġalu ġand ġanu* " (selfish and egoist)²³ „*ajul and qatur* (haste and niggard),²⁴ *zalum and ġahul* (forgetful and injustice)²⁵ and *ġadal and ġalu ġa* (argumentative and impatient).²⁶ According to the Quran, positive attributes of human persona are part of the human disposition which is given to man by Allah (s.w.t), while the negative behaviours are attributed to the human desires which man develops in the subsequent ages of his life.

Fourth, in Islam *akhġaq* (ethics) is understood as a disposition which is both internal as well as external; ethics is not just a personal affair but it is also interpersonal as well as social matter. On one hand, Islamic ethics enjoins *takiyah al-naġs* (self-purification), which is continuous process of intellectual and spiritual enhancement of human psyche. While on the other, Islam ethics calls the individual to improve his or her relations with other members of the community, and other creatures of Allah (s.w.t) in general. In this respect, the personality of a Muslim should make him a well- liked and respected person. A person is only well- liked and respected if he behaves well, is polite and gracious, respectful of and considerate to others. Thus, a Muslim is advised, among others, to be friendly, forgiving, compassionate, generous and helpful, and also to be inclined towards chivalry and gallantry, to give rather than to take, to sacrifice rather than to grab, to make way for

others" need, to say kind motivating words, to be humane to one and all.

6.2. The Scope and Foundations of Ethics

The primary subjects of Muslim ethics comprise the following:

- The good for man, i.e., virtues and happiness of the soul
- The three faculties of the soul and their effects on character
- The theory of self-control or the refinement of character through knowledge, discipline and association with people, so that the soul may become free from vices, attaining human perfection and complete happiness

6.3. Islamic ethics: Source and Origin

In Islam, while the Qur'an lays the foundation of ethical concepts and standards, the *sunnah* (way of life) of the Prophet (*s.a.w*) contains the actual practices of such concepts. For instant, in chapter 68 of the Qur'an, verse 4, the Qur'an states that: "You (Prophet Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character". When Aishah (*r.a*), the spouse of the Prophet (*s.a.w*), was asked about the personality (character) of the Prophet (*s.a.w*), she replied: "it was a reflection of the Noble Quran".²⁷ As ethical concepts taught by the Quran are embodied in the way of life of the Prophet (*s.a.w*), both the Qur'an and *sunnah* are the source of the Islamic ethics. Various Qur'anic verses and number of Prophetic narrations provide a code of ethics, which covers the dimensions of human behaviour, some of which are the followings.

To begin with, according to the Qur'an, belief in Allah (*s.w.t*), humility, better communications and continuation of good deeds are the foundations of good morals. The Qur'an states that the best person is the person who upholds these moral foundations and invites others to practice these values.

"Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to Allah, does good, and follows the way of Abraham the true in Faith? For Allah did take Abraham for a friend."[The Qur'an, 4:125]

"Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, I am of those who bow in Islam"?
[The Qur'an 41:33]

Furthermore, the Qur'an associates good morality with fair and

compassionate behaviour towards parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours, while arrogance and vainglory have no place in the Islamic morality.

“Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good- to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess: For Allah loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious.”[The Qur'an, 4:36]

Similarly, the Qur'an prescribes the behaviour of being truthful in speech and actions. Truthful actions and sincerity illuminates the heart and improves the conditions of the mind, which eventually enhances the person's outlook and worldview.

“O ye who believe, fear Allah, and (always) say a word directed to the Right, that He may make your conduct whole and sound and forgive you your sins: He that obeys Allah and His Messenger, has already attained the highest achievement”. [The Qur'an, 33:70-71]

In another chapter, the Qur'an prescribes the moral duty of authenticating received reports and narrations. The intellectual attitude of classification and scrutiny of given information is part of the moral duty of every man and women.

“O you who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done.”[The Qur'an 49:6]

The Qur'an requires Muslims to refrain from cheating, misuse and betrayal (*yaghlul*) of trusts, as these inappropriate conducts would eventually lead to injustice and distortion of rights.

“If any person is so false, He shall, on the Day of Judgment, restore what he misappropriated; then shall every soul receive its due,- whatever it earned,- and none shall be dealt with unjustly.” [The Qur'an, 3:161]

With regards to trust, the Qur'an states that man and woman need to uphold trusts and responsibilities (*amanah*) that are bestowed upon them. According to the Qur'an, those in a position of trust including

company managers, political leaders, decision makers, householders (husband and wife), and etc., are required to uphold and discharge their duties in the best possible ways.

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

In addition, making decisions and judgments on given issue, based on doubts (*shakk*) and speculations (*zann*) is morally wrong and unacceptable in the Qur'an. The Qur'an teaches that unfounded information cannot be the basis of claiming the truth (*haqq*). Truth claim must be established beyond reasonable doubts.

“But most of them follow nothing but fancy: truly fancy can be of no avail against truth. Verily Allah is well aware of all that they do.” [The Qur'an 11:36]

In the Qur'an, abetting or helping transgression is tantamount of doing it; therefore, the act of supporting or inclining towards immorality is prohibited. Thus, the Qur'an teaches its adherents not only to refrain from unethical conduct but also to disassociate themselves from those immoral conducts.

“And incline not to those who do wrong, or the Fire will seize you; and ye have no protectors other than Allah, nor shall ye be helped.”[The Qur'an 12:113]

According to the Qur'an, corruption (*fasad*), which basically means misappropriate and mishandling, leads to destruction of life; hence, the Qur'an commands Muslims to avoid *fasad*, instead it calls them to do *ihsan* (doing good or better). [The Qur'an 4:58]

“Do no mischief on the earth, after it hath been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the Mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good.” [The Qur'an, 7:56]

The Qur'an promotes the moral behaviour of kindness, generosity, self-discipline and the culture of forgiving.

“Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men; for Allah loves those

who do good."[The Qur'an, 3:134]

6.4. Ethics in the Prophetic Traditions

The Prophet (s.a.w) mentions that the aim of his mission (*bi,, thah*) is to complete the good morals. For the Prophet (s.a.w) was sent to upgrade and inculcate better moral values taught by all prophets, religion of Islam aims to uphold and perfect good universal values of human conducts. As such, the entire religion of Islam aims to serve good morality. The Prophet (s.a.w) said: "I have been sent only for the purpose of perfecting good morals."²⁸

Furthermore, the Prophet (s.a.w) was asked who are those whom Allah (s.w.t) loves the most? The Prophet (s.a.w) replied: "those who possess good morals."²⁹ On another note, the Prophet (s.a.w), taught his companions to avoid indecency and immoral conducts, and stated that: "the best amongst you are those who are the owners of the best morality"³⁰ In another occasion, the Prophet (s.a.w) stated the defining attributes of the Muslim character. He (s.a.w) said: "A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands."³¹ Al-Qurtubi quotes in his exegesis the Prophet (s.a.w),³² saying: "you cannot afford to win the hearts of people through your wealth, but you can win their hearts with smiling face and good morals". In other words, the real property that man owns and can share with and perhaps extend to others is the good character. As reported by Muslim, the Prophet (s.a.w) said: "in the eye of Allah (s.w.t), the worst amongst people in rank on the Day of Resurrection is one whom people abandon in order to avoid his indecency."³³ Generally speaking, ordinary people turn to avoid and abandon those indecent individuals, while those decent individuals are beloved by all. These are some of the Qur'anic verses and Prophetic statements, which served as the foundations and millstones of Islamic ethics *khalif* (trustee), *ta 'mir* (improvement) and *musakhar* (steward), man, has an ethical duty to constantly upgrade the efficiency and the quality of life. Based on this understanding, human conducts are ethical only when they (conducts) contribute to the improvement of life, and in line with divine teachings of Allah (s.w.t). This makes Islamic ethical system divine, transcendental, universal, and principle guided. As such, among the features that make Islamic ethics unique, are the followings;³⁴

First, Islamic ethics is transcendental; this is so, because the determination of what is ethical and what is not or what is proper and

what is improper, all comes from Allah (s.w.t). In Islam, the source of morality transcends human desires and culture. It is a divine code which descended from the divine realms. Legislation of moral conducts or otherwise, depends on the divine scripture (*al-wahy al-Ilahiyi*) which transcends the limits (changes) of time and culture. This make Islamic ethics vary from conventional ethics in which ethical conducts are characterized as bad or good based on their utilitarian outcome and gains.

Second, in the Islamic ethical system, man's nature is not evil nor graceless, but good (*fitrah*). Man is born with good natural disposition; evil traits are acquired and additional to the human nature. Upon birth, man is innocent and his nature is not ungracious which requires redemption or baptism to wash his original sin; every person begins his life ethically sane and sound, not weighed down by any original sin. In fact, at birth man is already above the zero point in that he has the revelation and his rational equipment ready for use, as well as a world all too ready to receive his ethical deed.³⁵ In this understanding, man and the world are either positively good or neutral, but not evil. In due time, this good character might become obscured by envy, hate, ego, jealousy, utilitarian and prejudice.

Third, as a universal code of conduct, Islamic moral standards teach universal justice and human equality. First of all, ethical propositions do reflect universal moral truths regardless of culture, race, religion, nationality, or any other distinguishing feature; thus moral relativism has no place in Islam. Second, human beings are equal and there is no favouritism of any ethnic groups over another; no individual is closer or nearer to Allah (s.w.t) except through good deeds. As such, discrimination and division of mankind into good or bad, intelligent and less intelligent, privileged or otherwise, based on ethnicity and kinship, have no place in the Islamic ethical system. Moral quality (*taqwa*) and educational qualifications (*ilm*) are what Islamic ethics: Scope and principles

Islamic ethics is founded on the worldview that man is trustee and holds responsibility of being vicegerent (*khalif*). In this understanding man existed as a result of the divine-plan of Allah (s.w.t), based on which man is delegated to manage and improve live on earth (*ta' mir*) according to the divine laws (*wahy*) of Allah (s.w.t).³⁶ To do so, the Quran, mentions that Allah (s.w.t) has empowered man with the qualities of intellect, knowledge, freewill and guidance, which raise man into a unique position above other creatures of Allah (s.w.t). While the

Qur'anic term *khalif* signifies commissioned for a duty and responsibility, the concept of *ta' mir* means constant improvement of life. As a *khalif* (vicegerent) whose duty is *ta' mir* (improvement of life), man is inaugurated to be the steward and guardian (*musakhar*), who will manage human and natural resources, to improve life and make earth inhabitable place.

In this conception, tribalism is replaced with *ummatism*, while ethno-centrism is replaced with universalism. Concepts like Cast System of Hinduism, Original Sin of Christianity and Chosen Community of Judaism have no place in the Islamic ethics. In this understanding, regardless of race, skin color, language, region, age and social class, man and woman are good only when they command good and prohibit evil (*al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy an al-munkar*).³⁷

Fourth, human conducts are judged to be ethical or otherwise, depending on the intention of the individual and in accordance with the divine texts (*nusus al-shari'ah*). Human conduct is considered morally good (*amal salih*) by fulfilling two conditions. First, the conduct must be done with good motives (*niyyah hasanah*). Second, must be in accordance with the norms of the *shari'ah*. In this case, both the motive and means (way) of conduct must be good. Good intentions cannot turn immoral actions into good, while good outcomes cannot justify the morality of immoral means; as such, Islamic ethical system is neither consequential nor utilitarian.³⁸ Thus, a person's behavior can be wrong even if it results in the best possible outcomes. For instant, stilling or roping the wealthy of others to feed needy people is immoral. The reason is because, though feeding needy people is good, however, stilling is immoral in itself and nothing can justify it. Similarly, an act can be righteous even if it results in a negative outcome. For instant, to defend your wealth and family is morally good even if that results your death.

Fifth, Islam grants to all, the right of enjoying their natural rights such as freedom and liberty, but "not on the expenses of accountability and justice".³⁹ In this norm, it is possible to evaluate the individual's behavior based on the issues of accountability and public interest, and characterize his or her behavior as an immoral, even though such characterization might limit the liberty of the individual. Individuals are free to speak of their mind and act according to their freewill, however, their freedom and liberty ends where the rights of others begin. For instance, nudists might defend nudism based on the norms of the

individual's freedom and liberty; however in the Islamic moral system, nudism is unethical and would remain immoral, simply because it contradicts with the moral principles of public decency (the concept of *awrah*). In this respect, apart from the Qur'an and *sunnah* which commands man and woman to cover their *awrah* (modesty), nudism violates also the rights of public decency and public order, therefore, it is immoral.

Sixth, Islam offers "an open system approach to ethics, not a self-oriented system"⁴⁰ As individual interest and personal satisfaction are very much related to the public well-fare and collective interest, egoism has no place in the Islamic moral system. The entire human race is considered as one entity; therefore, the interest of each and every one of this entity matters. The Prophet (s.a.w) states that: "He has not affirmed faith in me (i.e. he is not a true follower) who eats to his satisfaction and sleeps comfortably at night while his neighbour goes hungry and he is aware of it." This and other narrations, make Islamic ethics to transcend ego and personal gains. Islamic ethics is not just a personal affair, but it is also a social matter; it aims to serve the needs of both the individual and the society, as it aims to take everyone's right into account.

Seven, in the Islamic ethical system decisions that benefit the majority or minority are not necessarily ethical in themselves.⁴¹ In the Islamic conception, ethics is not a number game; therefore, Islam rejects the utilitarian contention that says, moral ethics is whatever brings the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people. For instance, regardless of the number (percentage) of the people who approves corruption and bribery, both corruption and bribery are immoral, and would remain unethical in Islam. Similarly, despite the number of people who would support or vote for same-sex marriage, lesbianism and gays, these conducts are unacceptable and immoral in the view of Islam. Islamic ethics is characterized by principles and norms, not by numbers and hedonism.

Eight, it is true that in Islam, ethical values aim to bring human interest (*jalb al-maslahah*) and to prevent hardship (*dar "al-mafsadah*); however, this cannot be equated with ethical utilitarianism. This is because, unlike utilitarian theory of ethics where moral conducts are evaluated based on their utilitarian outcome, not principles or motives, in Islam the concepts of *jalb al-manfa "ah* (human interest) and *dar "al-mafsadah* (to prevent hardship) is principle-guided; permissibility of means (*wasilah*) to serve human interest and (what) type of interest are

required. First, with regards to the permissibility of means (*wasilah*), the actions that are set to maximize the human interest (*manfa'ah*) are required to be permissible (*mubah*). Second, Muslim jurists (*fuqaha*) divided human interest (*masalah*), into three portions; namely, accredited interest (*masalah mu'tabarah*),⁴² discredited interest (*masalah mulghah*)⁴³ and unrestricted interest (*masalah mursalah*). In this regard, two conditions are needed in order the action to be ethical. (1), human conducts have to be in accordance with the *shari'ah* rules. (2), the human conducts which are set to achieve (or maximize) the accredited and unrestricted interests are moral. As such, in Islam, interest (*manfa'ah*) in itself is not a criterion to approve or disapprove the action, but the rules and the type of interest are important. Therefore, Islamic ethical system understands the role of utilitarian motivations in the human behaviour, however, it approves only if the interest (*manfa'ah*) is approved (*manutah*) by the *shari'ah*. Hence, while the outcome of the action alone is not enough to justify the means, and means alone cannot justify the outcome, both the outcome and the means are required to be in accordance with the moral norms and the rules of the *shari'ah*.

7. Results and Findings

Islam offers an ethical system which is unique. In Islam, ethics and religion are rooted to primordial human nature which is innocent and good unless is corrupted. Similarly, ethics, religion and law (*fiqh*) are complementary and do not contradict to each other. In this case, what is morally wrong is also illegal, and the law permits only what is moral. Similarly, in Islam both morality and law are derived from religious sources and religious teachings are practiced through morality and law. Second, Islamic ethical system is unique, because its value-judgments transcend all worldly gains and relativism interpretations. Transcendentalism, universalism and normative character are among building blocks of Islamic ethics.

8. References

- ¹. A.S.Hornby, *Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 45.
- ². Abdullah Hassan Zaroug, Ethics from an Islamic Perspective: Basic Issues. *The America Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 1999, Vol.16.
- ³. Abdullah, Yusuf, Ali, *the Holy Qur'an: Text, translation and commentary* (Brentwood, Maryland, U.S.A: Amana Corporation, 1989), 17.
- ⁴. Abi Abdullahi al-Qurtubiyi, *al-Jami' li Ahkam al- Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutubal-Ilmiyyah), 89.
- ⁵. Ahmad b. Muhamad Ibn Maskawayhi, *Tahzib al- Akhlaq Watadhir al- Araq*, (Beirut: Maktabat al- Thaqaiah al-Diniyyah, 2011), 10.
- ⁶. Ibn Ashur, Muhamad al-Tahir, *Maqasid al-Shari'ah al-Islamiyyah* (Al-Basa, ir Lil Intaj al-Ilmiyyi, 1st ed., 1998), 678.
- ⁷. Kamar Oniah Kamaruzaman, *Understanding Islam: Contemporary Discourse* (Saba Islamic Media, 2007), 34.
- ⁸. Manuel Velasquez, Claire Andre, Thomas Shanks, S.J., and Michael J. Meyer, *what is ethics*, available: http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/wh_atisethics.html
- ⁹. Rafik Issa Beekun, *Islamic Business Ethics*, International Institute of Islamic thought (Virginia, USA , 1997), 908.
- ¹⁰. Sayed Sikandar Shah Haneef, *Ethics and Fiqh for everyday life: an Islamic outline* (Research Centre, IIUM, 2005), 89.
- ¹¹. Velasquez, Manuel G., *Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1982), 67.
- ¹². William Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics* (Methuen & Co Ltd, 3rd ed. 1971), 209.
- ¹³. *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, entry: *the Natural Law Tradition in Ethics*, available at: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/natural-law-ethics>.

14. CHARLES HARTSHORNE, *Reality as Social Process* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953), 107.
15. RODERICK FIRTH and RICHARD BRANDT, *Discussion: The Definition of an "Ideal Observer" Theory in Ethics, Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 15 (1955)
16. TAMARA DEMBO, *A Theoretical and Experimental Inquiry into Concrete Values and Value Systems*, in *Perspectives in Psychological Theory*, eds. Bernard Kaplan and Seymour Wapner (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1960), 78-114.
 17. CHARLES REYNOLDS, *A Proposal for Understanding the Place of Reason in Christian Ethics*, *The Journal of Religion* 50 (1970): especially 157-58
 18. *Freedom and Reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), II. 6.4, footnote i.
 19. RODERICK FIRTH, *Ethical Absolutism and the Ideal Observer*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 12 (1952).
20. Bedau, H. A., *Justice and classical utilitarianism*, in C.J. Friedrich and J.W. Chapman (eds.), *Justice*. (New York: Atherton Press, 1963), 284–305.
21. Williams, B., *A critique of utilitarianism*, in J. J. C. Smart, B. Williams *Utilitarianism for and Against* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 77–150.
22. Walzer, M., *Spheres of Justice. A Defence of Pluralism and Equality*. (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 90.
23. Trapp, R.W., *'Utilitarianism Incorporating Justice' – A Decentralised Model of Ethical Decision Making*. *Erkenntnis* 32 (1990), 341–381.
24. Trapp, R.W., *"Nicht-klassischer" Utilitarismus. Eine Theorie der Gerechtigkeit* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1988), 120.

25. Stone, C. D., *Earth and Other Ethics. The Case for Moral Pluralism.*(New York: Harper & AmpRow, 1987), 12-18.
26. Slote, M. A., The morality of wealth, in W. Aiken, H. La Follette (eds.), *World Hunger and Moral Obligation.* Englewood Cliffs, (N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 124–147.
27. Schmidt, V. H., Bounded justice. *Social Science Information* 33 (1994), 305–333.
28. Rescher, N., *Distributive Justice. A Constructive Critique of the Utilitarian Theory of Distribution* (Indianapolis/New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966), 135.
29. Miller, D., *Distributive Justice: What the People Think.* *Ethics* 102 (1992), 555–593.
30. Leopold, A., *The Land Ethic*, in A. Leopold (ed.), *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), 201–226.
31. Kuhse, H., *Voluntary Euthanasia in the Netherlands and Slippery Slopes.* *Bioethics News* 11(4) (1992), 1–7.
32. Keown, J., *Euthanasia in the Netherlands: sliding down the slippery slope?* In J. Keown (ed.), *Euthanasia Examined. Ethical, Clinical and Legal Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 261–296.
33. Kant, I., *Über den Gemeinspruch: Das Mag in der Theorie Richtig Sein, Taugt Aber Nicht für die Praxis*, in *Kants Werke, Akademie-Ausgabe* (Berlin: Reimer, 1923), 273–314.
34. Elster, J., *Local Justice. How Institutions Allocate Resources and Necessary Burdens* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 11.
35. Ehrenfeld, D., *The Arrogance of Humanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 101.

- ³⁶. Edgeworth, F.Y., *Mathematical psychics*. (London: Kegan Paul, 1881), 230.
- ³⁷. Birnbacher, D., *Tun und Unterlassen* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995), 12.
- ³⁸. Callicott, J.B., The conceptual foundations of the Land Ethic, in J.B. Callicott (ed.), *A companion to A Sand County Almanac. Interpretative and critical essays*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 186–217.
- ³⁹. Birnbacher, D., *Tun und Unterlassen*. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995.
- ⁴⁰. Callicott, J.B., The conceptual foundations of the Land Ethic, in J.B. Callicott (ed.), *A companion to A Sand County Almanac. Interpretative and critical essays*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 186–217.
- ⁴¹. Kuhse, H., Voluntary Euthanasia in the Netherlands and Slippery Slopes. *Bioethics News* 11(4) (1992), 1–7.
- ⁴². Slote, M. A., The morality of wealth, in W. Aiken, H. La Follette (eds.), *World Hunger and Moral Obligation*. Englewood Cliffs (N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 124–147.
- ⁴³. Bedau, H. A., Justice and classical utilitarianism, in C.J. Friedrich and J.W. Chapman (eds.), *Justice*. (New York: Atherton Press, 1963), 284–305.

* * * * *