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ORIGIN

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WEAVING WITH PURPOSE: DAHLIA MOTIF

By Kader AYDIN

The Dahlia (a flower commonly known as the “Star Flower” for its star-shaped appearance) the emblem that represents our journal may seem like just an aesthetic element at first glance, but it carries deep meaning for us.

This motif, frequently used in rug weaving in Anatolia in the past, symbolizes productivity. Women weaving rugs were not merely creating something to cover the floor; they were additionally producing a work of art. Every pattern, every detail conveyed a distinct meaning: some motifs were thought to bestow good fortune, while others were believed to provide protection against wild animals or evil spirits.

In this same spirit, we have woven our journal with the Dahlia. As in our first issue, we aim to continue our productivity in the forthcoming ones, drawing inspiration from our culture and heritage while writing and offering it back to you as a source of motivation.

ORIGIN

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Courtesy of Prof. Dr. Şaban Ali Düzgün, Ankara University (Bukhara)

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CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITORS

Every idea requires a point of origin. Every pursuit begins from a "source." With this in mind, we are pleased to present the first issue of Origin, prepared through the collective efforts of students and faculty members within our university.

Origin is not merely a magazine; it aims to serve as a platform that encourages free thought, interdisciplinary curiosity, and academic creativity. In this regard, our journal offers a rich spectrum of topics—from the influence of religion on psychological resilience and our perception of time, to the roots of theological concepts, mythological symbols, artistic expressions of collective memory, and the process through which Turks embraced Islam.

In this inaugural issue, alongside original contributions written by undergraduate students, we also feature articles from two esteemed professors and an interview with another distinguished scholar. Thus, Origin becomes not only the voice of young writers, but also a reflection of academic mentorship, intergenerational intellectual dialogue, and scholarly continuity.

This issue gives special attention to Bukhara—an eminent center in the history of Islamic thought. Bukhara is more than a city; it is a legacy, a memory, and an intellectual lineage explored in two of our articles. The photograph of Bukhara on our cover symbolizes our respect for this scholarly heritage and our deliberate emphasis on it within this issue. Although Bukhara is not the main theme of the journal, we found it meaningful and appropriate to feature such a locus of learning on our cover.

As part of our visual identity, the Dahlia motif used on the cover and in the logo was a conscious choice. Introduced with this first issue and intended to continue in future editions, the motif embodies both a deep cultural memory and an aesthetic simplicity. A brief explanation of the motif can be found in the related section of the journal.

Naming the journal Origin was no coincidence. The most fundamental questions that nurture thought are often those directed toward beginnings:
What do we think? Where do we begin? Whose legacy do we follow, and which understanding do we pursue?

We believe that a university is not merely a place where knowledge is transmitted, but a space where it is continually produced, questioned, and shared. This journal is a product of that intellectual climate—and, at the same time, an invitation: to write, to think, to share, and to contribute.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all contributing students; to Professor Nahide Bozkurt for her valuable article; to Professor Şaban Ali Düzgün, whose article and the photograph of Bukhara featured on our cover have enriched this issue both intellectually and aesthetically; to Professor Halis Albayrak for sharing his insights in our interview; and to our Dean, Professor İrfan Aycan, for honoring our journal with his gracious foreword. We sincerely hope that this beginning will pave the way for greater ideas and more refined scholarly endeavors.

With best regards,

FOREWORD BY THE DEAN

Dear Students and Esteemed Colleagues,

Prepared with great care and dedication by the students of the English Theology Program at Ankara University Faculty of Divinity, Origin represents an important step that reflects our faculty's spirit of intellectual productivity and innovation. With this inaugural issue, Origin takes its first step toward becoming a window into the world of ideas of our young scholars.

This journal not only reveals our students' intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm for research, and expressive strength, but also paves ways for future academics, researchers, and thinkers.

We live in an age where the boundaries of knowledge are rapidly shifting. In such a time, one of our faculty's most important goals is to help our students become individuals who not only transmit knowledge but also produce it. Origin stands as a concrete reflection of this aim – a platform where young minds freely express their ideas, bring together interdisciplinary perspectives, and reinterpret the universal dimensions of Islamic thought.

I would like to sincerely congratulate all the students, advisors, and editorial team members who contributed to this remarkable endeavor. I truly believe that Origin will bridge our faculty's scholarly tradition with youthful energy and serve as an inspiration for intellectual creativity.

I wish Origin continued growth, always with the same enthusiasm, rigor, and originality, and I extend my heartfelt congratulations to everyone involved.

Prof. Dr. İrfan AYCAN
Dean

THE PEOPLE TO WHOM THE GATES OF HEAVEN OPEN WIDE

-A Short Phenomenology of Faith-

By Courtesy of Prof.
Dr. Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN

The Qur'an declares that the gates of heaven will open wide for people who show the will to build the common good together, and that the earth will become a fertile home for these people. Abundance, prosperity or fertility refers to the continuity, value and respectability of what is good. The human imagination produced Ishtar in Mesopotamia, Cybele in Anatolia, Venus in Rome as symbols of this fertility. The Qur'an attributes the fertility of heaven and earth to human beings:

“If people believe in Allah, if they are pious towards Allah, if they do not deny Him, the gates of heaven will open wide with abundance. Otherwise, all their efforts will hasten their destruction and they will be clothed in a garment of hunger and fear.”

I would like to draw the reader's attention to the phenomenology of the expressions in this verse:

- Faith in God must be the source of trust and confidence among people.

- To condemn ignoring Allah must entail the condemnation of the racist mentality that marginalizes and ignores others.

- Fear of God must entail fear of violating people's rights.

- A holy book is holy only to the extent that it protects and blesses the lives of people. It must derive its sanctity not only from God but also from the respect of the people whose rights and freedoms it protects.

- The believer who begins everything with the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious, should show the compassion/love he expects from Allah to his fellow human beings; his basic principle of life should be to benefit every living being, every breathing creature. For "Only that which is of benefit to mankind can last forever on earth.” This is the only way for religion to become a religion of life.

In this case, life is testing each one of us on the concrete fact of whether or not we ‘benefit people/humanity’ without expecting anything in return. We are being tested with our existence, with our humanity. The test is understood as being patient with the evil things that happen to us. It is not like that. The test is the struggle to eradicate evil. It is to increase our human sensitivity to prevent those evils from happening to anyone. It is to feel the tragedy that befalls every single human being, regardless of religion, language or race and to share the same pain they subject to. It is to desire much better than what is available for everyone. And to give people confidence and hope. Remember: “Where there is religion there is hope, where there is hope there is religion.”

7/A‘râf, 96.
16/Nahl, 112.
13/Ra‘d, 17.

• Tomb of Imâm Abû Mansûr al-Mâturîdî, Samarqand

WHY DID WE CHOOSE "ORIGIN"?

By Muhammed Furkan KARAKAŞ

ORIGIN

The origin of humanity has been thought of by scholars throughout history. We want to understand the origin of humanity. Firstly, we should look at the meaning of the word origin. In the dictionary, "origin" is a point or place where something begins, arises, or is derived. It's a point of something. The word comes from the Latin "origo," meaning "beginning" or "source." Its meaning varies slightly based on context but generally refers to the starting point of a person, thing, or idea. So, origin defines what comes from where. We firmly believe that the source of humanity is women. Because our sources are our mothers, they raise and teach us and code our culture, religion, and language to our minds. They are nurturing figures who have played a pivotal role in shaping our civilization. Their contributions, often overlooked, are deserving of our utmost respect and admiration.

Therefore, we should look at our women to change something or learn. They are sources of civilisations. And the key to their empowerment and the progress of our society lies in their education. When you comprehend which country has civilization, you should look at their attitude toward women and their freedom of education. We should educate them to raise the country before man. Even today, some people defend the idea that women should not study, but if they do this for religion, they are on the wrong side because Prophet Muhammed (Pbuh) has built a part of a school called "Suffa" in Masjid an- Nabawi. We used to think they were only for men, but according to Nusret Çam, there was a place for women. This source shows that Prophet Muhammed (Pbuh) had seen women as the source of "Ummah" before us. They were the Mothers of Ummah.

In conclusion, if we want to look at the source of civilisation, we can find the mother, who has been the silent architect of these civilizations. We should not forget that and continue to develop our civilisation. The hadith, "Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim." serves as a powerful inspiration, motivating us to continue our quest for knowledge and progress.

For more information, you can look at Nusret Çam article “Medine Mescid-i Nebevi Bünyesindeki Kadınlar Suffesi”

THE PROCESS OF TURKS EMBRACING ISLAM

By Yunus Emre KÖSER

It is generally believed that the Turks encountered Islam during the campaigns of Umayyad Caliphate in Asia. However, they did not embrace Islam as their religion at that time. The main reason was the policies implemented by the Umayyad in the region. An accurate acquaintance with Islam happened during the Abbasid period, especially after the Battle of Talas between the Abbasids and the Chinese. Allow us to take a step back in history to dive into the details.

During the reign of Caliph Umar, the conquest of the Sassanian Empire strategically situated the Islamic state in close proximity to the region of Khorasan. Nonetheless, the local Persian tribes and smaller Turkish principalities rebelled, forcing the Islamic army to withdraw. Subsequently during Caliph Uthman's rule, the governor of Basra initiated a new campaign. Although some conquests were achieved, internal conflicts within the state interrupted progress. Similarly, during Caliph Ali's reign, no conquests occurred due to ongoing unrest.

Following the ascension of the Umayyads to power, the emphasis on jihad, which had been, —central during the era of the Prophet Muhammad and the first four caliphs, —was sidelined. Their primary goal was to bolster the Umayyad state's economy through conquests. As a result, campaigns resumed, and cities located east of the Jeyhun River were conquered. Qutayba bin Muslim was appointed as the governor of Khorasan. Qutayba, though highly skilled, was notorious for his ruthlessness, carrying out massacres and looting in places like Beykent and Talekan. After the caliph's death, Qutayba rebelled against the new caliph but was killed by his own soldiers. A new governor was appointed, but he was also exhibiting merciless behaviour, suppressing revolts with extreme severity, as seen in Jurjan, where he slaughtered the male population.

After 25 to -30 years of stagnation, descendants of Prophet Muhammad's uncle Abbas rose to power and overthrew the Umayyads. The Abbasid caliphate adopted policies entirely contrary to those of the Umayyads. By fostering an atmosphere of tolerance, they reached out to other nations and spread Islam. However, Turks remained distant from Arabs due to their unfavourable experiences under the Umayyad regime. At the same time, Turkish regions were acting independently. The Karluks sought support from the Chinese by-, inviting their forces into the eastern part of Transoxiana. However, instead of helping, the Chinese killed Turkish leaders and took control of the area. In the west, the Abbasids, aware of the Chinese threat, moved to confront them near the Talas River. Both armies fought on the day of the battle, beginning with archery, followed by cavalry clashes. During the initial four days, the Abbasids suffered significant losses, and the Chinese anticipated a victory. On the fifth day, Kao Sien-Chih commanded an attack on the Karluk cavalry, but instead of targeting the Abbasids, the Turkish horsemen turned against the Chinese. Caught by surprise, the Chinese forces were devastated with the support of the Abbasids.

The reasons behind this pivotal event include:

•A secret agreement was made between Abbasid commanders and Turkish leaders the night before the battle. •The Turks' awareness of the true nature of the Chinese, led them to ally with the Abbasids. As a result of this alliance, the Turks became heroes of the battle, and with the diminishing Chinese influence, Islam gained a foothold in Central Asia. However, the majority of the Turks still did not embrace Islam. The actual spread of Islam among the Turks began in the 9th century through their interactions with the Persians. It is noteworthy that, the Turks learned about Islam not from Arabs, but rather from the Persians. This process began with the Karakhanids and continued until the Ottoman era. In conclusion, the process that commenced in the 9th century was completed by the 18th century, during which most Turks adopted Islam as their religion.

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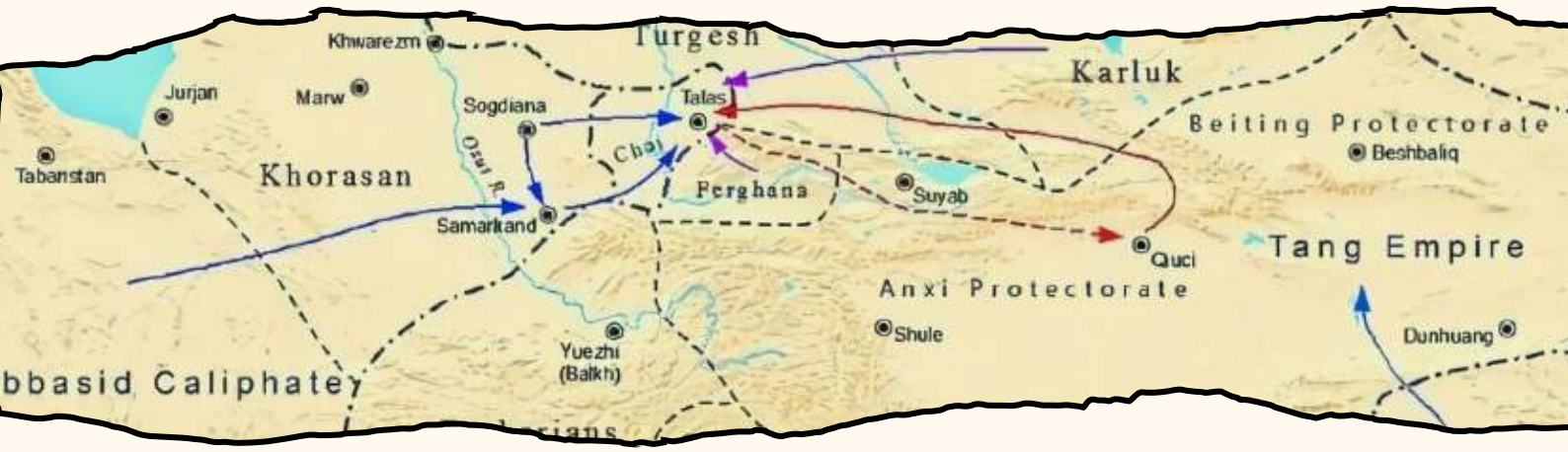


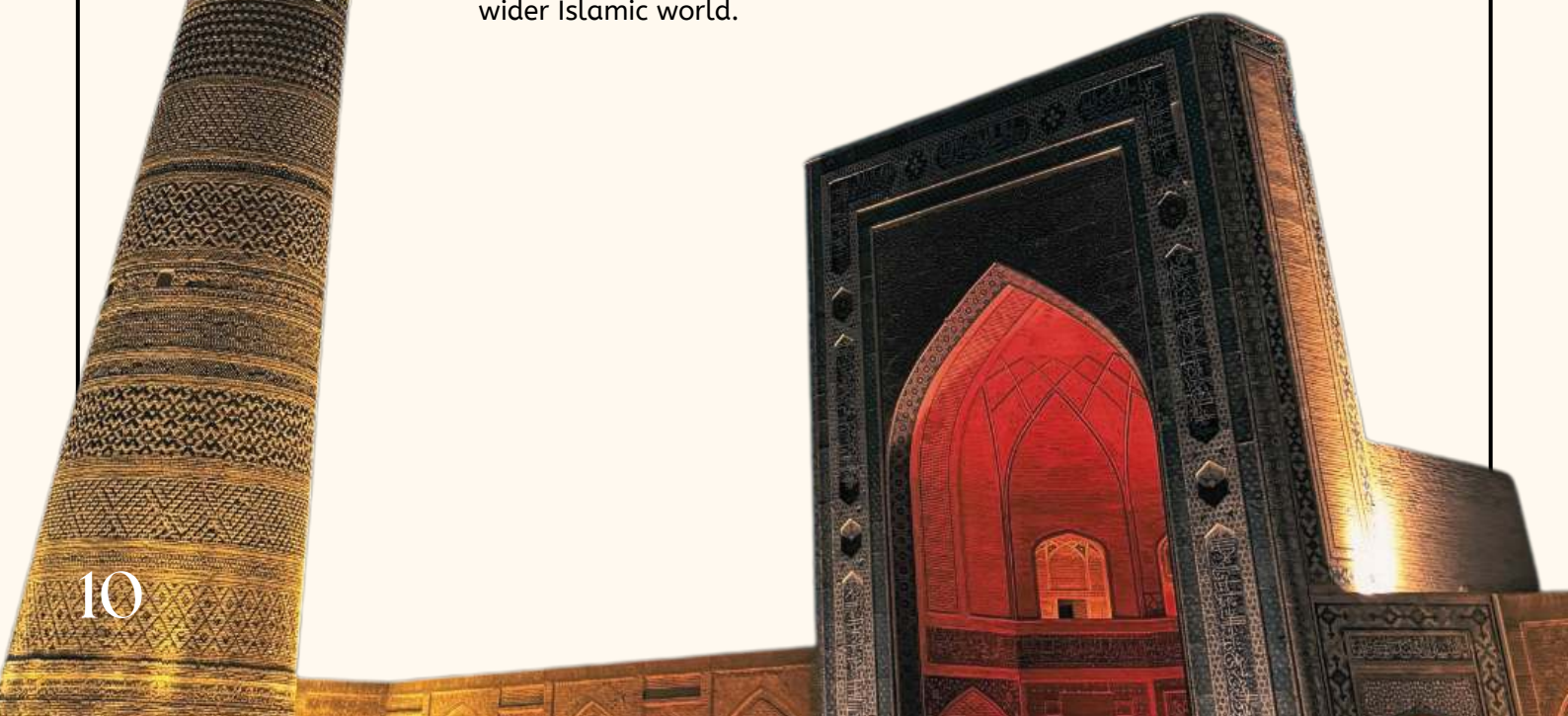
BUKHARA: A LEGACY AT THE HEART OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

By Reyhan Beyza ÇARDAK

Located in the heart of Central Asia, Bukhara represents not only a geographical center but also the spiritual and intellectual core of Islamic civilization. With its deeply rooted history, it has evolved into one of the most esteemed cities in the Islamic world in terms of both knowledge and spirituality. Although it is believed to have been founded by Alp Er Tunga and initially served as a significant center of the Sogdian civilization, Bukhara found its true identity with the emergence of Islam.

In the 8th century, with the arrival of Islamic armies into the Transoxiana region, Bukhara underwent a significant transformation, becoming a hub of science, spirituality, and civilization. During the Abbasid period, building on the legacy established by the Umayyads, the city flourished with distinguished scholars, mosques, madrasahs, and Sufi lodges. During this period, Bukhara was honored with the title 'Qubbat al-Islam' – 'The Dome of Islam' – a designation that became most incredible pride for the city.

Bukhara was home to some of the most influential scholars in Islamic history. Imam al-Bukhari, author of the Sahih al-Bukhari, laid the foundations of hadith sciences here. The renowned Sufi Baha-ud-Din Naqshband, the founder of the Naqshbandi order, also hailed from this city, profoundly influencing the Sufi tradition. Following in his footsteps, figures like Abdul Khaliq Ghijduvani, Arif Riwgari, and Mahmud Anjir Faghnawi became key links in the spiritual chain known as the 'Silsilah al-Aliyya'. These spiritual leaders illuminated not only Bukhara but the wider Islamic world.



Beyond its spiritual heritage, Bukhara is also home to stunning architectural achievements. Constructed in the 10th century during the Samanid dynasty, the Ismail Samani Mausoleum stands out as one of the most elegant representations of early Islamic architecture. This tomb is significant not only for its aesthetic beauty but also for its rich historical and cultural richness. Notable structures such as the Mir-i Arab Madrasah, Kalyan Minaret and Mosque, Fountain/Chashma Ayub Mausoleum, Kosh Madrasah, and Ark Fortress showcase Bukhara's enduring legacy of civilization.

Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Bukhara has preserved its historical identity and remains one of the few cities that have continued this tradition. Amid the chaos of the modern world, it offers a spiritual atmosphere complemented by its historical landmarks. The city persists in serving as both a center of knowledge and a sanctuary of Sufism.

In conclusion, Bukhara is not only a city of the past, but also a source of inspiration for the contemporary Islamic world. Through its intellectual richness , deep spirituality, and remarkable beauty, Bukhara stands as a living symbol of Islamic civilization, perpetuating its ancestral heritage into the future.

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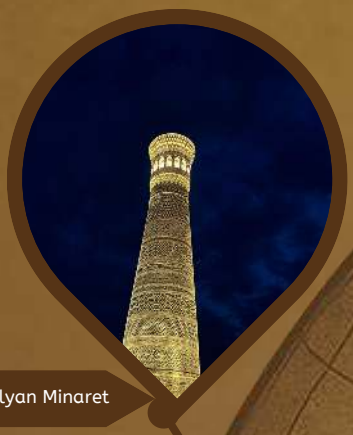

Kalyan Minaret

Kalon Tower

Chor Minor

Kosh Madrasah

UZB

EKISTAN

Fountain Ayub Mausoleum

Ismail Samani Mausoleum

Ark Fortress

Mir-i Arab Madrasah

IMAM BUKHĀRĪ

By Selda ALUÇ

THE PRESERVER OF HADITH: THE LIFE, EDUCATION, AND DEATH OF IMAM BUKHĀRĪ

Imam Bukhārī was born on Friday, the 13th of Shawwal in the year 194 H (20 July 810) in Bukhara. His great-great-grandfather, Bardizbah, was a Zoroastrian; however, his son Mughirah embraced Islam through the influence of the governor of Bukhara, Yaman al-Ju'fi. Consequently, Imam Bukhari was also known as "al-Ju'fī."

There is limited information about his grandfather, Ibrahim. However, it is noteworthy that Imam Bukhārī's father, Ismail, was a pupilof prominent scholars like Malik ibn Anas and Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak. Ismail passed away when Imam Bukhārī was still a child, leaving behind a collection of books to his son. His mother was a pious woman whose prayers were accepted by Allah.

Before the age of ten, Imam Bukhārī started learning hadith under the guidance of esteemed scholars in Bukhara, such as Muhammad ibn Selâm el-Bîkendî (d.225/839) [H1] [H2] and Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Musnadi (d. 229/ 844). When he was about eleven, he rectified some mistakes made by his instructor al-Dakhili, which drew the attention of those around him due to his remarkable intelligence.

At the age of sixteen, he memorized the books of scholars like Ibn al-Mubarak and Waki' ibn al-Jarrah (d.197/812) Then, he went on pilgrimage (Hajj) with his mother and his brother Ahmad. Following the Hajj, he requested his mother's permission to stay in Makkah to further his studies. She agreed and returned with Ahmad. Her sacrifice facilitated the development of a distinguished scholar within the Islamic tradition. Then, Imam Bukhari stayed in Makkah, where he studied hadith from scholars, including Hallad ibn Yahya and Abdullah ibn Zubayr al-Humaydi(d. 219/834).

HIS EXPERTISE IN HADITH AND HIS JUDGMENT:

Imam Bukhārī traveled to many places and collected numerous hadiths. He carried his books with him during these travels. One day, his servant remarked that there was no place to walk in his room. Imam Bukhārī counted all the hadiths he had written and said he had recorded 200,000 hadiths with full chains (isnad). He not only wrote these hadiths but also memorized them. In Baghdad, some scholars subjected him to a test. They mixed the chains and texts of 100 hadiths and asked ten people to read them to him. Imam Bukhārī stated, “I do not know these hadiths like this.” Then, he provided the accurate chain and text for each hadith. The scholars were amazed by his extraordinary memory and vast knowledge.

His teachers, including Muhammad ibn Salam and Abdullah ibn Yusuf al-Tinnisi, requested his assistance in correcting their texts. On one occasion, when Humaydi disagreed with another scholar, he requested the judgment of the eighteen-year-old Imam Bukhari, underscoring the profound trust placed in him.

Imam Bukhārī explained Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) through the hadiths. He did not avoid repeating a hadith if it represented multiple meanings. Due to this reason, his famous book al-Jami‘ al-Sahih is preferred over many other hadith books.

GOOD CHARACTER OPENS DOORS:

Imam Bukhārī was recognized from an early age not only for his exceptional intellect but also for his exemplary character. He once stated: “Allah will question me about many things, but inshaAllah not about backbiting. I never engaged in backbiting, and I hope to meet Allah with a pure tongue.”

Many people were great in knowledge, like Imam Bukhārī, but his strong morals distinguished him and earned him widespread respect. When Imam Bukhārī refrained from accepting a hadith from a narrator, he never labelled him as a liar. He refrained from engaging in backbiting. Instead, he used one of three courteous phrases:
1. Fīhi naẓar – “There is disagreement about him.”
2. Sakata ʿanhu – “The scholars remained silent regarding him.”
3. Munkar al-hadith – “His hadith is not accepted.”

PURE INTENTION BRINGS HONOR TO THE DEED:

It is reported that when Imam Bukhārī was about 16 or 17 years old, he pursued his studies in Makkah with his teacher Ishaq ibn Rahuyah. One day, the teacher expressed the following desire: “I wish someone could collect only the authentic sayings and sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), so people can understand them clearly.”

Imam Bukhārī heard these words and thought deeply for many days. Then, one night, he saw the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in a dream. In this dream, the Prophet was sitting alone in the desert, and Imam Bukhārī was providing comfort by fanning him. The Prophet was pleased. When he woke up, he told his teacher about the dream. His teacher said, “InshaAllah, Allah will choose you for this mission.”

MORE SENSITIVITY BRINGS MORE QUALITY:

On one occasion, Imam Bukhārī visited a narrator to collect a hadith. When he arrived, he saw the man holding his hat as if it contained food, trying to bring his horse into the stable. But the hat was empty. Imam Bukhārī said, “A person who lies to an animal can lie to people, too.” So, he refused to take hadith from him. This incident illustrates Imam Bukhārī’s remarkable caution- he accepted hadiths only from narrators known for their honesty and integrity.

THE DEATH OF IMAM BUKHĀRĪ:

As highlighted throughout our discussion, Imam Bukhārī—one of the most eminent hadith scholars in Islamic history—dedicated his life to collecting only authentic hadiths. In 870, he intended to return to his hometown of Bukhara after many years of travel. However, due to political tensions, he instead moved to a small village called Khartank near Samarkand. Soon after, he passed away there.

His famous book, al Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ, is not only a major hadith collection but also one of the most trusted works in Islamic history. In the Islamic world, after the Qur’an, the greatest attention has been given to al-Bukhārī’s al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ. The meticulous selection of its hadiths, its excellent organization, and the richness of its content have granted it this prestige. Al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ has been recited not only with the intention of gaining divine reward but also with the hope of deliverance from material and spiritual hardships, illnesses, and calamities, as well as with the desire to attain various aspirations. After his death, scholars continued to respect and honor him for his significant contribution to Islamic tradition.

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RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

By Nisa Nur DEMİR

Psychological problems such as trauma, anxiety, emotional distress, can be triggered by various external factors. Sincethe beginning of human history people have faced psychological challenges stemming from individual, societal, or other causes. While these problems continue to develop and increase, coping strategies have also evolved alongside them. Coping strategies differ widely; for example, individuals may rely on personal rituals, relaxation techniques, and, mostimportantly, their religious belief as a coping strategy. Religion has a significant impact on people's mental resilience. Therefore, religion and faith can be considered among the most essential sources for dealing with psychological issues.

First, the reasons for selecting religion as a coping strategy can be discussed. Why do people choose religion and benefit from it? This question has many different answers.
However, the need to believe in something is inherent in human nature. People are born with this disposition, and this feeling becomes more prominent at some point in their lives. The desire to believe in something shapes people'sreligious choices, and in turn, these choices guide how they cope with mental issues. While coping strategies may differ from religion to religion, in general, religion provides a safe and comforting space for individuals dealing with psychological problems.
For example, particularly in Islam, reading the Qur'an, fasting and performing salah give Muslims inner peace. WhenMuslims struggle with psychological problems, they often turn to their religion as a means of relaxation, believing that such issues are temporary and manageable with the help of their faith. Therefore, an individual's orientation toward faith and the communication they establish with the Creator can enable them to position themselves as a being. This relationship with the Creator can provide the individual with confidence and freedom, and as a result, peace. Similarly, in other religions, people have their ways of praying and coping with difficulties.
In general, we can say that religious people tend to be better at coping with psychological problems compared to others.However, there are also particular situations where the opposite may be observed.

Secondly, religion is used as a method for mental health and can carry different meanings for different people. Using religion as acoping strategy can lead to both positive and negative consequences. According to research conducted by experts, religion has a positive impact on people's psychology. However, these studies also show that religion can have some adverse effects on people's mental well-being. On the other hand, it can also be said that the positive effect is more dominant. The positive impact of religion on psychological well-being is still considerable. It will continue to be so if people approach their religion sincerely and in accordance with the essence of their beliefs. As a Muslim, I can personally attest to the positive psychological effects of worship in Islam. The pilgrimage (Hajj) fosters a deep sense of unity and belonging among Muslims, which helps mitigate loneliness and anxiety.

The month of Ramadan, as a whole is a month of peace and blessings for Muslims, and this month, with fasting, prayer, and worship that people do together, can provide a great deal of peace and comfort for people in terms of psychological health.
In this regard, the most important factor in using religion as a coping method is how it is applied. If religion and itsrequirements are approached without understanding, they can cause anxiety and distress. Research says that in some cases, this can happen, but when the essence of religion, especially the essence of Islam, is understood, which gives aperson inner peace and the ability to make sense of life, then religion continues to have a positive effect on psychology. Religion aims to bring peace to its followers while religious beliefs vary across cultures, the ultimate goal remains similar: to provide spiritual support and a sense of meaning in times of difficulty. For religion to serve as a healthy and effective coping strategy, individuals must have a clear understanding of what they believe and why in this way, faith becomes not only a source of strength but also a guide for navigating life's challenges.

Additionally, people's mental resilience is based on different factors, and as mentioned, one of the most significant isreligion—when used consciously. People should also be aware of scientific facts on this subject. Religion and sciencecan support individuals when used in harmony. Although they have different foundations, both contribute to understanding the meaning of life, which is one of the most common concerns behind psychological struggles related to existence and purpose. Therefore, religion and psychology are strongly
interconnected. That's why people should be aware of scientific facts alongside their religion. For example, the importance that Islam attaches to science and learning and the fact that human beings are beings of reason and consciousness, shows that if religion and science are intertwined, it will be reflected in physical and psychological healthin the life of the world. This consciousness and inner serenity will be reflected in the belief and confidence of the Muslims in the afterlife. And, of course, this awareness of the afterlife can also provide people with a sense of security and satisfaction in their worldly lives. Psychological resilience is one of the most essential things for living in peace. Because of that, while using coping strategies for inner problems, religious and scientific methods should be usedcarefully and in harmony. Research shows that religious methods can carry both positive and negative meanings, and having a positive impact on our religion depends on understanding the essence of religion, which brings happiness and peace, particularly in Islam.

In conclusion, from the beginning of human history to the present day, psychological problems and the methods used todeal with them have been evolving. As we mentioned, religion is one of these methods. To benefit positively from religious coping strategies, individuals must choose their path wisely. If not practiced with awareness and sincerity, religion can inadvertently cause additional anxiety or fear. According to various research findings, religious methods as a coping strategy can be very helpful for people's mental well-being in most situations with its essence if they are used correctly, healthily, and consciously, in harmony with scientific facts.

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CATCH THE THREAD OF TIME: FLOW AND PERCEPTION

By Rana KOCABEY

Time plays an essential role in shaping our lives and daily routines, and it can be perceived differently under variousconditions and circumstances. Recently, phrases like "Time is passing so quickly" or "Time never seems to pass" have become common expressions that most of us often use. This varying perception is rooted in time being a deeply subjective and personal experience. By examining the perception of time and related philosophical views, we will try to better understand the nature and speed of time.

First, we can begin by defining the concept of time through the lens of several philosophical perspectives. According to Plato, time is part of the material world and is related to change. For Plato, time is generated by the changes and movements in the material world. Immanuel Kant, on the other hand, argues that time is not an independent entity in the external world but a mental construct – a framework of the human mind. According to Kant, time exists only within human consciousness. Henri Bergson points out that there are two different forms of time: first, objective time (mechanical time) measured by the clock, and the second, perceived time (internal time). Bergson argues that time has not only an objective aspect but also a subjective one. Internal time is shaped by human conscious experiences, memories, and emotions. This time is not something measurable or countable; rather, it is a sensory and mental experience. According to Bergson, time is in a continuous flow, and this flow is more strongly felt in one's subjective experience. Our emotions and memories make us perceive time as a constant process, which shows us that time is an immeasurable experience. These different viewpoints indicate that time should not be conceived solely as a material reality. Time has both a measurable and a felt aspect, and together, these two aspects form our perception of time. The concept of internaltime may help us understand this perception more deeply.

In today's rapidly evolving world, technology plays a significant role in shaping how we perceive time. With the advent of smartphones, social media, and instant communication, we are constantly bombarded with information. This constant flow of stimuli can make time feel even more compressed. Social media platforms, for instance, are designed to capture our attention and keep us engaged, which can lead to time slipping away unnoticed. This effect is especially apparent when we engage in endless scrolling or become trapped in a cycle of digital notifications. The instantaneous nature of the digital world has fundamentallyaltered our relationship with time, often making it feel like it's speeding up as we juggle multiple tasks and distractionssimultaneously. As we navigate through these technological advancements, it's essential to be mindful of how our focus and attention are directed, as they directly influence how we experience the passage of time.

As for the time perception, it is largely connected to attention. When we focus on something, we often don't notice how much time has passed. For example, when we engage in something fun or something we are interested in (like reading a book we love), time appears to pass rapidly. This is known as the "flow state." Flow state is a mental condition in which a person is fully immersed in an activity, so much so that the passage of time goes unnoticed. On the other hand, when our attention is distracted, time seems to slow down. Imagine being in a class that doesn't interest you; if you don't focus, your mind gets caught up in boring thoughts, and time feels like it's standing still. Numerous other factors influence time perception; for example, age also significantly affects how we perceive time. For children, time seems to pass slowly because every new day represents a new experience. However, for older adults, experiences tend to become routine, and time seems to pass quickly.

In conclusion, time, a significant part of our lives, has two aspects: external and internal time. Internal time plays a critical role in shaping how we perceive the flow of time.. Attention is a significant factor in time perception. Connecting this to our current lives, our focus on intense work or academic life could be a reason why time seems to pass so quickly. Moreover, in our technological world, the attention we pay to social media also illustrates this phenomenon quite well.Whatever we pay attention to, we invest our time in it.

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ABOUT GREEK MYTHOLOGY INTRODUCTION

By Uluç Kaan DEMIR

WHAT IS MYTH?

Esteemed readers, I would like to mention Greek mythology in my writing. First, I will explain what “myth”, “logic”, and “mythology” are. Afterward, I intend to discuss the significance of studying mythology and the creation myth.

WHAT IS LOGIC?

According to Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries:
“1-A story from ancient times, especially one told to explain natural events or to describe the early history of a people; this type of story is also called a legend.
2-Something that many people believe but that does not exist or is false. Also known as a fallacy
Word origin: mid-19th century. from modern Latin mythus, via late Latin from Greek muthos.”

WHAT IS MYTHOLOGY?

According to Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries:
“1-Ancient myths in general; the ancient myths of a particular culture, society, etc.
2-Ideas that many people think are true but that do not exist or are false
Word origin: late Middle English: from French mythologie, or via late Latin from Greek muthologia, from muthos ‘myth’ + -logia.”

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDYING MYTHOLOGY

Why is studying mythology significant? There are various answers to this question, but I want to focus on what might happen if we did not learn mythology.

Mythology affects our lives.

Those who are familiar with mythology will recognize its influence immediately, but those who are not may not see it at all. Let me explain this with some examples. For instance, the staff in the emblem of the World Health Organization or the staff in our Ministry of Health, some of the words we use in daily life - such as cereal, furious, Milky Way Galaxy, atlas, and phaeton; some elements and compounds such as ammonia and helium, and examples from sportswear, such as Nike, place direction names, names given to celestial bodies and many more...

"Myth," Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, (Accessed: 26.04.2025). https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/myth?q=Myth
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THE CREATION

In the beginning, there existed only Chaos (the great space). Then, Gaia (Earth) was born from Chaos, followed by Tartarus (the deepest location of the Underworld), and Eros (love). After that, Erebos (the darkness of the Underworld) and Nyx (the dark Night) emerged from Chaos, and Hemera (the Day) and Aether (the Upper Air) were born from Erebos and Nyx. Also, Nyx had some other children, including Geras (Old Age), Hypnos (Sleep), Thanatos (Death), Eris (Discord), and Nemesis (Retribution).

After that, Gaia created a bunch of primordial beings. First, she created Uranus (the Starry Heaven), equal to herself. Second, she created Ourea (the Mountains) and Pontus (the Sea). Then, Gaia and Uranus had many children. Their first children were known as the Titans, twelve mighty immortal beings, six male and six female. Their names were Oceanus (Ocean), Koios (the Intelligence, Wisdom), Kreios (the Constellations and Seasons), Hyperion (the Sun), Iapetos (the Mortality and Human destiny), Thea (the Light), Rhea (the Fertility), Themis (the Justice), Mnemosyne (the Memory), Phoebe (the Moon and Prophecy), Tethys (the Freshwaters), and Cronos (the Time). Their second children were known as the Cyclopes; they were three one-eyed giants, the great artisans, and their names were Arges (Bright), Brontes (Thunder), and Steropes (Lightning). Their third children were known as Hecatonchires, the Hundred-handers, who also had fifty heads, and their names were Kottos, Briareos, and Gyges.

After a period of time, Uranus, while reigning over the Cosmos, feared that his children would someday take their father's throne from him, and he planned to lock his children in the deep caves of the Earth. Gaia could not stop him, and one day, Gaia decided to rescue her children. Gaia spoke to her children: "Children of mine and of an evil father, I wonder whether you would like to do as I say. We could get redress for your father's cruelty. After all, he began it by his ugly behaviour." However, only one child of Gaia, the youngest of the Titans, accepted this task, he was Cronos, and he replied to his mother: "Mother, I would undertake this task and accomplish it-I am not afraid of our unspeakable father. After all, he began it with his ugly behaviour."

Hesiod, Theogony and Works and Days, trans. M. L. West (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), s. 32.
Hesiod, Theogony and Works and Days, s. 32.

Then Gaia gave a sickle forged from adamantine to Cronos. So, they set an ambush for Uranus, and when Uranus came to his wife Gaia with desire for love, their son Cronos appeared suddenly and cut his father's genitals with the sickle, and after this event, some beings were created. From the blood that dropped on the earth, Erinyes (Furies) and the great Giants snake-legged in gleaming armour with long spears in their hands, and the Nymphs known as Mellai were also born. Then the genitals of Uranus were thrown into the sea, and the sea began to foam (Aphros). As a result of this, a being was created, Aphrodite (the goddess of Love). She approached Cythera at first, and then she went to Cyprus. She went ashore in Cyprus after that, known as Cyprus-born and Cytherea.

After Cronos dethroned his father, Uranus, Uranus gave them the surname Titans due to their wrongdoing. However, one day, the Titans will experience the same treatment as they did to their father. From that day on, Cronos reigned over the Cosmos until that day...

To be Continued...

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VIEWS OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS ON GOOD AND EVIL

By Mehmetcan ÜNLÜTÜRK

In Islamic thought, the relationship between moral responsibility, human will, and the omnipotence of Allah has been a subject of deep debate, especially concerning the concepts of "good" and "evil." In this regard, three major theological schools of thought -the Muʿtazila, Maturidi, and Ashʿari schools- have developed differing perspectives. Each of these schools has approached human moral responsibility, the distinction between good and evil, and the relationship of these concepts to Allah's justice from a variety of analytical dimensions.

The Muʿtazila school posits that the concept of good can be discerned through rational principles. According to the Muʿtazila, the designation of "good" is contingent upon its capacity to be evaluated through reason and logic. They maintain that Allah's justice is rooted in the idea that all matters can be comprehended rationally and logically. Within the perspective of Muʿtazila, "good" and "evil" are entirely rational concepts; humans can distinguish between good and evil through reason and moral judgments. The directives issued by Allah are regarded as good because they are recognized as such through reason.

One of the prominent scholars of the Muʿtazila, al-Jubbā'i, stated his rational approach to good and evil, asserting that Allah's will is always directed towards what is good. Al-Jubbā'i defines the concept of "good" as what benefits the servants the most. That is, Allah does what benefits His servants, which constitutes goodness. This view is also held by the scholars of the Basran branch of the Muʿtazila, known as the "Aslah theory."

Imam Māturidi, a distinguished figure within the third generation of the Hanafi sect, acknowledges the relationship between Allah's will and human reason that promotes a mutual balance. Māturidi's approach to good and evil balances reason and revelation. According to the Māturidi school, reason possesses the capacity to distinguish between good and evil; however, this distinction ultimately gains meaning within the boundaries set by revelation. In essence, while reason can make a fundamental distinction between good and evil, what is truly "good" and what is "evil" ultimately depends on revelation. In contrast to the Muʿtazila, the Māturidi school holds that reason cannot independently issue moral judgments. According to Maturidi, the matters commanded by Allah are regarded as "good," yet this goodness can be perceived through the lens of human reason.

The Ashʿari school places significant emphasis on the absolute power of Allah, and this comprehensionalso influences their perspectives on the concepts of "good" and "evil." The Ashʿaris accept that Allah's will is absolute; based on this will, all actions can be classified as either good or evil. According to the Ashʿaris, if Allah commands something as "good," it is regarded as such; conversely; if He forbids something as "evil," it is deemed evil. Consequently, the notion of "good" and "evil" is based on Allah's will, and thus, human reason is incapable of fully grasping these concepts. Every act and command of Allah is absolutely correct, and His justice transcends the limitations of human reasoning. In the Maturidi school, Allah commands good, and goodness has an independent existence, whereas in the Ashʿari school, that which Allah commands as good is both divine and beyond the reach of reason.

In conclusion, the concepts of good and evil in Islamic theology have been shaped by the perspectives of various schools of thought. The Muʿtazila asserts that reason can determine good and evil and establish moral judgments; in contrast, the Maturidi school contends that reason can merely recognize the distinctions between good and evil. The Ashʿari view, which centers on the absolute will of Allah, serves as the foundation of their ethical understanding.

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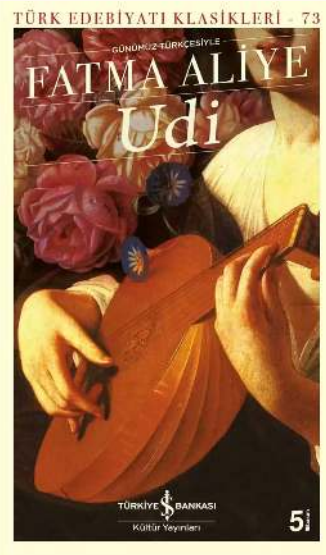
INTRODUCTION OF
Book

By Aliye YILMAZ



Fatma Aliye. Udi. İstanbul: Türkiye İşbankası Kültür Yayınları, 2024. 112 sayfa. ISBN:9786254292668

Udi is an impressive book by Fatma Aliye. It narrates the story of a woman who grew up loving music and explores how this passion influences her life from the perspective of the author.

The main characters of the novel are Bedia, her father Nazmi Bey, her brother Şemi, and her husband, Mail. Bedia is the youngest daughter of Nazmi Bey, and she shares her father's musical talent.

She was raised with special attention by her father; thus, she learns to play the violin and qanun. One day, she discovers an oud and falls in love with it, leading her to abandon the other instruments.

Throughout the novel, Bedia encounters various challenges. She overcomes each of them with the love for her oud. When she leaves her husband behind, even though she feels a deep love, she clung to her oud.
When she loses her brother, she finds solace in her oud.
Furthermore, Bedia's oud enables her to make a living after her brother's death. She takes care of her nephew and her servant by teaching the oud in Istanbul.
"Udi" is a brief yet impressive book that reflects on the life of women during the constitutional period. Moreover, it emphasizes the importance of education and self-reliance for women, particularly in terms of their ability to maintain a comfortable life when they face problems, as Bedia does.

A LETTER TO MY STUDENTS ON THE QUEST FOR MEANING

From Prof. Dr. Nahide BOZKURT

23 August, 2028

A Deepening Affection: Lost in the Universe of Meaning in Theology

When I finished high school, my goal wasn't study theology. As the daughter of a religious scholar and mufti, I believed I had sufficient knowledge about Islam and had thus formed my Islamic weltanschauung! However, as time progressed, when I began studying theology with great interest and love, my perceived paradigm—which I believed I possessed—collapsed, and I found myself immersed in the vast ocean of theology. From the very first days, as I encountered our course content and met our authoritative professors, I realized that theological education held a pool of knowledge that lifetimes couldn't encompass. Being a diligent student who scrupulously followed lectures and took notes also taught me the process of inquiry.

Our professors' dedicated approach and their lenient and patient demeanor in the face of questions compelled me to read and understand more each day.

In the years that followed, encountering fields such as Islamic history, philosophy, exegesis, hadith, law, history of sects, kalam, and many others, each with its unique approaches, enriched my experience. Theology's ability to connect us with so many different disciplines enabled me to question the meaning of life more sagaciously and transformed my perspective on life. I learned that interpretation is a richness but not an absolute. This learning opened dozens of doors that led to a better understanding of human history. I internalized the approach that every historical period has its own ethos and that those periods must be understood within their own historical context.

I came to realize that absolute truth belongs only to Allah, and that we, throughout our lives, are individuals searching for truth. With this awareness, I observed, and continue to observe, the immense value of being lost in the universe of meaning in theology.

How fortunate you, my dear students, are to have earned the honor of being students of A.Ü. Faculty of Theology. With a sense of accountability and the hope and expectation that you will add many more meanings to the universe of meaning in theology...

With love,

Nahide Bozkurt

AN ERASMUS JOURNEY

By Furkan AY

My name is Furkan Ay. I am a fourth-year student at the Faculty of Theology, Ankara University. The idea of participating in the Erasmus program actually came about thanks to my friends at the faculty. Many of my classmates, both from my year and the one above, had gone on Erasmus in previous terms, and they all strongly recommended that I give it a try. Honestly, I had wanted to take advantage of such an opportunity during my undergraduate studies.

Erasmus offers the chance to visit different countries and cities, creating unforgettable memories during one's undergraduate years, but it also comes with great responsibility.

Living alone in another country, dealing with paperwork, arranging accommodation, insurance and bank accounts- all of this has to be managed on your own.

The country we planned to go to was Germany, and we did not know German. However, English gave us confidence at this point. We found the courage to live in Europe for 5-6 months largely thanks to our knowledge of English.

Although it may seem intimidating at first, the process progresses step by step, and everything eventually falls into place.

First, you take the Erasmus exam, and then you make your preferences based on your score.

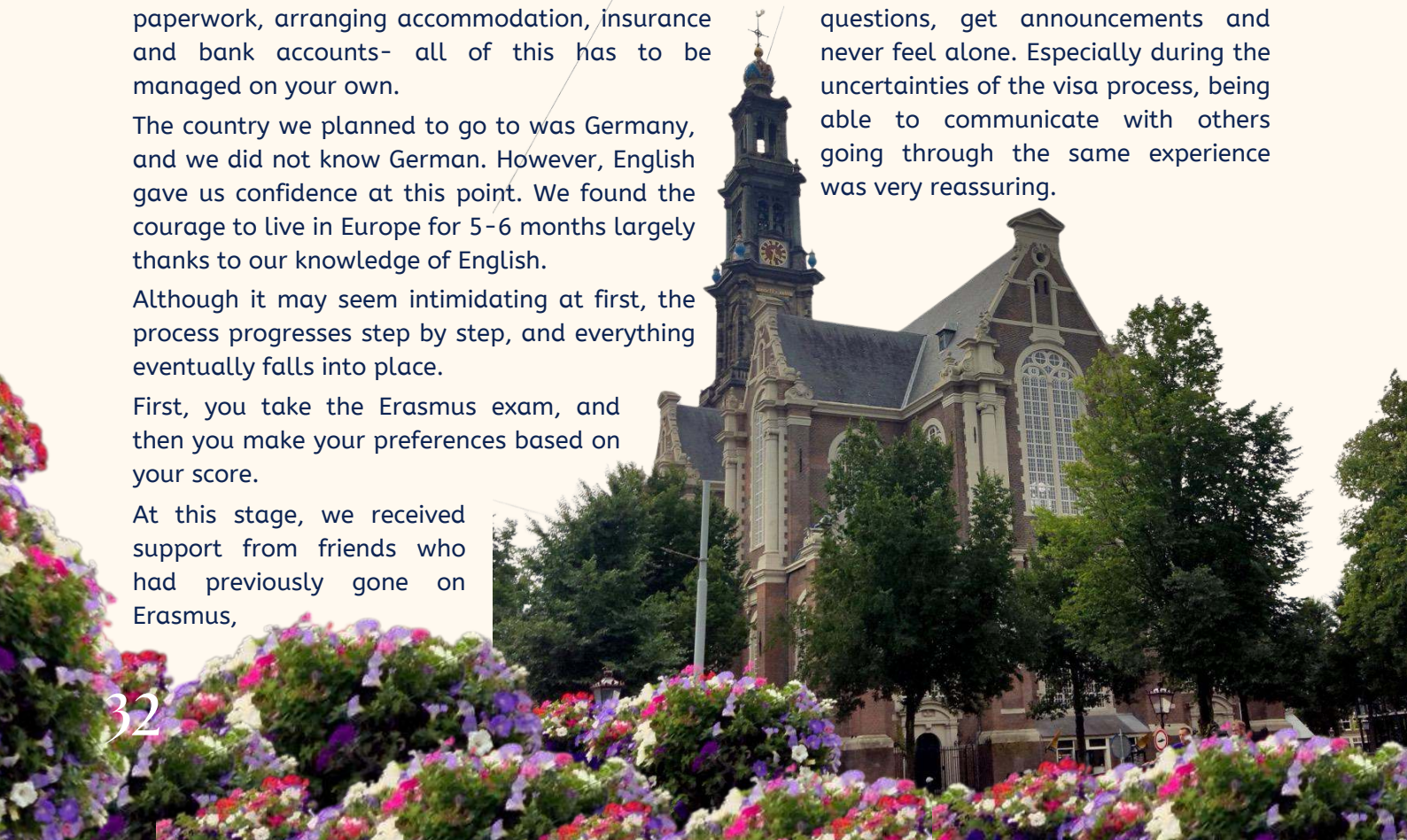
At this stage, we received support from friends who had previously gone on Erasmus, attended seminars held at the faculty, and stayed in constant communication with our coordinator.

As the process went on, our university organized Q&A-style information meetings for all Erasmus students.

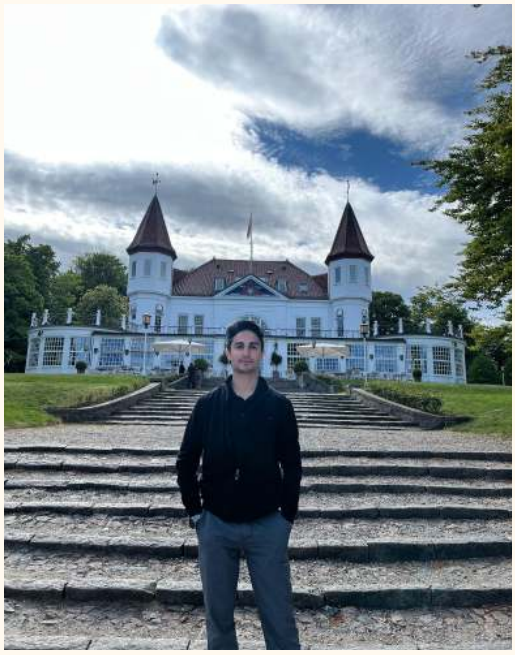
Once email communication with the host university began, the necessary steps were explained to us in detail,

I also joined a very large WhatsApp group with over 1,000 members, including students who had already gone, were about to go, or were still there.

Through this group, you could ask questions, get announcements and never feel alone. Especially during the uncertainties of the visa process, being able to communicate with others going through the same experience was very reassuring.



Finding accommodation before leaving took me some time. You can stay in the university dormitory if you wish, but I preferred to live in a shared apartment with other international students, so I started searching. Luckily, I eventually found a place as I wanted. Now, as I approach the end of my Erasmus adventure, I look back and say, “I’m glad I came, I’m glad I made this decision.”



During this period, I visited three different countries and ten cities, creating wonderful memories. Each challenge I overcame boosted my self-confidence. In this sense, Erasmus is a very valuable experience that helps you mature and grow. At first, I wondered, “How will I manage? Cooking, cleaning, school, classes... How will I handle all of this alone in a foreign country?” But over time, I built a routine.

I have been regularly exercising for the past four months, working for about 6 weeks, attending my classes,and preparing presentations and papers. I have also explored Germany and neighboring countries. On weekends, I played football, improved my language skills, and spent more time on myself. Loneliness is felt more here because people generally live individually, and the feeling of foreignness is strong at first. Instead of the call to prayer, you hear church bells every hour; the busy streets give way to silence, and the signs are unfamiliar... But over time, you adapt and get used to everything. Since the city I am in is small, bicycles are the most common means of transportation. For me, it has almost become like a car. I highly recommend getting a bicycle as soon as you arrive. Part of you might not even want to come back—while one part of you misses your homeland, another part wants to stay and keep going.

II would also like to mention that I really benefited from the courses there. I attended a Methodology course, where I conducted a study on the reasons for distancing from religion in Turkey. In another course, I learned about Ibn Taymiyya and gave a presentation on him. In one class, I wrote a paper on the relationship between worship and ethics in the Qur’an. We also did some work on Western studies; for instance, in one class I studied Milgram’s experiment on obedience.

IIn short, be brave and apply for Erasmus. You will create unforgettable memories, make great strides in personal development, and have the opportunity to experience different cultures. Erasmus is not just an exchange program; it is a unique journey that will leave a lasting mark on your life.

A JOURNEY OF LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND FRIENDSHIP IN OMAN

By Uluç Kaan DEMİR

Our faculty gave us the opportunity to improve our Arabic language skills in Oman through a program at Sohar University. As the departure date approached, I travelled from Trabzon to Ankara to meet my friends, and from there, our journey to Oman began. We departed from Esenboğa Airport, transferred in Istanbul, and finally arrived in Muscat. Although the first flight was a bit turbulent, the excitement of the trip kept our spirits high.

At Muscat Airport, we faced some delays during passport control but eventually managed to complete the process and meet our teacher, Sheikha. Together, we travelled to Sohar, arriving just before the morning prayer. My male friends and I stayed in an apartment, while the others stayed in the dormitory.

During the first two weeks, our days were simple—classes, meals, and occasional visits to the mall. Yet the Arabic lessons were highly enjoyable, especially with our teacher, Mr. Hosni. He was not only an excellent instructor but also very kind. I still remember the day he invited us for breakfast—it was my first and most memorable breakfast in Oman. We spoke about our studies, dreams, and future plans. Later, he took us to a café, and our inspiring conversation continued.

Another person who made our time special was Suleiman, a student from Uganda. He was like an older brother to us, always helping and guiding us to make our experience in Oman more meaningful. His kindness left a lasting impression on me; I still remember him as one of the kindest people I met there.

Our Arabic lessons were among the most valuable parts of the program. They were designed not only to improve our speaking skills but also to help us explore the cultural and social context of the Arabic language. Each week, we prepared short presentations on various topics and discussed them in class. These sessions encouraged us to express ourselves freely, think in Arabic, and overcome the fear of making mistakes.

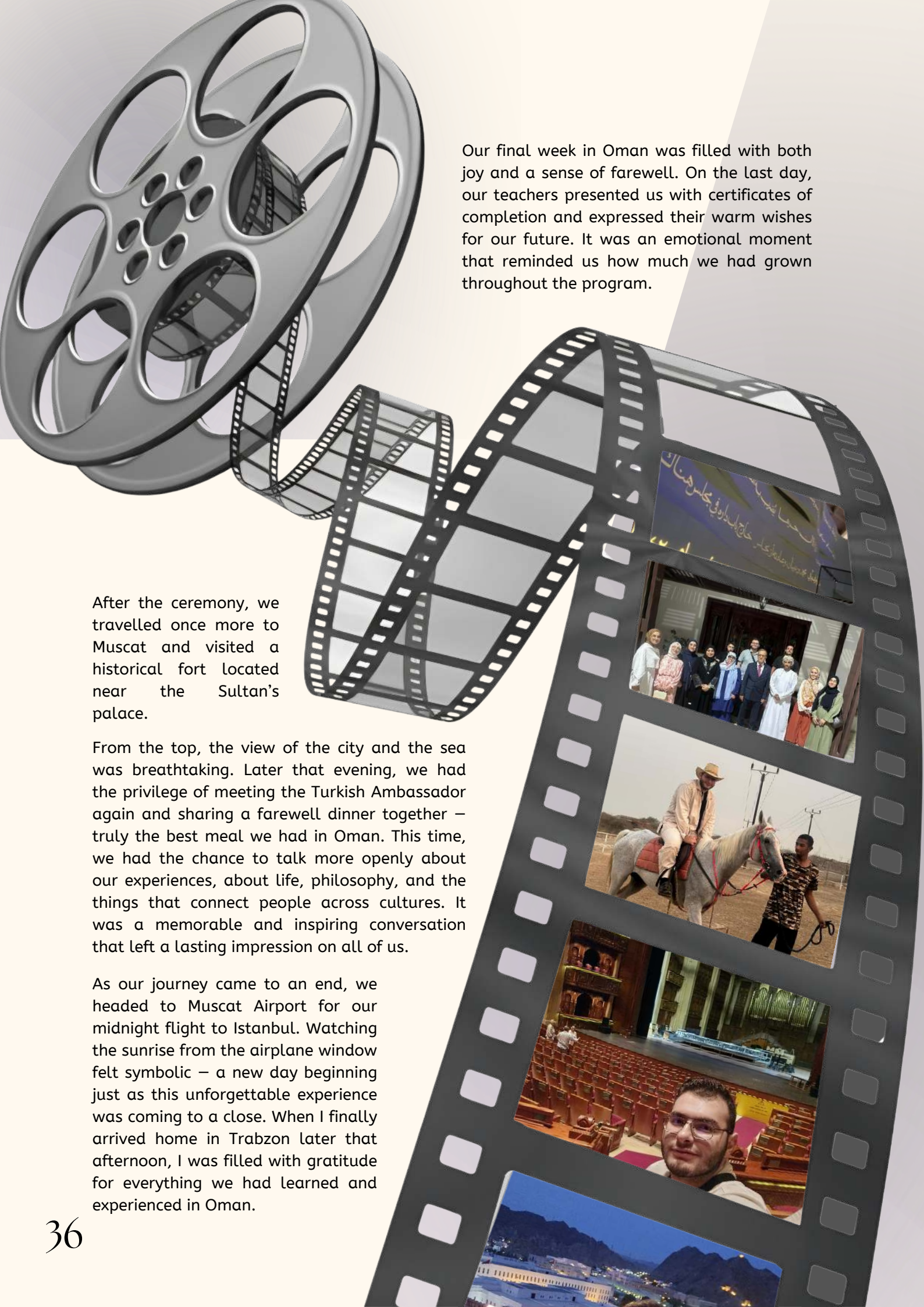
Our teacher created a warm and motivating environment where learning felt both enjoyable and meaningful. We practiced real-life conversations, learned idiomatic expressions used in Oman, and engaged in discussions that deepened our understanding of the language and its connection to culture. Over time, I noticed how much my confidence had grown. By the end of the course, I was not only able to communicate more fluently but also began to see Arabic as a living bridge to understanding the people and traditions around me.

Beyond the classroom, our journey through Oman offered countless opportunities to learn from direct experience. During our visit to Muscat, the capital city, we explored some of the country's most iconic landmarks, including the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, the Royal Opera House, the Amouage Perfume Factory, and the Rozna Restaurant. Each place revealed a different aspect of Omani history and culture. The Royal Opera House impressed me the most with its elegant design and serene atmosphere, while the Grand Mosque reflected the deep spiritual and artistic heritage of the region.

A few weeks later, we travelled to Liwa, where we encountered the traditional side of Omani life. We saw camels and horses, and I even had the chance to ride a horse – an experience that reminded me of the beauty of simplicity and nature. Later, we visited Nizwa, one of the most historical cities in the country. The Oman Across Ages Museum and the old markets gave us a vivid picture of how the past and present coexist in Omani society.

One of the most memorable moments of our trip was meeting the Turkish Ambassador in Muscat. He happened to be from my hometown, Trabzon, which made the encounter especially meaningful for me. That evening, surrounded by my teachers and friends, I realized how our journey had connected us – not only to another culture, but also more deeply to our own.

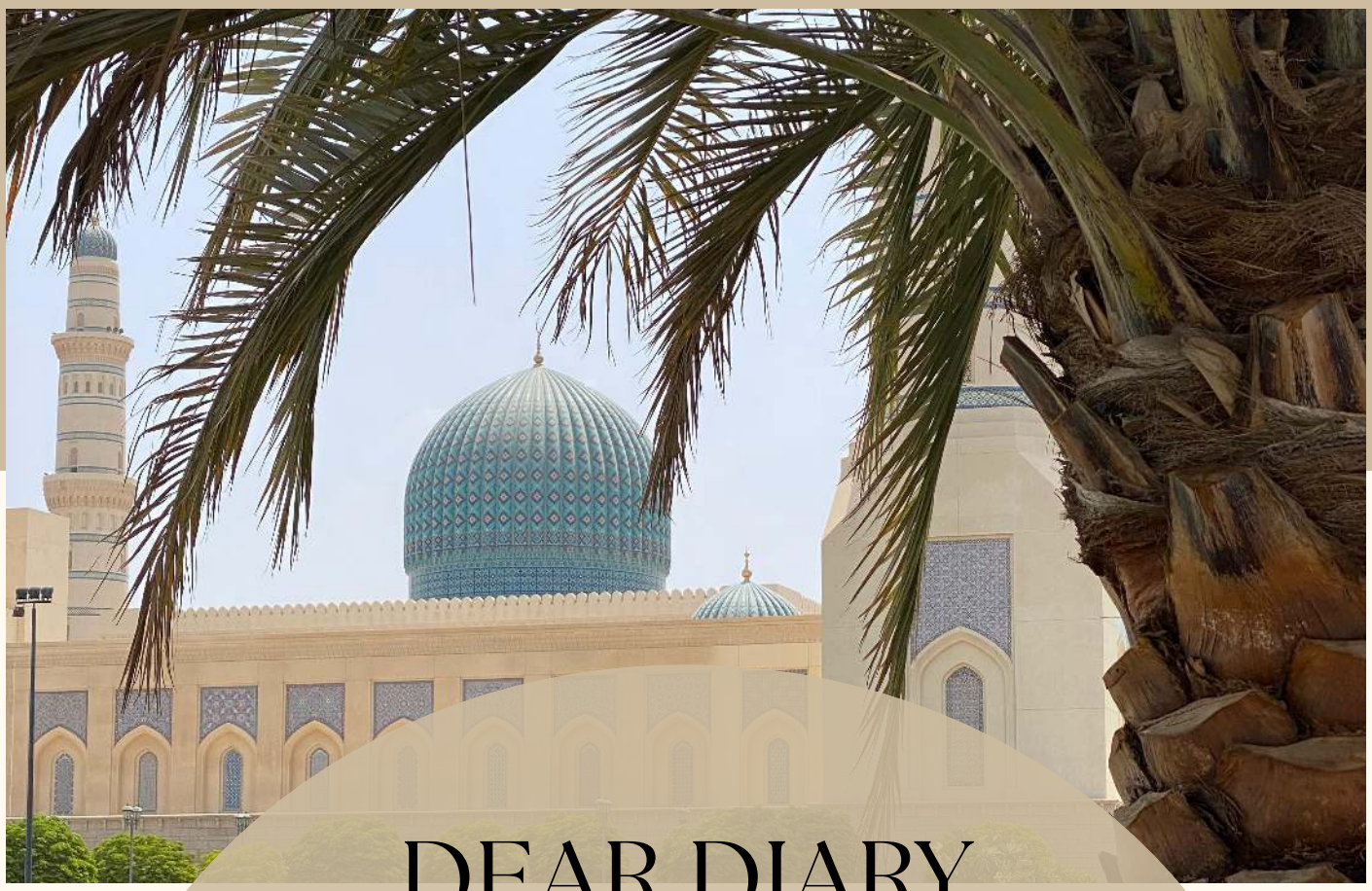
Our final week in Oman was filled with both joy and a sense of farewell. On the last day, our teachers presented us with certificates of completion and expressed their warm wishes for our future. It was an emotional moment that reminded us how much we had grown throughout the program.



After the ceremony, we travelled once more to Muscat and visited a historical fort located near the Sultan's palace.

From the top, the view of the city and the sea was breathtaking. Later that evening, we had the privilege of meeting the Turkish Ambassador again and sharing a farewell dinner together – truly the best meal we had in Oman. This time, we had the chance to talk more openly about our experiences, about life, philosophy, and the things that connect people across cultures. It was a memorable and inspiring conversation that left a lasting impression on all of us.

As our journey came to an end, we headed to Muscat Airport for our midnight flight to Istanbul. Watching the sunrise from the airplane window felt symbolic – a new day beginning just as this unforgettable experience was coming to a close. When I finally arrived home in Trabzon later that afternoon, I was filled with gratitude for everything we had learned and experienced in Oman.



DEAR DIARY

By Aliye YILMAZ

I am in Oman, as others call it, the heaven of the Arabian Peninsula. This is my thirty-sixth day here. I could not write much earlier, but now I want to share something about this place and our journey until we arrived in Sohar.

Throughout my life, I have never liked farewells. I don't know why, it is still a mystery to me. When I left home again- but this time for another country- I felt a mix of excitement and fear for the new, along with the sadness of saying goodbye. I went out with my parents to the railway station. They dropped me off, I had my ticket checked and sat on a bench near an old lady who was talking on the phone. After she hung up, she began talking to me.

As every conversation begins, we started with the question "where are you from?". Of course, everyone belongs somewhere -but can those places change? I did not expect that this simple dialogue would open my mind to something deeper.

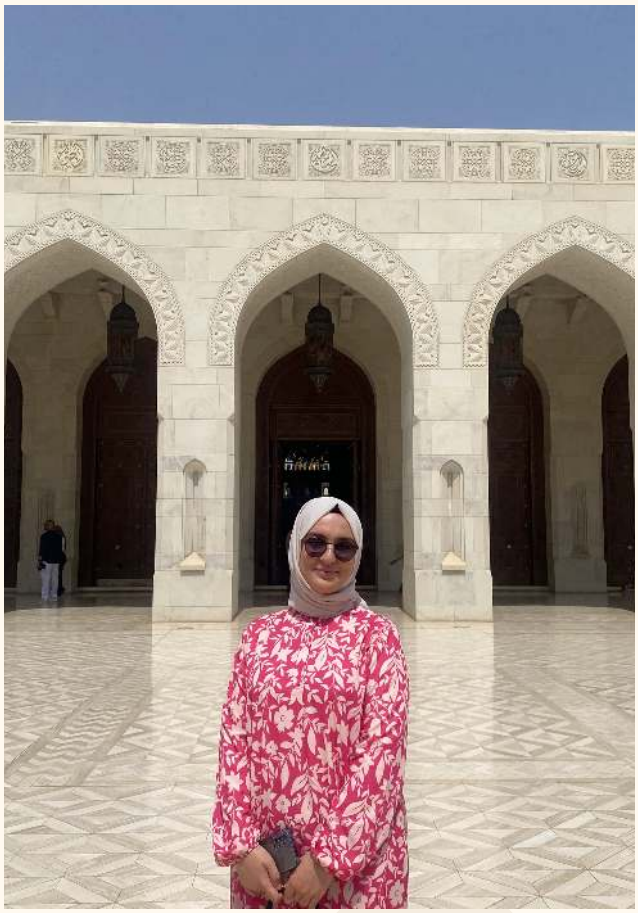
Every conversation carries an emotional part, I think. With tearful eyes, she told me that she had nobody left here. After people lose their connections, she said, they are no longer from their hometown. She had lost almost all her relatives in this city except her sister, whom she was visiting. Even though the old lady had lived in Istanbul for forty years, she said it no longer felt like home. I took a step back in my thoughts. She was right - if you don't have your loved ones in a city, the city feels completely empty. You never feel a sense of belonging even you have countless memories in every corner of it. I wondered could Sohar become an unforgettable city for me?

After the train journey, I went to Esenboğa Airport where I met with my friend and the rest of our group. Then the real journey begun. First, we went to Istanbul Airport, and after that we flew to Muscat. When we arrived, it was 3.00 a.m.. We were all exhausted, and there was a problem with our visas. Eventually we solved it and met our new teacher. However, our journey was not yet over – we still had to travel to another city, which took two or three more hours.

Finally, we arrived at our dormitory in Sohar. After nearly twenty hours, we could finally sleep...and the story began.

I want to start telling our story with a reflection. Throughout my life, I have always believed that a teacher who can touch hearts and truly understand others can change something in our lives – our personalities, perspectives, or even our hobbies. In every place, there is such a teacher if students are lucky enough to find them. I never thought we would meet such a teacher in Sohar.

Even now, I am not sure how to describe him – whether as someone who touched our hearts or as the one who shaped our journey with his funny and unique classes. I do not know. But I can say he was one of the most beautiful parts of our story in Sohar, Oman.Memories shape our life without asking permission. Sometimes they become lessons, and other times, sources of happiness or even trauma. When I look back at my happiest moments at school, I always see our teacher in those memories. His class was, without doubt, the most enjoyable one for us. One day, we had a very hard day during our training in reception and library. We were all exhausted and a bit sad. After the training, we had a meeting with our teacher at the university. It became a motivation for us because the day had been so tough.



During the past six weeks in Oman, we visited different places, met different people and improved our Arabic. To be honest, discovering new places and meeting people unexpectedly are the best parts of traveling. I am also very happy that my Arabic improved. When I first came to Sohar, I could only introduce myself but after all these weeks, I can express myself much better. Honestly, speaking another language is deeply enjoyable for me.

After leaving the reception, we went to class and waited for our teacher. I remember that all of us were very tired and downhearted, but all that sadness disappeared when our teacher arrived – not alone, but with his wife and children. I still remember how we met his wife; she was so kind and graceful. Moreover, she had cooked desserts for us – and I believe each of us still remembers their taste. That day was truly special. We ate, talked about everything, and realized that sometimes people can wipe away negative emotions with just a smile.

As part of this educational journey, we also visited two other cities besides Sohar: Nizwa and Muscat. Both were beautiful and offered different experiences., We visited the Turkish Embassy, several historical and famous sites such as forts, the Sultan Qabuus Mosques and local souqs.

Like every journey, ours had its challenges, but I believe that is all part of travelling.
Time is a strange concept. It is abstract yet we live within it. We cannot rewind it even if we wish nor can we fast-forward it.
We only have the present but we are not even sure if we will remember it later. Because of that, I tried to fill my time in Oman with unforgettable memories.
Did I succeed? I am not sure. But for now, I remember every detail.


CHINA

LEARNING TO THINK, THINKING TO LIVE... Interview with Prof. Dr. Halis ALBAYRAK

By Sinemnur ŞENER

First of all, thank you, Professor, for accepting our interview request and contributing to our journal. Your efforts and contributions to the Department of Tafsir are of great value to us. We follow your guiding work closely—through your books, articles, lectures at our faculty, conferences, and media appearances. With this interview, we hope both to benefit from your insights and to pose some questions to you. We had the opportunity to attend your presentation titled “Communication with the Qur’an” at a conference organized by our faculty, which we found highly insightful.

We observe in your publications that you shed light on current issues and propose solutions. n particular, under the theme “Communication with the Qur’an”, you address the challenges of our time in engaging with its meaning.

- In this context, What kind of alternatives do you propose to overcome the problem of failing to establish a meaningful engagement with the Qur'an?

This is not only a problem faced by contemporary Muslim intellectuals but also one of the fundamental challenges confronting all Muslims. Within the conditions of our age, we face serious challenges in establishing a sound connection with our sources—especially the Qur'an. We are often unsure where to begin when trying to engage with it. We turn to the text but encounter various barriers. For example, in the 1990s, discussions about historicism emerged in Turkiye within this context. However, these discussions were often conducted on mistaken premises. In essence, historicism is a philosophical stance unrelated to religion, revelation, or prophethood. Therefore, directly importing this concept into Islamic thought can be misleading.

Historicism, particularly rooted in German philosophical traditions, did not emerge from theological debates. Those who adopt a historicist perspective take a position on historical phenomena but do not necessarily believe in or relate to any sacred text. Thus, historicism belongs to an entirely different world.

Contemporary Muslim intellectuals do not seem eager to discuss "the Word" (i.e., Kalām in Arabic) within philosophical or scientific frameworks. Behind this reluctance likely lies a theological concern. Any philosophical or scientific debate on Kalām necessarily involves addressing the notion of "Kalāmullah" (Speech of God), which in turn requires a reconsideration of the prevailing definition of the Qur'an. A critical approach to the dominant theological understanding of Kalām and Kalāmullah thus becomes inevitable. At the heart of the difficulty of engaging with the Qur'an lies a philosophical and scientific silence regarding its nature and function. This silence has hindered the development of new theological perspectives on Kalām and Kalāmullāh. In my opinion, a harmonious and constructive engagement with the Qur'an is only possible by reopening historical definitions of its nature and function to debate.

When we attach the word Kalām to Lafẓatullah (The Divine Word), it is often perceived as a timeless, transcendental, absolute expression untouched by human influence. However, even if its origin is divine, it descends in human language, expressed through syntax and idiom; it wears a human "garment." If we ignore this point, we begin engagement from the wrong starting point.

There are certainly historical answers to questions like “What is the Qur’an? What is its function?” But we must ask these questions anew from our own standpoint, from within our own time, drawing on the accumulated experience and knowledge of humanity.

During the Prophet’s lifetime, the relationship with the Qur’an was intersubjective—there was direct communication between Allah, the Messenger, and the audience. Revelation came in this direct interaction. However, after the Prophet’s death and the end of revelation, this relationship turned into a subject-object dynamic. The Qur’an was no longer a speaking subject but became an object spoken about. This transformation led to significant changes in methods of interpretation. The emergence of sects, schools of thought, and interpretive divergences followed this rupture, as direct engagement with “the Word” was no longer possible. Scholars then resorted to interpretation (ta’wīl), which had not been necessary during the Prophet’s (peace be upon him) lifetime, since revelation was ongoing, and its implementation was manifest. Whenever opposition to the Prophet (pbuh) occurred, a new verse would be revealed to clarify the matter.

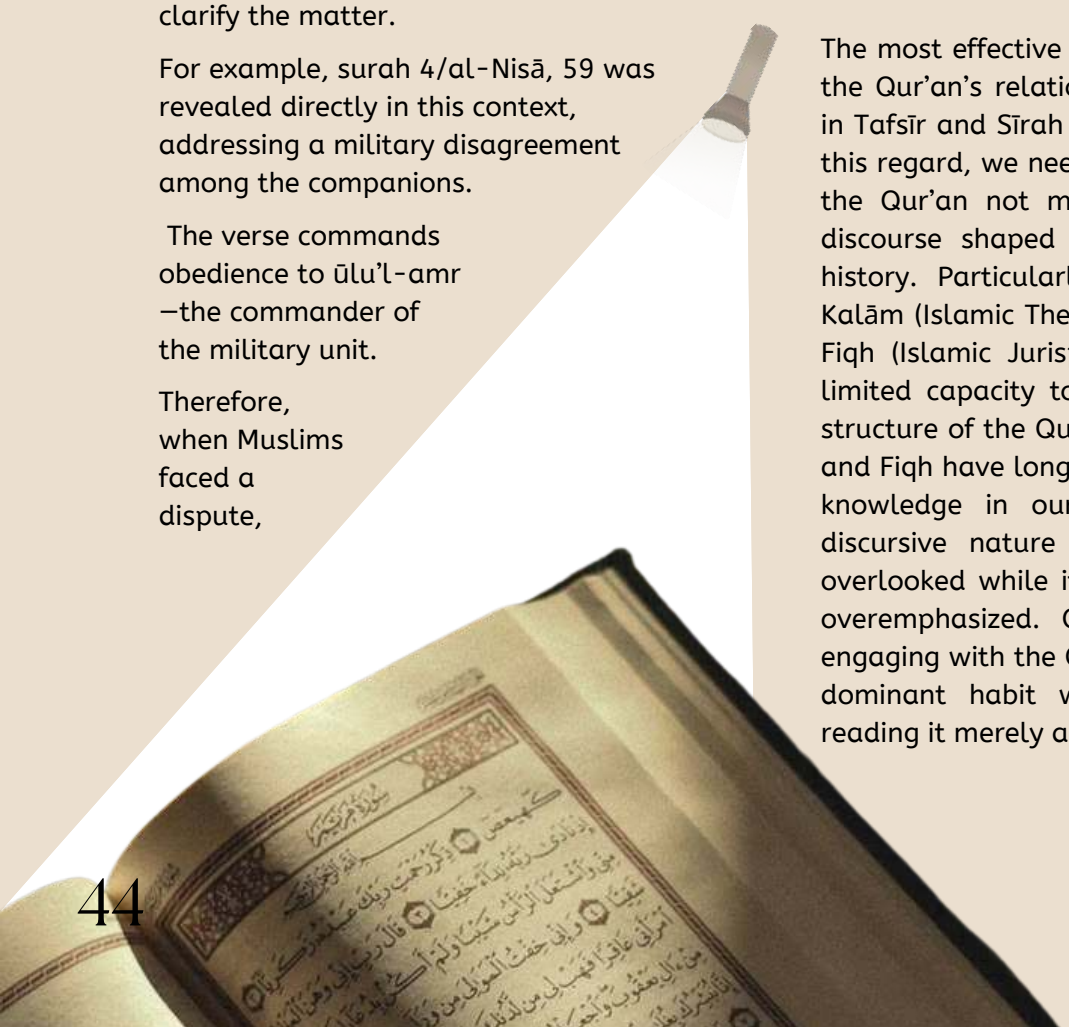
For example, surah 4/al-Nisā, 59 was revealed directly in this context, addressing a military disagreement among the companions.

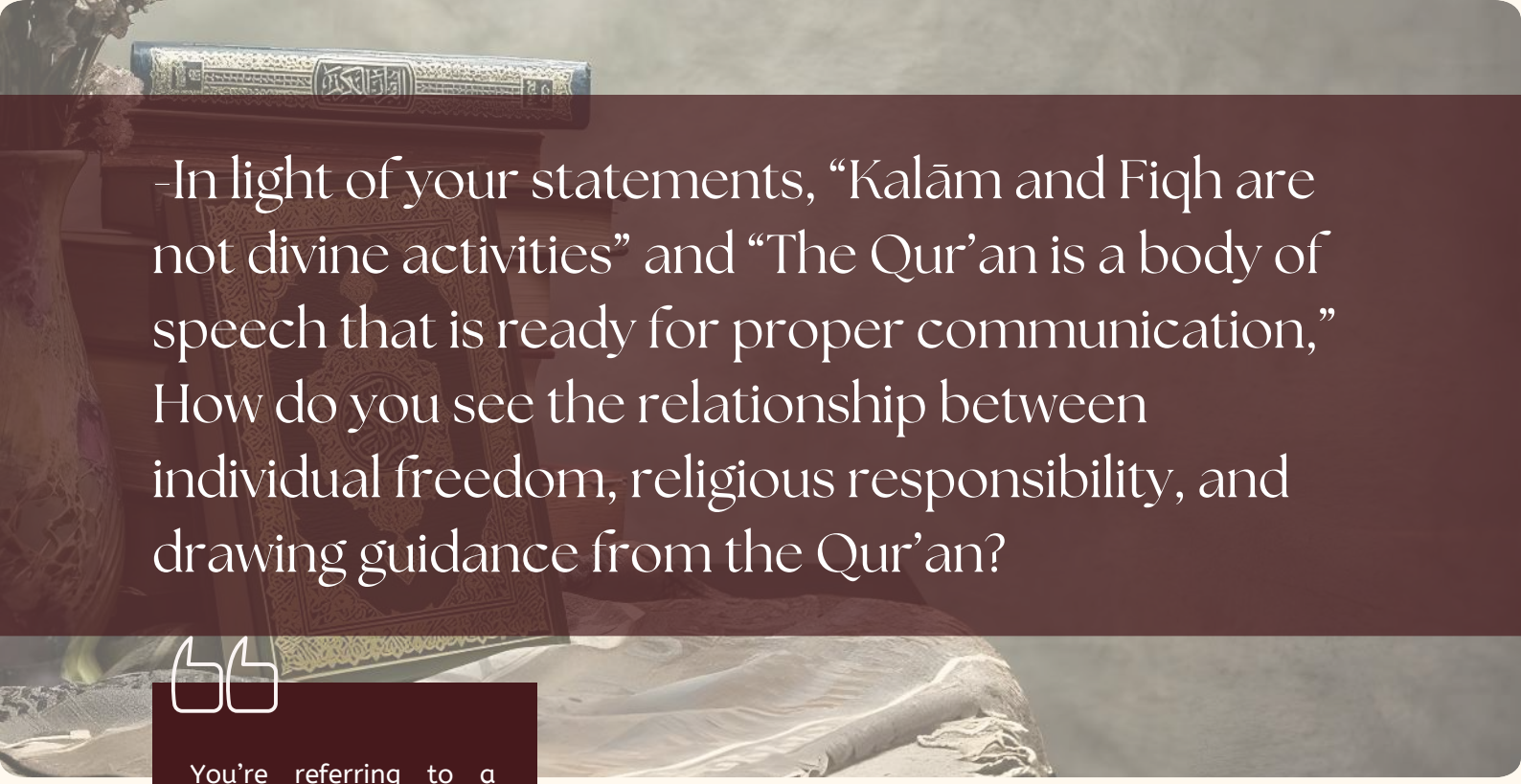
The verse commands obedience to ūlu’l-amr —the commander of the military unit.

Therefore, when Muslims faced a dispute, its resolution depended either on divine intervention through revelation or on the Prophet (pbuh) as the head of state, settling the matter. After the Prophet’s death, resolving disputes through revelation or his personal intervention became impossible. Muslim scholars later emphasized referring disputes to the Qur’an in place of God and to the Sunnah in place of the Prophet (pbuh). But neither the Qur’an nor the Sunnah, by nature, can resolve disputes. Subjects or institutions resolve disputes. Objects, as such, cannot perform functional roles in resolving conflicts. What I mean is that the authority given to God and His Messenger in surah 4/al-Nisā, 59 was transferred to the Qur’an and Sunnah without a rational or philosophical basis. This interpretive approach has endured until the modern era. However, in the modern period, it has become evident that this function attributed to the Qur’an cannot be fulfilled.

So how do we resolve disputes today? Do we refer to the Qur’an? No. We have modern legal systems, mediation, and courts—these issues are resolved through other means today. The Qur’an is no longer the point of reference for resolving personal disputes.

The most effective material for understanding the Qur’an’s relation to lived reality is found in Tafsīr and Sīrah (biographical) literature. In this regard, we need these sources to perceive the Qur’an not merely as a text but as a discourse shaped within its own revelation history. Particularly within the methods of Kalām (Islamic Theology) and to some extent, Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence), there has been limited capacity to grasp this intersubjective structure of the Qur’an. This is because Kalām and Fiqh have long been the principal fields of knowledge in our tradition, in which the discursive nature of the Qur’an has been overlooked while its textual aspect has been overemphasized. Our present difficulties in engaging with the Qur’an likely stem from this dominant habit within Muslim thought of reading it merely as a text.





-In light of your statements, "Kalām and Fiqh are not divine activities" and "The Qur'an is a body of speech that is ready for proper communication," How do you see the relationship between individual freedom, religious responsibility, and drawing guidance from the Qur'an?

You're referring to a word I used in one of my previous talks—naṣīb. My intention was to emphasize that all Muslims receive a share from the Qur'ān according to their own reading. Such individual readings are undoubtedly subjective and are not based on scientific or philosophical knowledge.

My description of the Qur'an as a "body of speech" was intended to highlight that it is not merely a text but a discourse. To be a discourse means that the Qur'an comes into being through reciprocal engagement with reality.

Regarding your quotation from one of my earlier talks—"Kalām and Fiqh are not divine activities"—I can say a few words about what I meant. It is quite straightforward. Muslim scholars and thinkers have regarded the Qur'an as a primary source and sought to extract certain principles and values from it. When the Qur'an was being revealed, it was in direct communication with reality; there was an opportunity for its verses to engage with concrete circumstances. However, after the end of revelation, the relationship between Kalām (theology)/the Qur'an and reality necessarily took on an indirect nature. For this reason, scholars resorted to ta'wīl (interpretation) as their primary tool. They maintained an indirect relationship with the Qur'an within their own historical contexts.

In this indirect relationship, Kalām-oriented interpretations focused on God's relationship with humanity and the universe, and on matters of belief. Fiqh efforts focused on how a Muslim should live. These were activities carried out by scholars; thus, they had a human, subjective, and historical character. Later scholars should have continued this work from within their own world and context. However, as you know, this is not how the process unfolded. There was no profound paradigmatic shift in response to the kalāmī and fıqhī interpretations of the founding scholars. Returning to the sentence you quoted, I intended to stress the need for kalāmī and fiqhī activities to be continuously re-engaged in relation to actual phenomena. Perhaps we can also evaluate the freedom of the Muslim individual within this framework.

- You spoke about the erosion of religious values in the context of power and authority. In this regard, what dangers do you see in the subject-object relationship formed around the Qur'an when associated with politics?

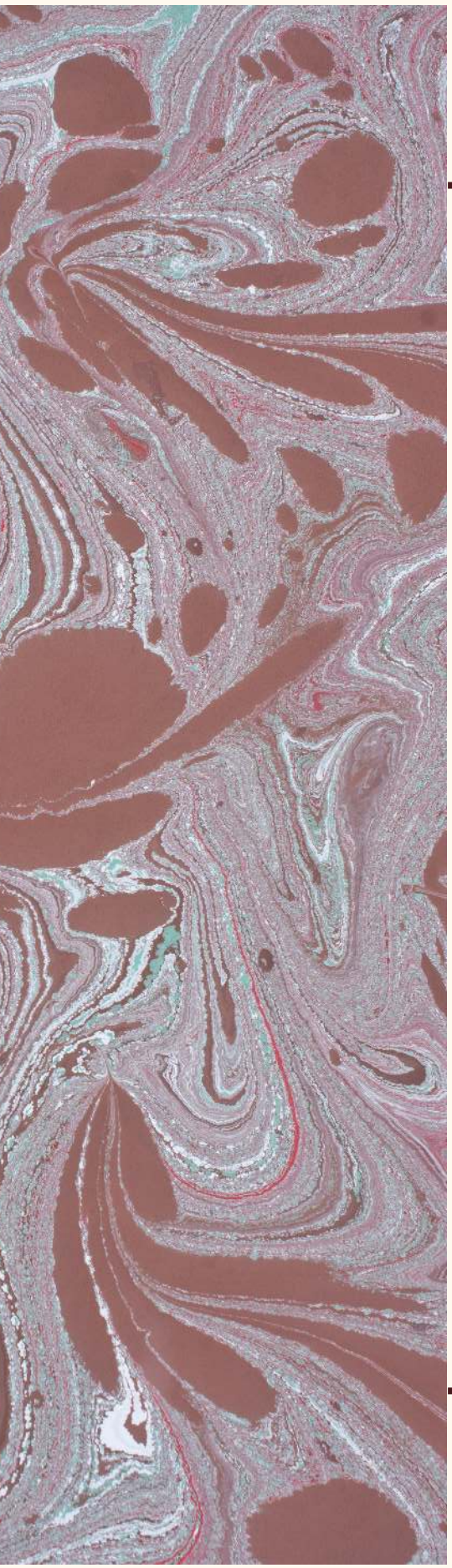
Yes, in addressing this issue, we first need to make a conceptual distinction. Each domain—whether politics, religion, or law—has its own ontological space, nature, and mode of operation. Politics and religion are distinct realms, which indicates that they belong to different modes of existence. To conflate politics with religion is to blur these two fields conceptually and to intertwine them in a way that contradicts their inherent nature. Each has its own internal dynamics, rules, and principles. Politics is about governance, the establishment of authority, and the exercise of power. It is a human endeavor.

In the modern period, political authority no longer concerns itself with a person's inner relationship with God, but with the governance of society and the state. Religion, on the other hand, aims to shape and refine the inner world of the individual.

However, the Qur'an is a text that both prioritizes internal transformation and engages with political situations within its historical context. When we examine the Meccan verses, we see an open struggle against polytheism and a strong emphasis on moral principles. In the Medinan period, the language of the Qur'an changed because the Prophet was no longer merely a Nabi (Prophet), but also a head of state. Therefore, the Qur'an also includes political, law, and conflict expressions. What is important here is that such verses should not be read purely as religious commandments but should be understood within their historical and political contexts.

For example, the verses in Surah al-Tawbah regarding polytheists are directly related to a state of warfare and the breach of treaties. The verses clearly state exceptions: they explicitly instruct that those polytheists who adhere to peace agreements should not be harmed (9/Tawbah, 4). This demonstrates that the issue is treated within a political rather than purely religious framework.

Thus, to read the Qur'an solely as a book of ethics or as a compilation of religious commands would be misleading. The Qur'an also records the historical and political struggle the Prophet experienced with his people. When this aspect is ignored, one begins to interpret the Qur'an from the wrong angle. If we want to establish a healthy relationship with the Qur'an in the contemporary world, we must first correctly identify what it is. Otherwise, religious values can be easily damaged within political power relations and drift away from their very essence.



Even in the Prophet's time, there was a political structure —perhaps not in the modern sense, but a basic form of statehood with core functions existed. The Prophet, at times, engaged in political struggle to preserve this structure. And undoubtedly, there were politically motivated practices during the period of the Four Caliphs as well. For instance, Abu Bakr's decision to declare war on the tribes that refused to pay zakāt (alms) was a political act rather than a religious one. At the time, zakāt functioned as a tax form, and refusing to pay it meant direct rebellion against political authority

What must be observed here is this: societal matters fall under the domain of politics, whereas individual responsibilities pertain to religion. The Qur'an states: "Each of you will come to Us alone" (6/al-Anʿām, 94). That is, religion focuses on the inner purification and unique piety of the individual. As our beloved teacher, the late Hasan Onat, used to say: There are no group reservations for Paradise. The aim of religion is the sincere and internal purification of the individual through personal effort.

Of course, Muslims can engage in politics, but in doing so, they must recognize that it is not a religious act but a human and social one. Unfortunately, this distinction has not yet been firmly established in the Islamic world. At the root of this problem lies a deep lack of understanding regarding the nature of the Qur'an. Without establishing a proper engagement with the Qur'an, it is impossible to develop a sound theory of politics

- Although you touched upon this topic in your previous answers, we would like to ask it directly for clarity: In your view, which approach do you find more accurate in interpreting the Qur'an—Historicism or Universalism?

This is an important question, but first, allow me to clarify: posing the question as "Historicism or Universalism?" is not quite accurate. These two concepts are not mutually exclusive; they belong to different categories. The opposite of "historical" is not "universal," but rather trans-historical. And trans-historical refers to a domain beyond human experience—something that belongs solely to the divine realm. As human beings, we can only experience what is historical. The Qur'an, too, exists within history.

The Qur'anic revelation emerged within the historical context in which the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) lived. Before that, this discourse did not exist. Therefore, we must acknowledge the Qur'an as a historical phenomenon; in fact, we can only understand it within this historical reality.

The universality of the Qur'an, on the other hand, must be considered on a different level. Universal values are abstract principles we mentally construct and regard as valid beyond specific societies. However, even these principles are not applied in the same way in every time and place. For example, the punishment of "cutting off the hand of a thief" cannot be claimed as universal, since today it is no longer applicable in almost any society.

Universality is often an ideal. For a believer to consider their religious system as universal is a desire, a moral aspiration—just as a Jesuit priest may claim universality for his own faith. In this regard, it is not the Qur'an's literal wording but the specific values and principles it contains that may attain universality in the believer's mind. However, this is not something that can be scientifically or philosophically proven.

As for historicism, the term is also often misused in Türkiye and more broadly in the Islamic world. If a Muslim believes in the oneness of God, the Prophet, and the Qur'an, they cannot, in the classical sense, be a "historical reductionist." That would mean limiting the text strictly to the period it emerged. However, a Muslim can adopt a historical critical perspective—someone who evaluates the text within its historical context and examines how historical circumstances were reflected in the revelation.

In fact, classical Muslim scholars also employed historical-critical methods. Abu Bakr's declaration of war against tribes that refused to pay zakāt, ʿUmar's decision not to distribute conquered lands as war booty, or the jurists who developed the theory of naskh (abrogation)—all of them interpreted the Qur'an's rulings in the light of historical conditions, adapting their applications to new realities. This is a historical approach, but not one that denies the core tenets of faith.

If we are to form a sound relationship with the Qur'an today, we must understand it within its historical context. It is not enough to bring its words into the present; we must also understand the conditions under which those words were revealed. Otherwise, the relationship we think we are forming with the Qur'an remains superficial. The Qur'anic revelation emerged in engagement with real-life circumstances. If even God revealed the Qur'an within a historical context, then we cannot bring it into today's world simply through its wording, without giving serious thought to contemporary realities.

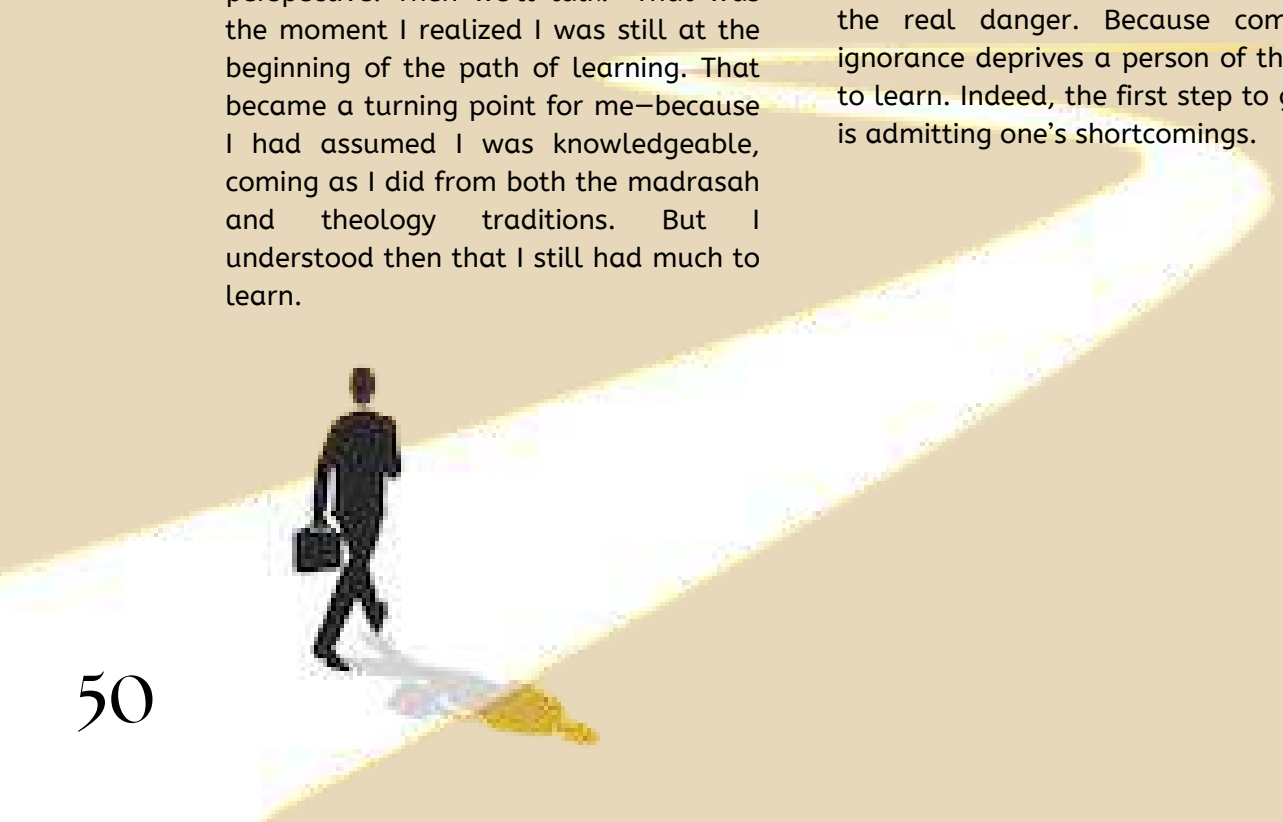
In this light, the debate between universality and historicism will not lead us anywhere unless it is grounded in precise and well-formed conceptual foundations. If we wish to discover the Qur'an's universal values and bring them into the modern world, we must first think with accurate concepts and sound methodology. And this is not merely an individual task—it is a responsibility that falls upon a committed and intellectually capable group.

- We'd also like to ask a more personal question: What was the most significant turning point that deeply affected or transformed your intellectual perspective?

Yes, I've spoken about this in some talks before, but I'd be happy to share it again here—it might serve as an example for younger students as well. It was the year 1987. I was a research assistant at the Faculty of Theology in Ankara and close to completing my doctorate. One day, we were sitting together in Professor Mehmet Hatipoğlu's office with a group of assistants. I asked a question—one that also included an evaluative comment. The professor merely turned to look at me, said nothing, and continued speaking. To an observer, this could appear as something that would hurt one's pride, but in that moment, I felt something different. I perceived that look as a silent message: "Halis, read a bit more, approach things from a broader perspective. Then we'll talk." That was the moment I realized I was still at the beginning of the path of learning. That became a turning point for me—because I had assumed I was knowledgeable, coming as I did from both the madrasah and theology traditions. But I understood then that I still had much to learn.

From that day on, I turned toward the human sciences—philosophy, sociology, psychology, hermeneutics. We formed discussion circles with colleagues like Professor Hasan Onat and Professor Mualla Selçuk. It was during that time that I first began reading about hermeneutics through Kamuran Birand's book Understanding as a Method in the Spiritual Sciences.

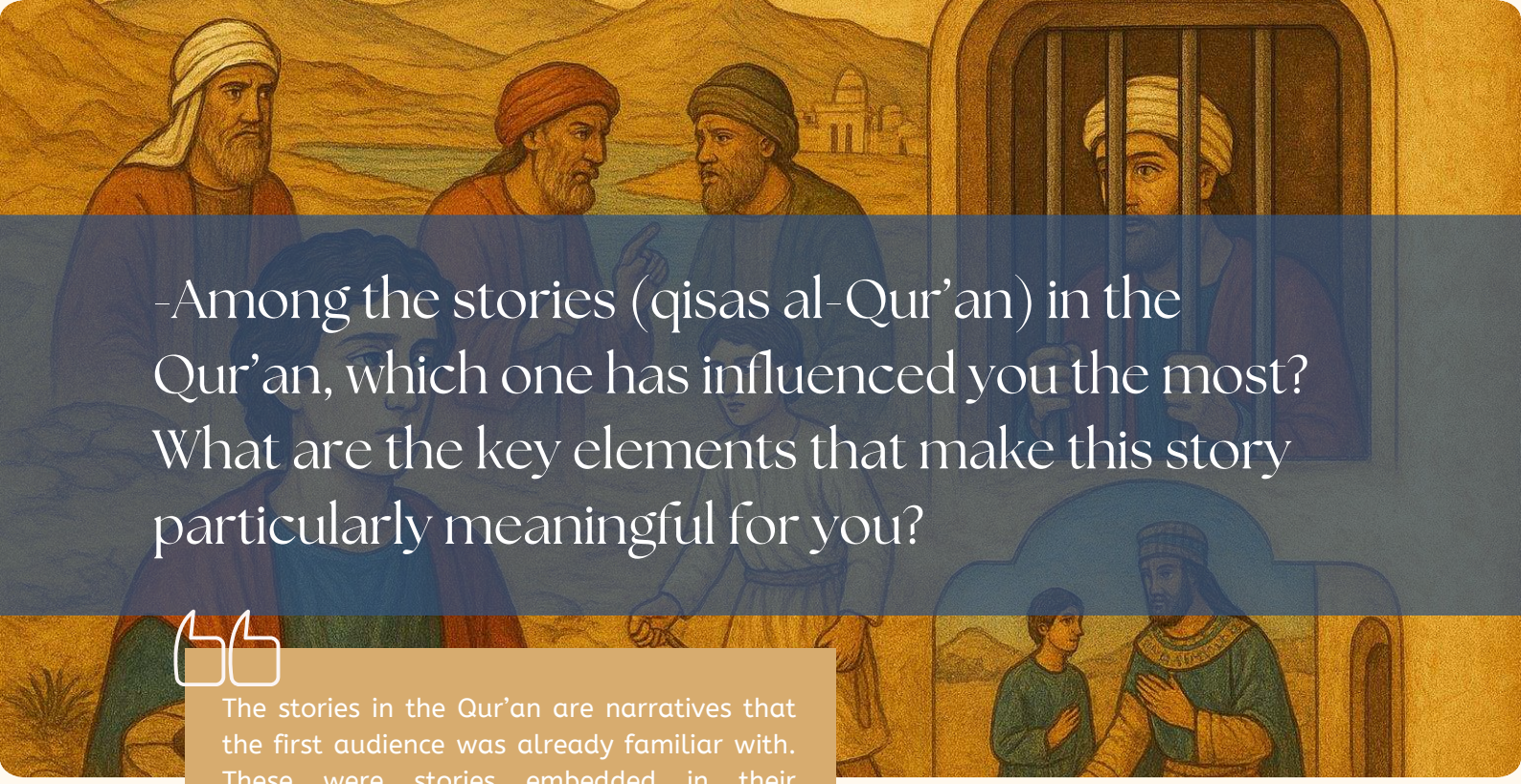
In my view, the greatest turning point for a person is realizing their own ignorance without making it a matter of ego—and turning that realization into an opportunity for growth. Not knowing is not shameful. But not knowing that one doesn't know—and refusing to acknowledge it—is what classical scholars called "compound ignorance" (jahl al-murakkap). That, I believe, is the real danger. Because compound ignorance deprives a person of the need to learn. Indeed, the first step to growth is admitting one's shortcomings.



- Our next question, Professor: If you hadn't become a theologian, what other profession might you have chosen to pursue?

This may be a classic question, but my answer is quite clear: I'm truly glad I became a theologian. There are many reasons for this, the most important being that theology is a discipline that enables one to reflect upon and question human beings and their inner world. In this respect, theology is directly related to our very existence. Moreover, since religion is a truth that concerns humanity, it is deeply connected to a person's journey of self-understanding and transformation.

Another reason I chose this field is that I didn't confine myself to a single discipline. Through my engagement with philosophy, sociology, and anthropology, I have found the opportunity to develop myself in a more holistic manner. For both Prophethood and the Qur'an are, ultimately, about human beings. Therefore, I believe that attaining this truth requires engaging with all fields of knowledge and experience that relate to the human condition.



-Among the stories (qisas al-Qur'an) in the Qur'an, which one has influenced you the most? What are the key elements that make this story particularly meaningful for you?

The stories in the Qur'an are narratives that the first audience was already familiar with. These were stories embedded in their collective memory—events they had experienced within their historical context or at least had knowledge of. In other words, they are not products of imagination or literary fiction; they directly addressed the world of the original recipients. In this sense, Qur'anic narratives should not be confused with abstract, fictional texts such as The Lord of the Rings or Dune. Qur'anic narratives are rooted in history and aim to convey direct messages to a specific audience in a particular time and place.

The main purpose of the Qur'an's use of such narratives is to instruct. Each story is guided by a clear pedagogical intention, and some stories convey more than one lesson. For instance, the story of Joseph (Yusuf) clearly illustrates how destructive jealousy (hasad) can be. At the same time, it tells how a person supported by God can remain protected amid adversity. The story does not explicitly say "do this" or "avoid that," but many propositions are subtly implied throughout the flow of the narrative. In the Qur'an, propositions are embedded within the story itself – an indirect yet powerful didactic technique

However, one point must be made clear: the Qur'an is a book addressed to adults; it does not directly speak to children. Therefore, simply narrating these stories to children may not always yield positive pedagogical results. These narratives should be restructured in ways consistent with sound educational principles. Otherwise, they may give rise to questions that conflict with contemporary value systems. Of course, material suitable for children can be derived from these stories—but that requires pedagogical transformation carried out by experts. When presented not as literal truths but as "narratives" or tales, such stories can be more meaningfully internalized by a child's mind.

As for me, I find all the stories valuable. It's hard to say, "This particular story affected me the most." Because each of them carries important lessons within its own context. But I would like to emphasize this: the ones who benefited most from these stories were the first interlocutors. In their world, these stories played a constructive, guiding, and transformative role. Because they could internalize the Qur'an's call to monotheism (tawḥīd), they needed to build a mental foundation through these stories. So, the stories functioned as supporting elements that helped to established tawḥīd.

It is no coincidence that most of the stories appear in the Meccan surahs. The Meccan period was a time when a social and political order had not yet been established, but when the world of faith and ideas was being shaped. That's why the stories aimed to create an awareness of tawḥīd in the people's minds. In the Medinan period, however, the story of Moses (Mūsā) becomes more prominent. This is because the Muslims were now in direct contact with the Jewish community, and the stories were adapted to address this new audience. The Moses–Children of Israel narratives in Sūrah al-Baqara are examples of this. Many of them, though, are repetitions of the Moses stories found in Sūrah Ṭā-Hā and others.

When we look at these stories today, we can see how deeply these stories impacted and transformed the people of that time. But if we want to be similarly influenced, we need new storytellers who can play the same role in today's world. The narrative form of the modern age is the novel and the short story. Storytelling today continues through literature. Therefore, novelists and short story writers are the storytellers of this era. And personally, I place great importance on storytelling.

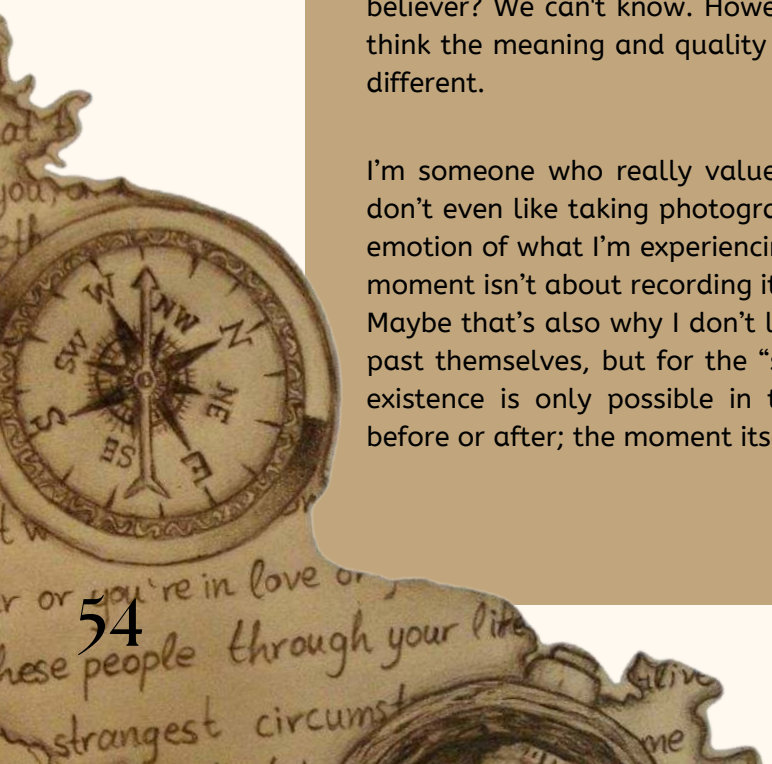
Speaking for myself, I'm someone who can't go without reading novels. At every stage of life, I've felt the need to connect with literary narratives, because these stories transform us—they open the doors to other worlds. The stories in the Qur'an, in a sense, are also literary narratives. Of course, they are historical—but they also contain a strong narrative structure.

Therefore, we need to rethink the stories in a way that fits with today's language, pedagogy, and narrative form. The first audience learned from these stories; we too can draw similar lessons through methods appropriate to our own time. But this can only happen if we approach these stories not dogmatically, but with intellectual depth—while staying true to the spirit of the narrative.

-Is there a moment in history that has deeply moved you—one that made you think, “I wish I had been there”? What makes you want to witness that moment?

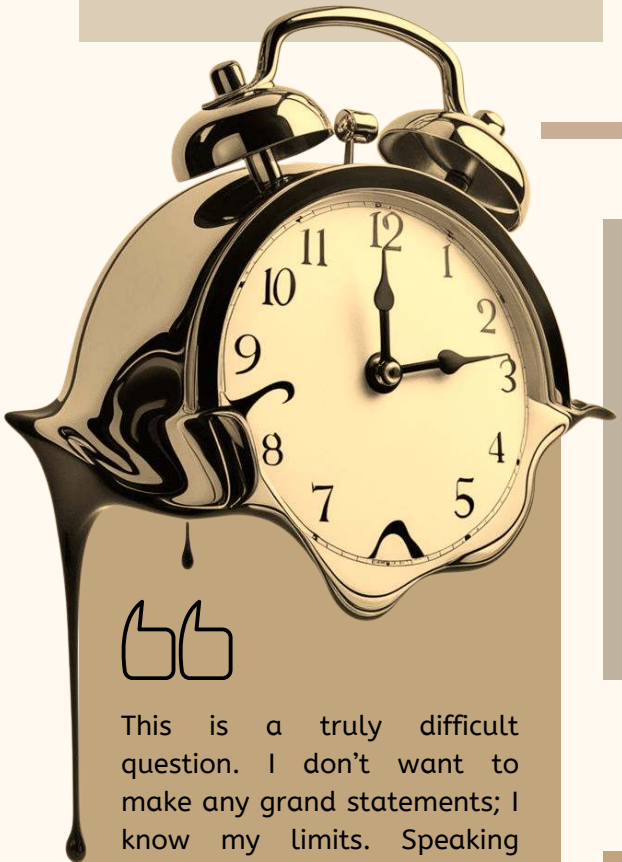
To be honest, when I think about this question, a scene from a film comes to mind. There’s a moment in the movie Ben-Hur—they didn’t show the face of Jesus (Īsa) directly, but the character was looking at him. And in that gaze, there was such a deep sense of emotion that, as a viewer, you can’t help but feel: “I wish I had been there too... I wish I had looked upon that face.” That scene left a strong impression on me. So, if I had the chance to witness a moment in history, I think I would want to see the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Perhaps Jesus (pbuh) as well... But especially, I would want to see the faces of Jesus and Muhammad—to understand what I would see in them. Would I have looked at them like Abu Jahl did, or with the eyes of a believer? We can't know. However, looking as a believer today, I think the meaning and quality of that gaze would likely be quite different.

I’m someone who really values being present in the moment. I don’t even like taking photographs, because I feel they break the emotion of what I’m experiencing right then. For me, witnessing a moment isn’t about recording it—it’s about “truly living” it.
Maybe that’s also why I don’t long for the grand moments of the past themselves, but for the “spirit” of those moments. Because existence is only possible in the present moment. There is no before or after; the moment itself is everything.



-If you could travel back in time, in whose circle of learning would you wish to be a student?

Now, you might think I'm saying this because of my own school of thought, but honestly, I would probably say Abu Hanifa. It would be hard for me to name anyone else. His way of thinking, his intellectual insight, and his independent stance have always impressed me. I would have loved to sit in his circle and breathe in the atmosphere he created.



-How would you define a lifetime — an ʿumr — from your own perspective?

This is a truly difficult question. I don't want to make any grand statements; I know my limits. Speaking about a concept like "life" is not something one can easily claim to do. But I can say this: for me, life is tied to a longing for a dervish-like way of living – to live the moment fully, to witness the present you're in truly... Probably it's not very easy to live such a life in this age—but it's not entirely impossible either.

What I understand by being a dervish is, above all, living a life where one's conscience and inner voice are not silenced. Life, even if it doesn't appear glamorous from the outside, is meaningful when it's lived with sincerity and wisdom. To live without suppressing that inner voice, to remain aware of it at every moment – that, for me, would be a meaningful life.

-What would be your advice to students in the Faculty of Divinity — especially those in the English Theology Program?

My first piece of advice to divinity students, no matter what path they intend to follow—is this: don't live life in a one-dimensional way. Whether or not they plan to pursue an academic career, I urge them to use their time well throughout their studies. Don't live a life focused solely on courses; also engage with art, literature, and social life. These enrich you both intellectually and personally.

Speaking specifically about the English Theology program: Since the language of instruction is English, the transmission of knowledge takes place in a second language. Naturally, this creates challenges for both students and lecturers. Information doesn't flow as effortlessly as it does in one's native language. As a result, students might struggle to deeply engage with the academic literature. While their English improves, their Arabic can remain underdeveloped. Yet Arabic is still the fundamental key to accessing the classical Islamic sciences—it should never be neglected.

Another issue is this: our faculty has many valuable scholars, yet they don't usually teach in the English Theology Program. Students should find ways to engage with these professors—through their books, articles, and intellectual contributions. Many students hesitate, thinking, "How would the professor respond to me?" But this hesitation must be overcome. Seeking direct benefit from these scholars is one of the most valuable investments a student can make during their university years.

More generally, I would say this: a theologian wears two hats—one of science, and one of thought. The scientific hat trains you within specific rules, leading to expertise. That domain has its own principles—there's no room for arbitrariness. But the thought that deepens you as a human being; it nourishes both the soul and the mind. And that depth comes from exposure to literature, philosophy, poetry, and music.

Literature humanizes us. It is very meaningful that the Turkish word for literature, “edebiyat”, derives from” edep” (ethics or refined manners). So let me repeat something I often say: “Theology without philosophy is like life without water.” Theology students must engage with philosophy, literature, and the arts. They must prepare themselves not only for texts, but for life itself.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our esteemed professor for sincerely sharing his knowledge and experiences with us. Through this interview, we have accompanied not only an academic journey, but also an intellectual and human one. We believe it will serve as an essential guide, especially for divinity students, and we wish our professor a life full of health, peace, and fruitful endeavors.