



The Psychosocial Dimensions of Religious Language and Metaphors from a Linguistic Viewpoint

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Abstract

It has become common in linguistic research to consider metaphorical language as matter of thought rather than of language. Herein, a metaphor is understood as a conceptual 'source' domain by which an idea about a notion (a conceptual target domain) is conveyed on the basis of human experiential knowledge which is constructed through a set of social and psychological dimensions in a given society. Research in contemporary metaphor analysis emphasises that scrutinising the conceptual components a frequent metaphorical representations in a given discourse can reveal the different psychological and social dogmatic constituents of the discourse of the society where these metaphorical representations emerge. In this paper, I argue that the analysis of religious metaphors in the Prophet Muhammad's tradition as a linguistic and conceptual phenomenon can reveal how their deliberate and indispensable choice induces some of five key psychosocial dimensions of early Islamic society. These dimensions are mostly concerned in introducing the Muslim's identity, the appeal to authority and power through well-guided rulership and Islamic laws, showing affiliation through the prescribed rituals, the conflict with an evil, and finally, the dichotomy of *us* versus *them*.

Keywords: Religion; Metaphors; Psychosocial; Islam; the Prophetic Tradition.



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1. Introduction: The Functions of Religious Discourse

The study of religious language is deep-rooted in history where the purpose was to identify the epistemological nature of religious beliefs; especially the statements or claims made about god(s). In this regard, religious language is perceived as a written and spoken language typically used by religious believers when they talk about their religious beliefs and their religious experiences (Harrison 2007, 127). Later, the study of religious language has shifted towards rhetoric where the purpose has become to investigate how this language can stir emotional feelings while performing prayers (ibid.). Accordingly, the functional aspects of religious language have been recurrently forwarded by scholars for the sake of understanding the factors which animate this linguistic phenomenon.

Binkley and Hick (1962, 19-21) suggest that we can distinguish at least seven different kinds of *usage* for religious language. First, religious language can involve an *empirical usage* where empirical statements of factual and historical claims are made about some important events, such as the birth and crucifixion of Jesus Christ in Christianity. Secondly, religious language bears a *tautological usage* where redundant repetitions of a particular meaning become prominent in the religious discourse. Binkley and Hick give the example of the use of the conception that 'God is good and omnipotent' when discussing the nature of the concept of God, which appears constantly in the Abrahamic religions. Thirdly, religious language is considered a highly-emotive sort of language and similar to that of poetry. Thus, it involves an *emotive usage* that appeals a religion-followers' imagination, and it attempts to arouse their feelings of reverence for this religion through verbal rituals and practices. Fourthly, religious language is needed to perform rituals and ceremonies and religious services; and this gives it a *performatory or ceremonial usage*. Fifthly, religious language can provide a directive function in proclaiming certain behaviour such as believing in one omnipotent god, in other words, it can be of *prescriptive usage*. Sixthly, religious language can serve a *mythical usage* to introduce a pre-scientific account of certain mysterious facts such as the creation of the universe and the reality of death and the afterlife. Finally, religious language can serve a *paradoxical usage* where a thorough study for the religious text may reveal contradictions and inconsistencies which have to be considered (ibid., 21). By a well-practised manipulation of the linguistic components of the religious text, one can give the relevant interpretation and elucidation of an alleged incongruity in the religious text to solve the apparent controversial paradox.

As a form of religious language, the Prophet Muhammad's Tradition conforms to most of the above-mentioned usages. The Prophet Muhammad's Tradition shows evidences of empirical usage where many of his *Sayings* present factual and historical events about preceding prophets and people. Additionally, the Prophet Muhammad's tradition involves tautological usage as it involves many redundant repetitions of a particular meaning; such as referring to Muslims as 'servants of God'. The emotive usage is mostly perceived in the Prophet's Sayings which involve supplication to God. In addition, the Prophet Muhammad's tradition involves a large body of laws, principles, and prescribed actions which the follower of Islam should respect, and this reflects a prescriptive usage. However, the Prophet Muhammad's tradition does not have a totally performatory or ceremonial usage as it cannot be recited while performing prayers or during performing rituals.

The Prophetic discourse is recognised as the word of God revealed to the Prophet, and it is uttered by the Prophet himself in his language on the basis of a conjuncture between Islamic creed and the common cultural understanding of the people during his time. The presumed divine nature of the Prophet Muhammad's discourse strengthens the need to ask if it shows any sort of paradoxical or contradictory usages because such an allegation can go against the fundamental principles of faith (Aydin Mehmet 1997). Accordingly, the paradoxical usage can be better understood in terms of assigning to religious language a sort of 'explanatory' usage by which a particular religious discourse is used to interpret and explain another discourse from the same religion. This can be elucidated from Islamic discourse where the Prophet Muhammad's Tradition is used to explain and interpret what is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an.

The application of Binkley and Hick's propositions of the functional aspect of religious language shifts our attention to the need to detect the linguistic strategies employed in achieving these functions or usages in the Prophetic discourse. For instance, many researchers who have embarked on the study of religious language have tackled the topic from one of two angles: either by studying the 'meanings' of the religious discourse or by studying the 'forms'. The first approach pays more attention to the meanings and the rhetorical components of the religious language and its discourse, such as prayers, hymns, and religious services. This approach emphasises the semantic qualities of the discourse in hand such as its richness in terms of lexical variations and its rhetorical qualities (Fernandez 1986; Wagner 1986; Weiner 1991). The second approach pays more attention to the forms in which the religious discourse is structured assuming that religious language bears 'some formal marks of its special character' (Keane 1997, 52), and this character can be manifested through 'virtually' any linguistic strategy, such as changes in phonology, morphology, syntax, prosody, lexicon, or the entire linguistic code can frame a stretch of discourse as religious (ibid.).

2. Contemporary Theory to Metaphor

In their book *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) emphasise the pervasiveness of metaphorical language in everyday language and thoughts. This postulation raises the argument that metaphor should be defined as a figure of thought not of speech because of its indispensability in organising the cognitive operations of everyday communication; giving more evidence to the ubiquity of metaphorical language in verbal interaction. Their theory, called the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, introduces an analytical structural framework by which a metaphor is recognised as a conceptual phenomenon that connects one notion with an idea.



According to CMT, any abstract notion and its idea, which represent two spheres of human cognitive system, are *conceptually* connected together through a process of 'cross-domain' mapping (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and by which a notion (e.g. argument) is understood in terms of human attributes and experiences (e.g. war) resulting in the metaphorical expression 'his idea is indefensible'. Herein, the conceptual domain that includes an idea that conveys a certain meaning on the basis of human real-world and experiential knowledge such as physical entities and animate beings is labelled a 'Source' domain. On the other hand, the conceptual domain that most frequently involves the meanings that the metaphor is intended to convey and which generally includes abstract concepts and notions is labelled a 'Target' domain. Accordingly, in a conceptual metaphor, systematic conceptual correspondences are drawn between the relevant elements in the two conceptual source and target domains. For example, in the expression 'his idea is indefensible', the metaphor is understood by means of a process of conceptual cognitive mapping between the elements of the conceptual source domain WAR and the elements in the conceptual target domain ARGUMENT. This mapping generates the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR¹. And whereas the source domain generally includes human experiential knowledge such as physical entities and animate beings, the target domain typically involves more abstract notions such as emotional states.

In another respect, one of the key roles of metaphorical language is to add more vividness to the message, and its use in language eliminates monotony and uniformity. However, such an oversimplified proposition is not satisfactory to modern approaches and theories of metaphor analysis. Recognising metaphorical language in terms of cognitive processes sheds light on its function in language and thought. Since it is mostly based on the interlocutors' common cultural background, metaphor provides the speaker with an explanatory tool which makes novel ideas more comprehensible for the listeners. Eva Kittay maintains that 'metaphor has cognitive value and this stems not from providing new facts about the world but from a reconceptualisation of the information that is already available to us' (1987, 39). Accordingly, the use of metaphorical language in any type of discourse helps in minimizing ambiguity and incomprehensibility because it brings to the surface the most comprehensible aspects of the argument in question with the reference to the familiar domains of experience. In Kittay's words, 'metaphor actually gives us *epistemic access* [my italicisation] to fresh experience and, to the extent that we have no other linguistic resources to achieve this, metaphor is 'cognitively irreplaceable' (ibid.).

As I presented earlier, religious discourse is characterised by its abstractness where the recognition of metaphysical assumptions (such as the existence of God, the creation of the universe, the definiteness of our destiny, the reality of death and the afterlife) are introduced conventionally by the followers of religion as ideas which transcend the capabilities of human conventional capacities. Here, Olaf Jäkel maintains that because of the high level of abstraction of the religious domain, it is likely that religious language will be largely (if not completely) dependent on metaphorical conceptualisation when mentioning concepts which are removed from our human sensual experience, such as God, the soul, the hereafter, and the freedom of moral choice (Jäkel 2002, 23). This assumption encourages the examination of how metaphorical language works in religious discourse to extend the knowledge of human existence to what is beyond. Charteris-Black asserts that the effectiveness of metaphor within religious discourse is related to the fact that:

[I]t [metaphor] is a primary means by which the unknown can be conceptualised in terms of what is already known [...] metaphors are a natural means for exploring the possible forms that such divinity might take and for expressing religious experiences (Charteris-Black 2004, 173).

In connection with this idea, it is noticeable that in many religions, metaphors are the only means of representing abstract notions and concepts. The three major Abrahamic (monotheist) religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, generally portray the concept of 'God' in the Old and New Testaments and the Holy Qur'an in terms of metaphorical rather than literal language (Charteris-Black 2004). In fact, one could claim that a believer's knowledge about God is deficient because of the lack of any direct experience of Him. This is why metaphorical language can be the optimal tool to employ in religious discourse when referring to God.

Metaphorical language facilitates understanding of the nature of God by directing the perception to His absolute intrinsic qualities. For example, God is conventionally represented in Christianity and Judaism as a 'father', and in Islam He is represented using metaphors of 'light' (Charteris-Black 2004, 213). These images draw attention to particular symbolic qualities of God such as His power, His providential care, His indispensability and His perfection. Additionally, it is emphasised that metaphorical language plays a significant role in the creativity of any ideological discourse as it possesses an ideological significance which should be investigated (Fairclough 1995, 74). This can be achieved by showing how the metaphoric representation of a particular topic invokes differences in power, social practices, principles, thoughts and beliefs. As religious discourse involves a system of ideas and beliefs which can evoke ideological implications, metaphors are discursively used in religious language to link between this system of ideas and beliefs on the one hand and the distinctive system of values encompassed in religion. In this regard, the *psychosocial* dimension of the discourse assigns the inherent relationship between the psychological dimension of the individual, inner world of thoughts, feelings, desires, beliefs, values, cognition and ways in which people perceive themselves and others on the one hand and the existing set of relationships and environment of the individual in relation to the material world as well as the social and cultural context in which people live (Wink and Dillon 2003).

¹ It is conventionally in the field to represent conceptual metaphors using small upper-case letters.



For instance, in relation to the concept of God in the three Abrahamic (monotheistic) religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, one might argue that the two metaphoric representations of God as a 'father' and as 'light'¹ invoke dogmatic constituents. On basis of the religious beliefs of the three religions, the two metaphoric representations play an essential role within religious discourse in portraying the existence of God as a necessity for mankind and life. Similar to children, the conceptual metaphor GOD IS A FATHER accentuates that all men – and women – look for a father-figure to whom they repair in moments of despair. Meanwhile, the father-figure represents power and authority in the eyes of children. In addition, where God is represented using the metaphor of light in Islam, this image, in contrast to the image of darkness, reflects God's omnipotence since this resembles the forces that produce light such as the sun and fire necessary for life. And as God in Islam is portrayed as the ultimate source of light, He is cognitively conceptualised by Muslims as the primary source for the sustainability of life. In this respect, one can contend that the psychosocial dimension of the conceptual metaphor GOD IS LIGHT by arguing that this metaphorical scheme arouses the Muslim's sense of his own weakness and limitation in comparison to that of God. Accordingly, it is the overall set of affections, evaluations, and ideas associated with God as a FATHER and LIGHT which evoke a large set of dogmatic implications which play a significant role in shaping the psychosocial constituents of the discourse of Islamic society.

3. The Psychosocial Dimensions of the Prophet Muhammad's Metaphors

The Prophet Muhammad's tradition is a large collection of Sayings which encompass religious principles, laws, accounts which have been narrated directly from the Prophet by his followers. The importance of these Sayings stems from the fact that they are meant to manage the mutual relationships between members of Islamic society and their religion by authoritative legislations for the sake of introducing a discourse that encompasses the representations which construct the foundations of a new Islamic society. Accordingly, the Prophet's language reproduces the common social representations of early Arabic society to convey to them a new statement of faith with the aid of metaphorical language.

The Prophet Muhammad's discourse involve oral and written text that represents an organized form of human experience, and this representation is established through processes of recitation and interpretation of different events and in different contexts within historical, social, and religious domains of experience. As an instant of discourse, the Prophet Muhammad's Tradition involves 'a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment' (Hall 1992, 291). Norman Fairclough (1992, 28) regards discourse as a sort of *social practice*, and its analysis should focus on the ways by which social and political dominations are reproduced by texts and speeches because a discourse is 'shaped by relations of power, and invested with ideologies' (ibid., 8).

Fairclough's proposition above can be, to a great extent, applied to religious language too as it may reflect the existing difference in power and dominion. For instance, religious discourse can be perceived as a social practice itself that reproduces a set of ethical and dogmatic principles and laws which aim to resist social (and ethnical) inequality, oppression (power abuse), or ungrounded supremacy (domination). Thus, the term 'discourse' can be used to refer to the Prophet Muhammad's Tradition because it involves a large set of interrelated religious texts, and the practices of their production, dissemination, reception, and interpretation that introduce an intended divine message to its followers. The representations of these practices and the discursive strategies which the Prophet has employed to introduce them are based on a large set of recurring psychosocial dimensions which are derived from the distinctiveness of early Islamic society. In the Prophetic discourse and should involve which are metaphorically represented. What is more, metaphorical language is used here represent these dimensions.

The diversity of these dimensions in relevance to early Islamic context requires their classification. I hereby classify them according to their dogmatic constituents; and this involves: the dimension of identity, the dimension of authority and power through rulership and Islamic laws, the dimension of showing affiliation through rituals, the dimension of conflict with evil, and finally the ideological dimension of *us* versus the *other*.

3.1. The Dimension of Identity

Islam is recognised as a system of beliefs that is elaborated through the Holy Qur'an and the Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad's and his tradition. The word 'Islam' originates from the Arabic verb '*ʔaslama*', which means 'to accept, to surrender, or to submit to' (Ibn Manzur 1997, 'muslim'); thus the shade of meaning of Islam refers to the complete submission to the commands of God (*Allah*) and His orders and to renounce polytheism and avoiding what God declared unlawful. Hereby, the complete faith '*ʔymaan*' in God is introduced in Islamic religious discourse as the key factor that determines the inner identity of the Muslim, and it is recognised as an inherent capacity that man attains by birth; so all humans are innately endowed with this capacity and privilege to be Muslim.

This innate 'willingness to Islam' (called '*alfetra*') involves the instinctual innate knowledge that a person is endowed with, and which makes him/her properly distinguish good from evil (Ibn Manzur 1997, '*alfetra*'). According to Islamic theology, human beings are born with an innate inclination to believe in the existence of one omnipotent God (*Oneness*). However, the mystical nature of the concept '*fetra*' and its association with 'faith' is not recognised straightforwardly, and they should be conceptualised in connection to real-world human experience. Thus, 'faith' is

¹ Metaphors involving the notion of 'light' have been a common motif for early Arabic and Islamic philosophy. This motif has augmented the philosophical debates about the nature of God in Islam and its 'transience' and 'emanation'. For a detailed account of the topic look into Netton 1994.



perceived in the Prophetic discourse through conceptual ANIMALS and BEASTS source domains. The Prophet Muhammad states that *everyone*¹ is born with this 'willingness to Islam' (*‘alaa alfeṭra*) in the same manner that a beast (*albahaymah*) is typically born whole and not maimed (*Miṣkat*, 90: p. 26)².

The Prophet presents to his followers the reality of faith and *alfeṭra* on the basis of the conceptual metaphor SPIRITUAL QUALITIES ARE INNATE ANIMAL QUALITIES³ which is derived from the more generic metaphor HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR (Charteris-Black 2004, 237). This metaphorical representation puts forward the argument that faith is 'innate' to a degree that man is typically born as a monotheist Muslim. The conceptual metaphor involves the target domain 'spiritual qualities' of the believers understood through a cross domain mapping with conceptual domain of ANIMALS QUALITIES. These qualities are recognised by the believers from their familiarity with domestic animals such as horses and camels. On the basis of early Arabs' knowledge of real-world, the Prophet accentuates that faith in god (*alfeṭra*) is a sign of innate perfection which man has endowed with in the same manner a beast is born with all its body organs are complete and perfect. Davis (1999) emphasises that animal metaphors construct a rich domain of human experience because 'they are the projections from our concepts of the human subject 'onto nature''. Accordingly, the Muslim's identity is primarily presented as a universal integrating identity that is shared with all mankind. And this, in turn, brings to light the distinctiveness of the Islamic identity as a universal identity that is not linked to particular people or ethnicity.

The nature of faith and its importance to establish the identity of the believer is presented by the Prophet Muhammad through another metaphor from the ANIMALS QUALITIES source domain. As the Prophet asserts how faith is - naturally - subject to alteration, the true believer's inner state of faith in God is constant. The Prophet compares the inherent relationship between faith and the believer to that of a horse (*faras*) tethered to its stake (*?axeyah*) (*Miṣkat*, 4250: p. 900). The constant state of true faith is represented here in terms of the two conceptual metaphors A BELIEVER IS A TETHERED HORSE and FAITH IS A STAKE. As a vital aspect of the Muslim's unique identity, faith is portrayed as the moral self-constraint, or a 'rope', that prevents the believer from being led astray. This metaphoric representation is derived from common sense and early Arabs simple familiarity with animals' aptitude to go astray when left unattended or tethered. Here, this metaphoric representation emphasises how the Muslim is asked to maintain and preserve his Islamic identity. This psychosocial dimension of the conceptual metaphors derived from the conceptual domain of ANIMAL QUALITIES constructs an important aspect of the Muslim's distinctive identity that distinguishes him from other people who do not believe in God.

Islam collective identity is also represented in the Prophetic discourse by the STRAIGHT PATH source domain. Muslims, who are identified from their inner state of faith, follow the 'path' that leads them to attain God's forgiveness and His reward in Paradise. The STRAIGHT PATH metaphor distinguishes two kinds of people: those who 'follow' the sound path and accept 'guidance' from the Qur'an and the Prophet, and those who 'follow' the wrong path which will 'lead them astray' to fall in the unlawful. This sound 'path' is recognised in the Prophet's language as the '*Sunnah*' (meaning 'path and habit') (Ibn Manzur 1997, '*Sunnah*'). For example, the Prophet persistently urges his followers to follow his *Sunna* as⁴:

- (1) ... You [the believers] must therefore 'follow' [Original Arabic 'be adherent to' '*‘alaykum be*'] my *Sunna* and that of the rightly guided Caliphs. (*Miṣkat*, 165: p. 44)

Here, the Saying reveal an important aspect of Muslims' collective identity where the Prophet's and his rightly guided Caliphs' sound habits and usual practices is conceptualised as the sound PATH (*Sunna*) that has to be followed. The identity psychosocial dimension of this metaphoric representation stems from the conceptual metaphor ISLAM (THE PROPHET'S SUNNA) IS A PATH. This representation constructs Muslims' collective identity that distinguishes them from others. Here, the experiential basis of this metaphor is derived from the conventional aptitude to represent goals and achievement in terms of a target that may be reached by following a defined path (Kövecses 2002). In this regard, working to attain God's paradise is conceptualised in terms of following a path to reach a desired target.

3.2. The Dimension of Authority and Power: Rulership and Islamic Laws

Islamic laws involve the set of orders and principles believed to be decreed by God conveyed through the Qur'an and the Prophetic Tradition. These laws are traditionally referred to as *Shari'ah* meaning 'way' or 'path' to water resources

¹ Original Arabic *kullu mawluuden*; which means 'every newborn'.

² My examples are extracted from the Arabic version of *Miṣkat Al-MaSaabiḥ (the Niche of Lamps)*, and all of the relevant information on the English translations and commentaries on the Sayings of this study were taken from *Miṣkat Al-MaSaabiḥ: English Translation with Explanatory Notes* by James Robson (Robson 1965). The original collection (*Miṣkat*) is considered to be one of the most authentic secondary collections of the Prophetic Tradition. For centuries, this collection has been subject to much meticulous investigation and refinement. Now, it involves about 5,600 Sayings; over half of which were collected from the Al-Bukhari and Muslim's Collections of Sound Tradition (the primary collections of the Prophet Muhammad's Sound Sayings). A digital copy (doc.) of *Miṣkat* can be downloaded from Meshkat Islamic Network for Arabic digital books (www.almeshkat.net/books/open.php?cat=8&book=1762).

³ As I indicated earlier, it is conventional in the field of cognitive linguistics to represent conceptual metaphors in small upper-case letters.

⁴ For purposes of elucidation, metaphoric keywords from the source domain are represented in **bold** and their Arabic transliteration are represented in *italic* between two single quotation marks 'xxx', whereas elements from the target domain are represented underlined.



(Ibn Manzur 1997, 'Shari'ah'), and they are meant to be implemented and applied to govern the Muslims' lives in the Islamic state¹. The etymology of the notion *Shari'ah* and its association to water resources emphasises its indispensability as that the path to water is the whole way of life in an arid desert environment like that of Arabia (Weiss 1998, 17). Hence, the application and implementation of the *Shari'ah* has been assigned to the Muslim ruling authority. The Qur'an commands that:

... Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieves after this, they are *Fasiqun* (rebellious, disobedient to Allah). (*Surah An-Nur*, the Light, 24: 55).

According to Wuthnow, history has witnessed how religious dwellers tend to accept traditional forms of religious authority and in which they 'inhabit' a divine space which is created for them by established religious institutions (Wuthnow 1998). In the Prophetic discourse, the importance of the authority is understood in relevance to the concept of 'rightly-guided rulership' which has been constantly emphasised using metaphorical representations which assign to the Muslim ruler the qualities of the representative of God on earth. For example, the Prophet Muhammad asserts that:

(2) The sultan [the Muslim ruler] is **God's shade** '*Zellu*' on the earth **to which each one of His servants who is wronged** '*maZluum*' repairs '*ya?wy*'.... (*Miškāt*, 3718: p. 789)

The conceptual metaphors THE SULTAN IS SHADE and GOD'S JUSTICE IS SHADE in the Saying positively evaluates the target domain '*Sultan*'. Given the experiential basis of the metaphor, the climate of the land of Arabia at the Prophet's time was not exactly friendly for the nomadic Arabs. Soaring temperatures in that arid region, especially during long and rainless summers, expose much hardship onto its inhabitants. Herein, and in such a land where the sun rises with a burning heat and 'strike' by day, the roofs of the houses are seen more as a shield from the sun, and the travellers seek relief from the heat in the 'shade' of trees or the shadow great rocks. Thus, the image of 'repair' to the shade of God is understood in terms of the person's natural need to seek protection against the heat of the sun. This entails that the heat of the sun refers to injustice, and the just Muslim ruler 'Sultan' is the source of protection against this heat. And this protection is reinforced through the concepts of God's mercy and His care to His subjects as reflected through applying Islamic laws - impartially - among members of Islamic society. This image also constructs part of the identity of integration which characterise Muslim and Islamic society where all members of that society, regardless of their religious beliefs, are treated equally by the Muslim ruler.

2.3. The Dimension of Showing Affiliation through Rituals

This dimension involves the distinctiveness of the believer's Islamic identity as materialised through his observance to the prescribed rituals to reflect his inner state of faith in God. There are many mandatory rituals in Islam which are performed as a duty, and the Muslim cannot be exempted from without an allowed excuse. These duties relate to tasks which every Muslim is required to perform, such as daily prayer (*Salaah*), or the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime (*ḥajj*). Those two duties are among other five of mandatory rituals which are considered the 'pillars of Islam'²; the Prophet declares:

(3) Islam is based '*buneya*' on five things [**pillars**]: the testimony that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger, the observance of the prayer, the payment of *zakaat* [obligatory charity], the pilgrimage, and the fast during Ramadan. (*Miškāt*, 4: p. 6)

The metaphor 'pillars of Islam' reflects an important constituent of believer's Islamic identity as materialised through his actions. This distinctive identity is represented through an image of 'building' process to emphasise the conception of achievement through the conceptual metaphor THE ONE'S ISLAM IS A BUILDING. Such a metaphor can be perceived as an elaboration of the metaphor CREATING AN ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEM IS BUILDING (Kövecses 2002, 131) where the conceptual target domain THE ONE'S ISLAM in the metaphor is understood in terms of images of construction. This metaphoric representation involves a large variety of metaphoric entailments because it can be deconstructed into several simple metaphoric representations such as CREATING AN ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEM IS BUILDING, THE STRUCTURE OF AN ABSTRACT SYSTEM IS THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF A BUILDING, and A LASTING ABSTRACT SYSTEM IS A STRONG BUILDING (ibid.). Thus, as one's own Islam can be viewed as a complex system of beliefs and deeds prescribed through laws and principles, the psychosocial dimension of conceptualising Islamic identity in terms of metaphors from the CONSTRUCTION conceptual domain reflect another aspect of the multifaceted characteristic of the Muslim's identity. As it is portrayed innate and inherent, it is here represented dynamic and subject to development in the same manner a complex structure is built and organised.

¹ Islam scholars have categorised humans' behaviours within a scale of fine lawful and bad prohibited ones, so what a man performs can be obligatory (*farḍ*), recommended (*mustaḥabb*), neutral (*mubaah*), discouraged (*makruuh*), and forbidden (*ḥaraam*).

² The Pillars of Islam involve the profession of faith (*ṣahadah*), performing the five daily prayers (*Salaat*), giving of obligatory charity (*zakaat*), fasting during the month of Ramadan (*Sawm*), and pilgrimage to Mecca (*ḥajj*) at least once in life.



Observing the five obligatory rituals represent a vital part of the Muslim's identity by which he preserves his inner state of faith. Thus, the prescribed obligatory prayers are also recognised as a visible indication of the Muslim's inner state of faith that distinguishes his Islamic identity. In fact, the prayers are performed according to well-defined conditions, practices, and times, and they are considered the direct, and indispensable, mean of communication with God. The Prophet emphasizes that:

- (4) The **covenant** ^c*ahd* between us and them [the non-believers or hypocrites] is prayer, so if anyone **abandons** *'tarakhaa'* it he has become an infidel. (*Miškāt*, 574: p. 115)

The chief purpose of *Salah* in Islam is to act as a Muslim's communication with and remembrance of God. As required in all prayers, the worshipper stands before God to thank and praise Him, and to ask for His guidance along the Lord's 'straight path' of faith. In addition, they are prescribed as the primary means of restraining the believer from social wrongs and moral deviancy (the Qur'an 29:45). And in the Prophetic Tradition it is considered as 'the best deed' (*Sahih al-Bukhari* 4:52:41). Accordingly, the importance of obligatory prayers in establishing the Muslim's identity is likened to that of the strict 'covenant' (^c*ahd*) on the basis of the conceptual metaphor THE PRAYERS IS A COVENANT.

In this metaphor, the significance of the target domain PRAYERS is highlighted by resembling it to the source domain COVENANT by a cross-domain mapping to conceptualise the prayers as a formal that is made between two or more persons to do (or not do) something specified. In this respect, the 'obligatory prayers' are depicted as a COVENANT to recognise them as a permanent formal promises which were made under the oath of swearing allegiance to Islam.

2.4. The Dimension of Conflict with Evil

Islamic religious language constantly places the Muslim in a state of conflict with his desires. Metaphorical language is used by the Prophet Muhammad to warn the believers against sin and evil deeds. Remarkably, most of these metaphors are extracted from the conceptual domains DESTRUCTIVE FORCES where Islam is assigned a sort of AGENTIVE nature. For example, the Prophet describes the power of Islam over other decaying, and deviant, religious beliefs by presenting it as destructive force for all preceding unsound beliefs. The Prophet states:

- (5) Do you not know, 'Amr [one of the Prophet's companions], that Islam demolishes *'yahdemu* what preceded it..." (*Miškāt*, 28: p. 11)

The Prophet depicts Islam as an AGENT that demolishes what had been 'built' before the emergence of Islam. Islam stands for an AGENT who 'demolishes' (*yahdem*) *aljaahaleya* (Age of Ignorance) represented in terms of a BUILDING source domain in the Saying; and following the conceptual metaphor CREATING AN ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEM IS BUILDING discussed earlier. Hereby, the target domain ISLAM is assigned the agentive capacity that allows it to obliterate the preceding unsound beliefs, especially polytheism, and their consequences. This obliteration process is presented here in terms of a process of demolishing a complex structure and rebuilding a new one in its place.

In addition, the Prophet warns against the spread of state of division among Muslims by standing against the emergence of ungrounded 'novelties' (*beda*^o) in religion. The emergence of novelties among Muslims especially those which are the result of the following of one's passions make Muslims deviate from the original principles of Islam and which are decreed in the Qur'an and the Prophetic Tradition. Here, the Prophet depicts these novelties and evil passions as threat. For instance, the Prophet warns that '...folk will come forth from among my people in whom those passions *'?ahwaa?* will afflict them as does hydrophobia *'alkalab'* in one who suffers from it, permeating every vein and joint' (*Miškāt*, 172: p. 45). In this Saying, the conceptual metaphor PASSIONS ARE DISEASES defines the reality of novelties (*beda*^o) which are not based on religion or not from the Qur'an and the Prophet's *Sunnah*. Novelties here are portrayed by a threat to Islam and Islamic society. The metaphor of hydrophobia from the EPIDEMIC DISEASES conceptual domain draws attention to the speed by which these novelties spread and their destructive effect to Islamic society.

In another respect, and although drinking wine was a common practice during pre-Islamic and early Islamic period, the beverage of spirituals is prohibited in Islam as it is stated in the Holy Qur'an¹. The Prophet also warns that wine has destructive effect on the believer and society as 'it is the key *'meftaañ'* to every evil.' (*Miškāt*, 580: p. 117). Wine is prohibited in Islam because it facilitates the uncontrollable release of one's evil desires in the same manner as evil deeds and all what is deemed to be unlawful are represented in terms of a substance contained in a firmly sealed container following the conceptual metaphor EVIL IS A SUBSTANCE IN A CONTAINER. This metaphoric representation accentuates that Muslim should avoid and stand against all what might afflict his inner state of faith.

2.4. The Ideological Dimension: the Us vs. the Other

In the time of the Prophet Muhammad, *Medina* was the home of various groups and ethnicities such as Christians, Jews, and *majuu*s (the Zoroastrians). As Islam considers the existence of such diversity natural, the Prophet Muhammad accentuates this diversity because his message is meant to be universal. In his discourse, the Prophet

¹ The mentioning of wine in the Holy Qur'an appears in three different places. At first, it was forbidden for Muslims to attend prayers while intoxicated (*Surah an-nisa'*, the Women, 4:43). The next step in turning people away from wine consumption is achieved by a later verse that was 'revealed' and which said that alcohol contains some good and some evil, but the evil is greater than the good (*Surah al-baqarah*, the Cow, 2: 219). Finally, a verse was 'revealed' stating that 'intoxicants and games of chance were some sort of the abominations of Satan's handiwork; so Muslims must avoid them all' (*Surah al-ma'edah*, the Table Spread with Food, 5:90-91).



Muhammad addresses all components of Islamic society, and he encourages Muslims to approve their fine qualities and moral values and implement them when he says:

- (6) **Men**¹ [Original Arabic 'people'] '*alnaas*' are of different origins [Original Arabic 'minerals'] '*ma'aaden*' just as **gold** '*dahab*' and **silver** '*feḍah*' are; the best '*xeyaruhum*' among them in the pre-Islamic period are the best among them in Islam when they are versed '*faqehuu*' in the religion. (*Miškāt*, 201: p. 50)

In the Saying above, moral values construct a key aspect that distinguishes members of Islamic society. These qualities are recognised inherent in the same manner valuable minerals are recognised. Hereby, people's moral values are recognised in terms of the conceptual metaphor PEOPLE ARE (VALUABLE) MINERALS. Thus, the best (*xeyaruhum*) amongst people are those who keep their values and ameliorate them by joining Islam and being 'versed' (*faqehuu*) in it. The conceptual basis of this representation entails the existence of individual differences between people on the basis of their moral qualities and sound deeds. This leads to the inevitability to set a typology by which the components of Islamic society are categorised. Since the state of faith is constantly introduced as the distinctive constituent of the identity; thus the components of Islamic society can be categorised into believers and disbelievers. More precisely, this involves Muslims, Jews and Christians, and the disbelievers.

Muslims are the adherents of Islam who accepted to follow the message of God transmitted in the Qur'an and revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Herby, Muslims believe that there is only one God, *Allah*, whom they worship and that the Prophet Muhammad is His last messenger. For this reason, the Prophet refers to Muslims as '*?umaty*' (my people) to indicate the degree they enjoy by being associated to him, and to distinguish them from other people: the disbelievers.

As mentioned earlier, the identity psychosocial dimension of Muslims has been frequently conveyed in the Prophetic discourse through metaphors derived from the NATURE, ANIMALS, and PLANTS source domains. For example, the Prophet says:

- (7) Rejoice and rejoice again. **My people** are just like the **rain** '*ḡayṯ*', it not being known whether the last or the first of it is better; or it is like a **garden** '*ḥadyqa*' from which a troop can be **fed** for a year, then another troop can be **fed** for a year, and perhaps the last troop which comes may be the **broadest, deepest and finest**. (*Miškāt*, 6278: p. 1348)

The Prophet here portrays his people who believed in his message by pleasant metaphoric representation which are based on the conceptual metaphors THE PROPHET'S PEOPLE ARE RAIN and THE PROPHET'S PEOPLE ARE A GARDEN to emphasise how they are considered a source of good and contentment on earth. Both RAIN and GARDEN source domains convey the idea of how Muslims are different from other people because their benefit to earth is continuous and eternal like rain and the productive garden of fruit; and this can be entailed from the Saying above on the basis of the conceptual metaphor IMPLEMINTING FINE QUALITIES IS GARDENING.

Additionally, Muslims are collectively represented in the Prophet Muhammad's discourse in terms of organs of the body to emphasise the believers' unity and solidarity. The Prophet says:

- (8) You see the **believers** in their mutual pity, love and affection like **one body** '*jasad*'. When one member **has a complaint** '*?eštakaa*' the rest of the body is **united** '*tada'aa*' with it in **wakefulness and fever**. (*Miškāt*, 4953: p. 1032)

In this Saying, the Prophet's encourages the believer to adhere to the concept of collective responsibility by relying on the conceptual metaphor SOCIETY IS A BODY to conceptualise the homogeneity of Islamic society where each member takes care of the others.

The conceptual metaphor SOCIETY IS A BODY characterises an important aspect of political language evoked by the Prophet. In the Saying above, the conceptual representation of Islamic society, or State, as HUMAN BODY is based on a mapping with elements from the semantic domain of illness and diseases. The conceptual basis of the inferential relationship between the stability and harmony of society and the physical state of the human body is derived from a set of conceptual metaphors such as: AN APPROPRIATE CONDITION IS A HEALTHY CONDITION; INAPPROPRIATE CONDITIONS ARE ILLNESSES; and THE STRUCTURE OF AN ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEM IS THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BODY (Kövecses 2002, 134). One aspect of this real-world knowledge is our ability to make a diagnosis of an afflicted body organ by identifying and examining the symptoms appeared on another organ such as the skin. Again, this metaphoric representation reflects the psychosocial dimension of Islamic identity which the Muslims have acquired when they have joined Islam and adhered to its principles.

From another perspective, Jews and Christians - known as 'the People of The Book' (*?ahlu alketaab*) - have lived with Muslims and remained faithful to their original religious beliefs under the reign of Islam. For centuries, Jews and Christians have been governed with Muslims by a special ethical covenant which had granted them the rights of residence with Muslims in return of a special tax (*aljezya*) (Glenn 2007, 218-219). The Prophet emphasises that ethical covenant is implemented for the benefit of the adherents of the three religions who collectively constitute the larger Islamic society.

¹ The original Arabic version of the Saying does not explicitly state 'Men', it says 'people' (*alnaas*) which is a collective noun that does not denote a particular marker.



The basis of this covenant stems from the proposition - as the messenger of God - the Prophet Mohammed had been sent to confirm the earlier teachings of Jews and Christians but also to correct them where they had gone wrong (Charteris-Black 2004, 225). Thus, Islam is recognised as a 'continuation' of the preceding celestial Abrahamic messages which deviated from the original path, and it has come to re-guide Jews and Christians to the straight path from which they have deviated. Accordingly, the relationship between Muslims on the one hand and the people of the book on the other is conventionally represented by images of journeying along a path. For example, the Prophet states that - as the last Prophet - people must *follow* 'yattabe^cu' his guidance because his message is based on the very same 'path' of the preceding prophets. He says:

- (9) Are you in a **state of confusion** as the Jews and the Christians were? [...], and if Moses were alive he would feel it absolutely necessary to **follow** 'yattabe^cu' me. (*Miškāt*, 177: p. 46)

The Prophet accentuates that the adherent the Judaism, Christianity, and Islam principally follow the same 'path' here; however, he gives emphasis also to the proposition that they have been in a state of confusion that made them deviate from the right path. Jews and Christians, the Prophet informs, can only be back to sound path by following the 'steps' of those believers who preceded them. This metaphoric scenario puts into practice the conceptual metaphors THE DIVINE MESSAGE IS A PATH and SPIRITUAL LIFE IS A JOURNEY. The Prophet then emphasises that Muslims have the initial privilege of following the sound 'path', and that their traces must be followed by the people following them in order to reach their appointed destination safely.

In addition, a cooperative relationship between Muslims from the one hand and Jews and Christians on the other is understood in Islam using metaphors from the semantic domains of professions. As Islam is deemed as a continuation of Judaism and Christianity, Jews, Christians, and Muslims are depicted by the Prophet Muhammad in terms of the LABOURERS source domain. In this regard, Jews, Christians, and Muslims are assigned by God to complete the job of handling His divine message and conveying it to mankind. The Prophet patently states:

- (10) ... A comparison between you and the Jews and Christians is like a man who **employed** 'ʔesta^cmala' labourers 'umaal' and said, 'Who will work for me till midday for a *qirat* each?' The Jews **worked** till midday for a *qirat* each, and then he said, 'Who **will work** for me from midday till the afternoon prayer for a *qirat* each?' The Christians **worked** from midday till the afternoon prayer for a *qirat* each, and then he said, 'Who **will work** for me from the afternoon prayer till sunset for two *qirats* each?' I assure you that you are the ones who **work** from the afternoon prayer till sunset and that you **will have the reward** twice over. ... (*Miškāt*, 6274: p. 1383)

The metaphors LIFE IS A DAYTIME, THE DIVINE MESSAGE IS A PAID JOB, and JEWS AND CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS ARE LABOURERS reflect on of the psychosocial dimensions of the Prophetic metaphors by which the universality of the divine message and the common nature and purpose of the three Abrahamic religions is creatively illustrated. This illustrated image reflects the Prophet's contention of the cooperative common affiliation of all the adherents of the three Abrahamic religions to one sacred mission. Thus, this proposition reduces the degree of dichotomy of the scheme *us* versus *them* when contemplating the relationship between Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Islamic society which the Prophet wants to create.

In another respect, Islamic society in the time of the Prophet involved the 'disbelievers', or 'infidels' (*kuffaar*) who rejected believing the existence of God and denied the truth of Islam by explicitly defying its principles. However, Muslims are constantly asked to invite the disbelievers to Islam by means of the fine word. However, the Prophet portrays those who reject the invitation and insist on disbelief using negative metaphorical representations. Most of these representations are derived from the semantic domains of colours – especially black – and odours. For example:

- (11) ...When an infidel's death is near the angels of punishment bring him hair-cloth and say, 'Come out displeased and subject to displeasure, to the punishment from God who is great and glorious.' The soul comes out with a **stench** like the most **unpleasant** 'ʔantan' **stench** 'reyñ' of a **corpse**, they take him to the gate of the earth and say, '**How offensive is this odour!**'. They finally bring him to the souls of the infidels. (*Miškāt*, 1629: p. 339)
- (12) '...but when an infidel is about to leave the world and proceed to the next world, angels with **black faces** come down to him from heaven with hair-cloth and sit away from him as far as the eye can see. Then the angel of death comes and sits at his head and says, 'Wicked soul, come out to displeasure from God.' Then it becomes dissipated in his body, and he draws it out as a **spit** [iron filing] 'assafuud' **is drawn out from moistened wool** 'Suuf mabluuf'. He then seizes it, and when he does so they do not leave it in his hand for an instant, but put it in that hair-cloth and from it there comes forth a **stench like the most offensive stench of a corpse** 'ʔntan reyñe jeyfaten' found on the face of the earth....' (*Miškāt*, 1630: p. 340)

The message of Sayings 11 and 12 above refers to the degree of mortification which the disbelievers deserve because of their disobedience to God's orders and disrespect to Islam. The metaphors SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE IS DARKNESS, THE INFIDEL'S SOUL IS A SPIT IN MOISTENED WOOL, and SPIRITUAL DECLINE IS MOTION DOWNWARD in addition to the metonymic principles THE QUALITY OF THE FACE FOR THE QUALITY OF ITS BEARER and THE QUALITY OF THE FRAGRANCE FOR THE QUALITY OF ITS BEARER make a group of pejorative representations to warn the recipient(s) against the consequences of abandoning Islam. Phillip perceives that colour metaphors are influenced by metonymy, because most of the connotative meanings assigned to colours in a given culture seem to be grounded to reality (Phillip 2006). So, the connotative values of colours are basically constructed from conventional



linguistic usage constructed around traditional and folk beliefs about the meaning of colour in particular context. Thus, the Prophet emphasises that Muslims, and those who believe on God, should be distinguished from those who do not believe in the same manner we distinguish the white colour from black. The emergence of this distinction in the Prophet Muhammad's discourse and its conceptualisation in terms of contrasting visual and odour representation emphasizes psychosocial dimension of the dichotomy of *us* versus *them* when contemplating the relationship between Muslims and the disbelievers in the Islamic society. Accordingly, the metaphoric scenario above indicates that the one's distinctiveness and superiority is only attained through adherence to faith in God, and this allows the Prophet to negatively portray the disbelievers in God in contrast to the believers of the three Abrahamic religions.

To summarise, it is palpable from the previous illustration that the metaphoric representation of interrelated Islamic constituents in the Prophetic discourse indicates the most significant aspects of the psychosocial dimensions and dogmatic usages of metaphorical language in Islam. The abstract nature of religious language requires resorting to ontological representations which gives additional information about the topic represented on the basis of the audience's real-world knowledge and familiarity with conceptual domains derived from their environment the conceptual PATH and JOURNEY source domains (Charteris-Black 2004, 225). Hence, metaphorical language is used in the Prophetic discourse to conceptualise faith, Islamic rituals and practices for the sake of indicating the significance of revealing faith as a substantial identity-mark in Islamic society. In addition, the Prophet accentuates the concept of judicious and rightly-guided rulership in his metaphors where the application of God's commands on earth is a decisive factor that characterises the Islamic identity. Still, the Prophet accepts the existence of diversity on the basis of accepting others' religious practices and adopting their sound moral values. Hence, the true believers are represented using pleasant metaphoric representations which reflect their solid faith in God and their benefit to life. On the other hand, Jews and Christians are depicted as been wronged and led astray; so they must be led again to the original path of faith. In turn, Muslims, Jews, and Christians' faith in God distinguishes them from the disbelievers who are represented negatively because they, and their sinful deeds, are portrayed as a threat to Islamic society and religion.

2. The Psychosocial Dimension of the Prophet Muhammad's Metaphors

In her book *Metaphor and Religious Language*, Janet Martin Soskice (1985) drew attention to the indispensable relationship between metaphor and religious language when she accentuated that what is needed to study in religious language is not a more literal theology but a better understanding of metaphor. She perceives that the analysis of metaphor in religious language illuminates the way in which the clergy speak of God and contributes to revealing how our understanding of metaphors in religious language can facilitate the way we perceive sciences and other disciplines. In addition, Soskice emphasises the role of metaphors in creating new perspectives to increase humans' understanding of religious notions especially if they are very abstract and difficult to recognize without the metaphor. She argues that by the creation of new perspectives, successful metaphors expand humans' descriptive powers when other types of linguistic expressions fail (Soskice 1985, 66).

Generally, the Prophetic metaphors are characterised by their simplicity where the source and target domains and conceptual mappings involved are easily recognisable. The significance of the simplicity of the Prophetic metaphors constructs a vital factor that affects the persuasiveness of the Prophetic message and its psychosocial dimensions. The Prophetic discourse is deemed by Muslims to be of *divine* nature, and this nature – one may argue – increases the persuasiveness of the Prophetic message. So, one may still raise the question of what are the reasons behind this copious utilization of metaphors in the Prophetic Tradition to construct a well-defined set of dogmatic constituents despite of its inherent divine persuasiveness.

In addition to the justification presented by Soskice with regard of the use of metaphorical language in religious discourse to conceptualise abstract religious concepts, the copious use of the Prophetic metaphors as a persuasive device that reflects the psychosocial dimensions of Islamic discourse can be recognised from one of the assumptions of the Elaboration Likelihood Model. This model proposes that there are two routes to persuasion, *central* and *peripheral* (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). Thus, the language of the Prophetic discourse, and its metaphors, can be recognised as the *central route* which involves processes that transmit the messages of the discourse. These processes require a relatively larger degree of cognitive effort by the discourse recipient resulted from a careful examination of the context of persuasion, and this makes the Prophetic metaphors dominate the message of the discourse showing a higher degree of elaboration in the persuasive situation based on the message recipient's unique cognitive and evaluative responses. On the other hand, the presumed divine nature of the Prophetic discourse, in addition to the Prophet Muhammad's credibility, can be seen as the *peripheral route* which involves the processes that rely chiefly on environmental characteristics of the discourse. Accordingly, the choice of metaphors in the Prophetic discourse can be considered an indispensable discursive practice by which the reader or the listener of the Prophetic Tradition who carefully evaluates the content of its message could be persuaded by the *central route*. A less thoughtful (passive) message recipient who relies on simple clues and who is satisfied by the divine nature of the Prophetic message will evaluate the same message and accept it through the *peripheral route* (Walton 2007, 86).

From another perspective related to the psychology of the message producer and receiver, one can argue in favour of the position that a persuasive discourse must use a language that appears *natural* to both the discourse maker and audience. The use of natural and spontaneous language creates a bond of solidarity between the discourse maker and his/her audience. Charteris-Black argues that the choice of metaphor in a particular discourse depends on individual, social (and ideological) factors (Charteris-Black 2004, 248); the metaphor producer first introduces the metaphor that reflects his/her thoughts, feelings, and bodily experience, and he/she takes into consideration the common understanding of what makes an argument more effective in a context, and this is bound to the discourse



maker's experiential and linguistic knowledge. On the other hand, the social basis must involve the ideologies, policies, and cultural knowledge which characterise the society where the discourse is delivered (ibid.). With regard to the first factor, the recipient of the Prophetic discourse can notice the abundant use of metaphors which involve BODY PARTS in their source domains and which reflect one aspect of the Prophet's human experiences with his own body. The use of conventional metaphors in the Prophetic Tradition (especially those from the conceptual domains of CONTAINER and BODY PARTS) which provide ontological and epistemic knowledge about abstract notions and entities construct a reflection of the pervasiveness of metaphorical language in everyday language.

On the other hand, employing the less conventional, or novel, metaphors in a didactic discourse like the Prophetic Tradition puts more emphasis on its persuasive role on the one hand, and the aspect of the quality of language on the other. In the first, the critical analysis of metaphors in discourse predicts that the choice of novel metaphors can be seen as a conscious selection of one linguistic form to make a discourse persuasive; and this choice can be explained with reference to individual and social considerations (Charteris-Black 2004, 249). Thus, from an Arabo-Islamic psychosocial dimension, we find in the Prophetic Tradition that many metaphorical representations are derived from early Arabs' or the Prophet's own experience; such as metaphors from the domain of JOURNEY and PASTURALISM. Novel metaphors characterise the Prophetic *style* and make it appear *extraordinary* enough to call the audience's attention to the Prophet's linguistic and rhetorical competence and to make it appear more *dynamic* and *less static or monotonous*.

In another respect, the choice of metaphors in the Prophetic Tradition appears to be motivated by the existence of a unique doctrine and ideology. The introduction of abstract religious notions requires that intelligibility of these concepts by the discourse recipient without raising any sort of ambiguity. For example, one of the ideological bases of Prophetic metaphors relies on accepting that the believer is in a constant state of *conflict* with the devil; starting from the day when Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise after eating from the tree. This conflict is materialised by the believers' resistance to their own desires and worldly passions and overcoming the devil's temptations. Herein, metaphorical language is used in the Prophetic Tradition to define the ideological basis of this spiritual CONFLICT. For example, in one Saying, the Prophet emphasises the simplicity of Islamic law by drawing the image of the SHEPHERD and the PRESERVE (*Miškāt*, 2762: p. 592) and in which he illustrates the image of performing an unlawful deed in terms of physical FALLING in which he depicts the individual as a SHEPHERD who pastures (*yar'aa*) his animals near a forbidden PRESERVE (*alḥemaa*). This shepherd, the individual, will soon find himself – by mistake – breaking the law because some of his animals might have stepped into the forbidden preserve and started grazing in it. Here, the Prophetic metaphor in the Saying is derived from the ideological basis of Islamic dogmatic constituents which regard God as the supreme authority, or the KING, who has his own forbidden preserve. This preserve is a representation of the things which He has declared unlawful. In this case, the metaphoric representation UNLAWFUL DEEDS IS THE ACT OF ENTERING A PRESERVED PASTURE constructs a convenient way to express the precise idea of the existence of doubt as to what is lawful (*ḥalaal*) and what is unlawful (*ḥaraam*) in Islam. Obviously, the metaphorical scenario of GOD'S PRESERVE is rhetorically used to bridge the gap between what is spiritual and what is cultural and material in Islamic religious discourse which in turn reflects another psychosocial dimension of Islamic religious discourse.

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