

iEpistemology e-Newsletter

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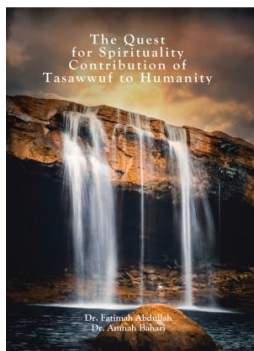
This bimonthly newsletter presents the most recent developments in the fields of Islamic epistemology and educational curriculum reform summarized from books, journals, websites, interviews, and academic proceedings (conferences, seminars, and workshops). We also accept original contributions of less than 500 words.

The Quest for Spirituality: Contribution of *Tasawwuf* to Humanity

By Fatimah Binti Abdullah, Amnah Bahari

Abstract

Tasawwuf is the science of the soul concerning self-knowledge and the inner dimensions of the human being to mould human personality or character. *Tasawwuf* is regarded as a body of knowledge that deals with Islam's inner dimension. Islam as a way of life and worldview offers its followers insights to treat the malaise of the soul in holistic, cognitive, rational and psycho-physiological ways. It is generally acknowledged that spiritual, cognitive therapy can significantly impact the treatment of emotional and spiritual disorders.



Tasawwuf literature provides integrated approaches to managing emotions. Most early Muslim scholars such as al-Ghazali al-Muhasibi and al-Balkhi were Islamic psychologists or Sufis who did their best to invigorate their disciples and refine their character spiritually. The approach of Sufi ethics or *tasawwuf* with its self-introspection underpins individual and societal well-being and mental health and conditions the ummah's development and prosperity. ❖

The Role of Muslim Professionals in Reducing Poverty and Stimulating Economic Prosperity in Trying Times - 1

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SUMMARY

Muslim professionals have the role of clarifying concepts and interpreting economic information so that the Muslim community can understand and change its economic behavior. They must clarify the difference between the 'real economy' and the 'virtual economy'. They also must be role models of economic behavior that ensures community prosperity so that the community can learn from them.



The 2 Main Quranic Concepts for Poverty: فقر و مسكنة

The Quran has used two terms: *faqir* and *miskin* with interchangeable meanings to non-scholars but scholars have made attempts to explain the difference between them with no unanimity. In general, *faqir* has nothing (absolute poverty) whereas *miskin* has something but it does not cover or satisfy his or her needs (relative poverty). A person with a lot of material property may feel *miskin* if he has no inner satisfaction قناعة which is a psychological and not an economic problem. Both *faqir* and *miskin* are considered poor and deserve being given from zakat.

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ [التوبة: 60].

The Muslim community cannot allow any members to fall into poverty permanently. Poverty should be a temporary status that is quickly relieved by the extended family, the community and zakat.

Causes of Poverty

Poverty is associated with civilization and urbanization. Small rural communities were historically self-reliant as communities and individuals and because of the community self-help nobody was left in poverty. Pre-

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colonial African villages had no beggars. The Buganda language has no word for a beggar and borrows the Arabic with corruption as 'masiikiin'. Break-up of the family (both nuclear and extended) as well as the community will throw individuals into poverty. Intact families and communities can protect the widows, the orphans, the handicapped and the mentally ill from poverty. Violence such as wars and crimes can throw individuals into the trap of poverty. Refugees and displaced persons live in artificial poverty due to wars over resources by national and international powers. Artificial poverty is caused by exploitation and corruption (national and international) and not lack of resources. Nigeria has enough resources for the present population and double or triple that with good management and no extra technological or foreign loans. ❖

RUM(I), The Ottomans and Turki in Malay Cultural and Journalistic Consciousness

In Search of Social Order: Organized Modernity in the Thought of Hasan Al-Banna and Mustafa Kamal Atatürk

International Conference on Muslim Minorities: Realities, Challenges, and Future Opportunities



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