



APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master (M.A.) in Islamic Civilization

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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND CIVILIZATION
(ISTAC)**

**AL-GHAZĀLĪ ON ADMINISTRATIVE ETHICS
(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS *NAṢĪḤAT AL-MULŪK*)**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND
CIVILIZATION
(ISTAC)
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE M.A. DEGREE**

**BY
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**KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
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To the undying memory of my beloved father,
Haji Abdul Samad bin Mahmood,
May God place him among the *Ṣāliḥūn*

بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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PREFACE

After graduating from the International Islamic University, Malaysia, I had the intention of furthering my studies abroad, realizing that most of my friends decided to do so. Being an Economic graduate, the best thing I thought then was for me to do a Master in Business Administration (MBA), a professional degree which seems to be very lucrative for someone who intends to join the corporate, until one day in 1994, one of my close friends, Mr. Wan Mohd Nasruddin Wan 'Abdullah, handed me a book by Professor Dr. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas entitled *Islam and Secularism*.

I read the book, though admittedly it was a tough philosophical treatise, with enjoyment not only for its contents but for the powerful command of the language and logic Prof. Al-Attas used therein which I really admire. I read it again and again until I really grasped its content. Still undecided where to go, I consulted my father on the possibility of me applying to study at ISTAC. To my surprise, he supported me and recalled his own experience as an undergraduate at the University of Malaya in late 60's and early 70's, on the fame and genius of Professor Al-Attas. He then advised me to find in his personal library a book written by Professor al-Attas, *The Origin of the Malay Sha'ir*, for my further reading, which he claimed to be very impressive. Truly it is.

Finally, *Islam Dalam Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Melayu* is another work that really amazed me to be a humble student of Professor al-Attas at ISTAC. Without any exaggeration, of all the books particularly the Malay book that I have ever read, *Islam Dalam Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan Melayu* is a masterpiece *par excellence* that truly deserves due recognition, and in the words of Anwar Ibrahim, 'not only for its contents

but also its form, expressive diction and superb delivery which elevated the descriptive power of the Malay language as a scientific language with such eloquence and magnificence.'

I joined ISTAC in 1995 and after completing my courseworks, I was still in the dark as to what should be written for my thesis. When I was assigned to help the Administration of ISTAC, I began to develop interest in administration and decided to explore in the Islamic administrative literature, which hitherto has not been seriously dealt with by our scholars here. If the West are so proud with all sorts of administrative and management theories and concepts propounded by their experts like Henri Fayol, Harold Kobutz, E. C. Eyre and later people like Peter Drucker, Edward De Bono, to name but a few, -- we the Muslims too, should also be proud of our own scholars who have written copious works in this field, if we dare spend some time exploring these resources from our rich mine of Islamic literature on civilization. Al-Ghazālī's *Nasihat al-Mulūk* is undoubtedly one of them.

Kuala Lumpur,
1st January 2000

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In the course of exploring the thought of this great scholar, I have received tremendous support and help from many people to whom I am very grateful and indebted and whose names cannot be mentioned all here.

Above all, the first and foremost, my gratitude is due to the Almighty Allah for His guidance and blessings that enabled me to complete this task after such a long endurance. Praise and Peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. for the light that he has brought with him, extracting us from the darkness of total ignorance.

My deepest gratitude goes to YM Prof. Dr. Syed Muhammad Naqib al-Attas, the Founder-Director of ISTAC, for giving me this precious opportunity to be his student, advising us to become a true and competent scholar of international caliber.

Prof. Dr. Wan Mohd. Nor Wan Daud, not only the Deputy Director but also a man of many tasks from being students' academic advisor, theses supervisor, administrator, to course schedule planner, is the next person whom I should be grateful and indebted. Prof. Wan's brotherly advice on academic and personal matters shall I always cherish. I could never imagine a deputy vice chancellor of any university doing jobs that have been done by Prof. Wan. In spite of all those heavy responsibilities, he still manages to find time to meet the students, solves their problems and give them motivation.

The next person that I should be grateful is my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Ipirli, for his fatherly advice, dedication and sincere guidance showed to me. His mastership on Islamic sources indeed has helped me a lot in understanding these new

fields for me, namely history and administration. He was also the responsible person who guided me to systematic note takings, resource collections and thesis outlining.

My thanks should also go to Tuan Hj. Mat Ali Mat Daud, the Registrar of ISTAC, a person who is less talking but managing the administration superbly. I vividly can recall how he acted fast knowing a few problems that I suffered while spending eight months polishing my Arabic at the International University of Africa, Khartoum, Sudan His right hand, and my immediate superior, Mr. Wan Mohd.Nasruddin Wan Abdullah, is the next person to whom my indebtedness goes for what he has done and helped me throughout my studies here at ISTAC and promoted ISTAC to me.

The Senior Research Fellow, Dr. Muhammad Zainiy Uthman, who is assigned to look after the affluent library of ISTAC should also receive my appreciation. Dr. Muhammad Ismail Marcinkowski, Bro.Ugi Suharto and Bro. Zaidi, I owe them very much for their meticulousness in looking into my thesis format in spite of all their hectic schedules. On the whole, my thanks are due to all administration and library staff as well for their dedication in making ISTAC a conducive and serene place for academic and scholarly research.

My senior colleague, Zaidi Ismail, the Research Fellow of ISTAC - whom we, the juniors at ISTAC, regard highly - indeed has helped and guided me a lot in the course of me finishing this thesis. His paper on *tadbir* in fact gave me some insights on this subject as well. My colleague, Asham Ahmad, also has contributed tremendously to my further understanding of Arabic language.

To all my professors and academic instructors, and all colleagues especially Sani Badron, Amran (formerly of ISTAC), Mohd.Zain, Aliza and others are my thanks due to them all for their pivotal roles in my character and intellectual building.

Finally, I feel obliged to express my sincere gratitude to my parents, Hj. Abdul Samad bin Mahmood and Tengku Rakhiah bte. Tengku Chik, who brought me up and cherished me with love and tenderness more so to my father, to whom I dedicate this work since he has been responsible for constantly reminding me day and day on my task to complete this thesis soon. Last but not least, to my dear wife, Haiffa' Hj. Hamzah, whose patience, love and companionship has contributed one way or the other to the fruition of this work, and also to my seven-month old son, Nik 'Ammar Daniel.

May God reward all of them for their sincere help and forgive me for whatever shortcomings or imperfections, which may appear in this modest work that needless to say, is entirely my sole responsibility.

NOTES ON GENERAL FORMAT, DATES AND STYLE OF transliteration

Generally, the system followed in this thesis adopted from the manual on *ISTAC's Format of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* produced by ISTAC on 22nd February 1999 as its official guidelines. Consultations was also made to Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, Sixth Edition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996) for some details. However, in the case of conflict, the preference is given to the former. In this thesis, dates are usually given in both Muslim and Christian calendars abbreviated as "A.H." (*Anno Hegirae*) and "C.E." (of the common era) e.g. 656/1258 respectively. In some cases the A.H. date is inappropriate, the single date is always a C.E. one. To avoid unnecessary clumsiness, decades (e.g. "the 1250s") and centuries (e.g. "the thirteenth century") are given only in C. E. form.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

'Abbasid	<i>The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Religions, learning and science in the 'Abbasid period</i>
Al-Shajarah	<i>Journal of The International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)</i>
Bahr	Julie Scott Meisami, <i>Bahr al-Favā'id</i>
EI ¹	<i>E.J. Brill's First Encyclopaedia of Islam</i>
EI ²	<i>The Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Edition)</i>
ICAL	Ilse Lichtenstadter, <i>Introduction to Classical Arabic Literature</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of The American Oriental Society</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JSAI	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i>
Kashf	Kâtib Çelebi, <i>Kashf al-Zunûn</i>
Legacy	Schacht & Bosworth, <i>The Legacy of Islam</i>
Lisân	Ibn Manzur, <i>Lisân al-'Arab</i>
Literary	E.G. Browne, <i>Literary History of Persian</i>
Medieval	Morgan, <i>Medieval Persian 1040-1797</i>
Naṣīḥat	Al-Ghazālī, <i>Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk</i>
Qābūs	Kay Ka'ūs, <i>Qābūs Nāma</i>
Siyāsāt	Nizām al-Mulk, <i>Siyāsāt-Nāma</i>
Tibr	Al-Ghazālī, <i>Tibr al-Masbūk fī Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk</i>
Umayyad	<i>The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of Umayyad period</i>

ABSTRACT

The Proof of Islam (*Hujjat al-Islām*), Imām Abū Ḥamid bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Ghazālī al-Ṭūsī (450/1058/9-505/1111), is popularly known for his various works written on theology, philosophy, logic, jurisprudence, Sufism and in almost all disciplines of Islamic science. Nonetheless, only few are really aware that this great scholar and theologian has written a book on administration, advising a ruler of his time as to how the kingdom should be ruled in the wisest manner possible and with justice. Not only that, in fact he has been regarded as one of the major contributors to the administration and management in the history of mankind which had already begun as early as during the Sumerians period since 500 C. E.¹

Unlike other scholars such as Nizām al-Mulk, and Kay Ka'ūs who wrote their books based on their own experiences as minister and ruler respectively, al-Ghazālī, unfortunately, did not have such experience. Yet, his advice is no less superior than these two practitioners.

This thesis has attempted as far as possible, to systematically expound the ethical administrative qualities as found scattered in al-Ghazālī's *Nasīḥat al-Mulūk*. Obviously, this attempt is not exhaustive and there are many other qualities not listed in this thesis, for one may refer to other works of al-Ghazālī such as *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* and *Mizān al-'Amal* to further be enlightened. In as much as it is not possible to be all-inclusive in this single volume, I have tried, instead, to select and bring together the most pertinent examples of ethical administrative qualities and write them into a logical whole with sub-

¹ The managerial form then was not as sophisticated as of today. It was just a simple record keeping and scripts, see Claude S. George, Jr. *The History of Management Thought* (New Delhi: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 31-32.

headings etc. which would provide an outline for understanding the framework of al-Ghazālī's thought in this field.

The importance of high moral and ethical qualities of rulers and leaders are very much pertinent not only during al-Ghazālī's era, but even more so in this modern age, the age where corruption and abuse of power is so rampant due to unethical and unqualified personalities are given high positions in society, the positions where they do not deserve them at all. As a result of not putting right people at their right places in accordance with the teachings of Islam, the Muslim countries now - apart from continuously remain backward economically and socially - are facing with moral decadence not only among their youths, but even among the political leaders themselves.

1. On The Aims and Approach of The Study

Sajida Sultana Alvi has rightly said that writers dealing with Islamic political thought - from Ibn Khaldūn¹ in the fourteenth century to Rosenthal² and Lambton³ in the twentieth - have not given enough importance on the mirrors literature primarily because this genre, due to its literary character, neither provides a systematic interpretation of political thought nor ventures upon systematic treatment of the problems of government or state.⁴

Thus, the aims of this study is to systematically expound the ethical administrative qualities as mentioned by al-Ghazālī in his *Naṣīhat al-Mulūk*⁵ and briefly compare it with its contemporary works. Unlike other works of *adab* or *akhlāq*, this work of al-Ghazālī falls under the category of mirrors for princes and concerns mainly with the administrative ethics, and the ways on how a government should be Islamically administered. Ethics and moral conduct are broad topics that can take volumes of discussion, however, this work only outlines the basic concepts of administrative ethical qualities.

In this *Introduction*, I will highlight a few important nomenclatures used in connection with the administration as understood and widely used in Islamic traditions and literature. Understanding these terminologies is pre-requisite to further

¹ See Franz Rosenthal, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967) vol.1, 83.

² E. I. J Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam: An Introductory Outline* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1968) 68-9.

³ Ann K. S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981)

⁴ Sajida Sultana Alvi, *Advice on the Art of Governance: Mau'izah-i Jahāngiri of Muḥammad Bāqir-Najm-i Ṣāni* (New York: State University of New York, 1989), 1-2.

⁵ Abū Hamid bin Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Ghazālī al-Tūsī, *Naṣīhat al-Mulūk*, Persian edition, ed. 'Allāmah Jalāl Humā'i (Tehran, Muassasah Nasharhuma, A.H. solar 1402/1981)

grasp the concept of Islamic administrative ethics as a whole. It often happens that the Muslims are confused with their so-called English equivalent 'terms' which in actual fact do not always deliver the same meanings as they should be.

Certain terminologies that I have emphasised here sometimes are not given much importance by other scholars with respect to the concept of the administration such as the word 'adab' and 'tadbīr'.

I then make a cursory survey in *Chapter One* on the so-called 'mirrors for princes' genre literature to see how the genre had developed from its early stage until the *Naṣīhat* came into existence. The development from the epistles, to *belles-lettres*, *adab* and *akhlāq* literature and eventually to the modern form of mirrors for princes can clearly be observed.

In *Chapter Two*, I begin to explore the work in respect to its author, the disputes on its authenticity, and on the materials and sources of the work.

Chapter Three is where I gather all the administrative ethical qualities found scattered in this treatise and arrange them accordingly under their respective themes. As such, the themes or sub-topics mentioned in this chapter are our own and not originally given by al-Ghazālī in his *Naṣīhat*. A few selected anecdotes were also drawn again here in order to further enlighten us on the principles advocated by the author.

Finally, in *Chapter Four* I briefly compare *Naṣīhat* with its contemporary works namely *Qābūs Nāma*, *Siyāsat Nāma* and *Baḥr al-Favā'id*. Obviously, the comparison is not thorough enough, however, suffice for it to show a certain common trend and influences that existed in those days.

English trans. F. R. C. Bagley, *Al-Ghazālī's Book Counsel for Kings (Naṣīhat al-Mulūk)* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), hereafter abbreviated as *Naṣīhat*.

2. Some Nomenclatures In Islamic Administrative Ethics⁶

There is no exact equivalent word in Islamic tradition for the words 'administration' or 'management'⁷ or 'ethics' as used and understood in the West since these words were coined only at a later stage in the Western history of civilization. Sherwani affirms this when he says that " political philosophy and the science of administration were not known as such in the West until comparatively recent years".⁸ What one may find after thoroughly scrutinizing the primary Islamic sources and various works written by Muslim scholars that the Arabic words like '*tadbir*,' '*akhlāq*' and '*adab*' resemble one way or the other some equivalent features to that of Western administration. One will not fully understand the concept of Islamic Administrative Ethics until one fully grasps the semantic meanings of the words '*tadbir*,' '*akhlāq*' and '*adab*' and their derivatives.

Islam, being a religion and at the same time a comprehensive way of life has made no dichotomy between temporal and spiritual aspects. All are interconnected and intertwined to each other. Administration of the worldly affairs in Islam, though may sound temporal, still subject to rewards and punishments in the hereafter, and thus never be regarded as separated from the spiritual domain as understood by secular man. Therefore, in Islam, administration - as well as other matters - must be accompanied by certain guiding principles in order to be blessed and rewarded by The Almighty God and saved from His punishments.

⁶ I am very grateful to my senior colleague, Bro. Zaidi Ismail, for highlighting me on the synthesis of *tadbir* and *adab* in Islamic Administration. In fact this section stems out from various fruitful discussions with him as well as based on his paper entitled, "*Tadbir and Adab as Constituent Definiens of The Concept of Islamic Management*" which he presented in *The First International Conference On Islamic Development Management: Management of Economic Development In Islamic Perspective* at University Science Malaysia (USM), 8-10 December 1998.

⁷ The distinction between 'administration' and 'management' from the Western perspective is still vague. Even one of the fathers of the management studies, Henri Fayol, has not make a clear the difference between the two. As such the two words will continue to be employed interchangeably to mean the same thing. See E. C. Eyre, *Mastering Basic Management*, (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982), 2.

⁸ H.K. Sherwani, *Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration*, (Lahore: SH.

A. The Meaning of *Tadbir*

Tadbir is a *maṣḍar* (verbal noun) of the second stem of the root *d-b-r*.⁹ The Arabic lexicographers explain *dabbara* as a verb from the noun *dubur* “the hindmost,” “the end,” or “the back,” (opposite: *qubūl*); and therefore when we say *duburu kulli shay'* it means ‘its result and its end’ (*‘āqibuhu wa mu’akharahu*).¹⁰ In *Lisān al-‘Arab* of Ibn Manẓur he further writes *dubur* to mean, *an tanẓura ild mā ta’ūlu ilayhi ‘āqibatahu* “to heed what one attains at the end of a matter,” or *yanẓuru fi ‘awaqibihi*, “to heed the end of a matter.” This verb has a double application: first, in the sense of government, administration and second, which concerns us here, in the sense of guidance, management, of a household such as *tadbir al-manzil*.¹¹

Al-Tahānāwī defines *tadbir* as to literally mean “disposal over or reflection on the results of the affairs” (*al-taṣarruf aw al-tafakkur fi ‘āqibati al-umūr*). While al-Jurjānī describes *tadbir* as “to examine the outcomes by means of knowing what is good” (*al-naẓar fi al-‘awaqib bi ma’rifah al-khayr*) and “putting matters into effect in accordance with the knowledge of the results” (*ijrā’ al-umūr ‘ala ‘ilmi al-‘awaqib*).¹² Al-Bayḍāwī when commenting on the verse 3 of surah Yūnus: “*Inna rabbakumu Allahu... yudabbiru al-amra...*,” says that ‘*tadbir*’ means the discernment or contemplation into the consequences of the affairs in order to attain commendable results (*al-naẓar fi adbāri al-umur li tajī’a mahmudat al-‘aqibah*).¹³ Al-Jurjānī again in his *al-Ta’rifāt* sees ‘*tadbir*’ as perception on the consequences of the affairs (*an-*

Muhammad Ashraf, 1970), 35.

⁹ Ibn Manẓur, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 15 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Šādir, 1410/1990), vol. IV, 268-276; *The Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Edition)*, ed. E.J. Brill, vol. VII, 595, hereafter abbreviated as *Et*.

¹⁰ *Lisān al-‘Arab*, vol. IV, 268.

¹¹ *Et*, vol. VII, 595.

¹² Al-Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta’rifāt* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Miṣri, 1991), 69.

¹³ Al-Qāḍī Nāṣir al-Dīn Abī Sa’id ‘Abd Allāh al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-Tanzil wa Asrār al-Ta’wīl*, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1988), 1:428.

nazar fi 'awaqib al-umūr) and regards it as almost like, if not synonym to 'tafakkur' or thinking and contemplation.¹⁴ In reality, only God is the Real Administrator (*al-mudabbir*) for ultimately only He who has the absolute knowledge on the best outcome of every action while man as an administrator on earth is merely in metaphorical sense.¹⁵

Further observation on this nomenclature will lead us to notice that the tense of the word *tadbir* that is 'yudabbir' is repeated four times in the Holy Qur'ān (10:3 and 31; 13:2; 13.2;32.5) in which all refers to Allah. The words come together with 'al-amr' and thus we read 'yudabbir al-amr' which literally means 'He (Allah) administers the affair'.¹⁶

The term 'tadbir' gradually became a technical term which imbued in it a meaning of 'the administration or management of a household or a state.' This is obvious as in the usage of Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddimah* when he says, '*al-siyāsat al-madaniyah hiya tadbir al-manzil aw al-madīna....*' "The *Siyāsat al-madaniyah* is the management of a household or of a state in keeping with the demands of ethics (*akhlāq*) and wisdom, so that the whole may be led on a path on which regularity is maintained".¹⁷ Thus we find that scholars in the past started to use the term 'tadbir' in its technical sense, like in the case of Ibn Abi'l-Rabi' who wrote a book entitled *Sulūk al-Mālik fi Tadbir 'l-Mamālik* and translations of various works, particularly

¹⁴ Al-Jurjāni, *Kitāb al-Ta'rifāt*, 69

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ For simplicity, the word 'amr' is translated here to mean 'affair' though we fully aware of its other meanings such as 'command' and 'decree' which for the Sūfīs would preferably translated it as such. We are not interested to dwell into this 'double meaning' issue of the word as it has been elaborated by many scholars in the field of Sūfism. For further readings, one may refer to the work of Prof. al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansūrī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970), 66-141 and his *A Commentary on the Hujjat al-Siddiq of Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānī* (Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Culture Malaysia, 1986), 316ff. Also W. H. T. Gairdner, *Al-Ghazzālī's Mishkāt al-Anwār* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1924), 27-61.

¹⁷ 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Muḥammad Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah*, ed. E. Quatremiere (Paris: 1858-68); trans. F. Rosenthal, 3 vols. (London: 1958).

the Greek into Arabic such as *Kitāb Aristū fī Tadbīr al-Manāzil*, and *Thimār Maqālah Aristū fī Tadbīr al-Manzil*.

B. The Meaning of *Akhlāq* and *Adab*

As we have previously stated, there is no single analogue for 'ethics'¹⁸ in Islamic tradition.¹⁹ Instead there are several genres of discourse, each with a special set of concerns and roles to play in the development of Islam and each related to the set of interests we associate with ethics. Unlike the Greek, in which popular ethics were refined and reshaped by philosophical and with no perceptible influence of any foreign doctrine, so that eventually philosophy came to express the moral values by which the lives of the educated classes were governed. In Islam, ethics appeared in its matured state as an amalgamation of a pre-Islamic Arabian tradition and Qurānic teaching with non-Arabic elements, mainly Persian and Greek origins, embedded in or integrated with a general-Islamic structure.²⁰ The ethical teaching in Islam is so much related to its theology as well and not merely separated as moral philosophy as that of the Greek²¹ and understood by the West. Like any other Islamic sciences, ethics takes its origin from the Qur'ān in the form of a religious foundation based on

¹⁸ "Ethics", originally comes from Greek *éthos* to mean "personal disposition". It came ultimately from pre-historic Indo-European "*swedh*". The meaning then gradually broadened out to "trait", "character" and then "custom" or in the plural "manners" or "morals". The Greek derived adjective *éthikos* entered English via Latin *éthicus* as ethic in the 16th. century. The plural usage *ethics* "science of morals" dates from the beginning of the 17th. century. Ethics then further developed to become a discipline which concerns itself with judgements of approval and disapproval, judgements as to the rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness, virtue or vice, desirability or wisdom of actions, dispositions, ends, objects, or states of affair. This new discipline, philosophical ethics, derived from Greek was introduced at first by the limited circles who devoted themselves to the study of philosophy. It is also sometimes referred to as moral philosophy, for further readings see John Ayto, *Dictionary of Word Origins* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1990), 208; *Collin Dictionary of Philosophy*, eds. G. Vesey & P. Foulkes (New York: Collins, 1990); 105-106; *Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Dagobert D. Runes (New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1971), 96-100.

¹⁹ *Et*, vol. I, 442.

²⁰ *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World*, ed. John L. Esposito, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), s.v. "Akhlāk" by R. Walzer & H. A. R. Gibb, 1:325, hereafter abbreviated as *Akhlāk*.

²¹ Ann K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam: An Introduction to the Study of*

the Islamic ethical principles. Hence, there is not so much distinction can be made between Islam as a religion and Islamic Ethics, neither can there be any rigid separation between one sciences to the other. Ethics as a science did not take shape until the influence of the Greek thought.²²

Among the classical intellectual traditions in the study of moral philosophy in Islam, the most frequent term used to refer to ethics is *akhlāq*²³ or '*ilm al-akhlāq*, the "science of virtue" and sometimes the *adab*²⁴ is used interchangeably, focuses on the character of persons. The praise of, and value attached to good character (*ḥusn al-khuluq*) is common enough among traditionalists, mystics, philosophers, and those writers who aim at giving practical advice to rulers and civil servants. But their ideas of moral perfection are drawn from widely different sources. The nature of courage, the practice of wisdom and tolerance, and discussions about the cultivation of such desirable traits are the focus here.

In fact, the preaching of the Prophet Muḥammad (p.b.u.h) obviously produced a radical change in moral values as well, based on the sanctions of the new religion, and fear of God and the Last Judgement: kindness and equity, compassion and mercy, generosity, self-restraint, sincerity, moral fellowship of the Believers are among the new virtues to replace tribal morality and to become the pillars of an ethical society.

The religious ethic of the Qur'ān was subsequently expanded and pointed in immense detail by the traditionists in the form of *ḥādīth*, professedly based upon and

Islamic Political Theory: The Jurists (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

²² Muḥammad Umar al-Dīn, *The Ethical Philosophy of al-Ghazzali* (Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf, 1991), 53. Though the Greek translations into Arabic and Syriac might have influenced the early Muslim writers, nonetheless it must be remembered that the thought itself and its spirits are Oriental and already there in the holy Qur'ān and Ḥādīth with its multitude of illustrations from Persian, Arabic and Indian sources, see Sherwani, *Studies*, 36.

²³ Derived from the tradition of the Holy Prophet "I have been sent to fulfil the virtues which go with nobility of character (*makārim al-akhlāq*)"

²⁴ It is tempting to surmise that the word *adāb* was used for the very differently motivated ethic of Persian origin expounded by the 2nd/8th century writers which led to the substitution of the term *akhlāq*, that appears in various traditions extolling "good *akhlāq*". *EP*, 326

expounding the *sunnah*, or supplementing this source by traditions of the Companions and by adaptation of materials from cultural traditions of the older religions. It may be said broadly that the whole corpus of *ḥadīth* constitutes a handbook of Islamic ethics, in as much as in the general view the correct performance of religious doctrine are inseparable elements of the moral life. The most accessible examples of the genre is the *Nasirean Ethics* written by Nāṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d.1274 CE), the celebrated Saljūq vizier Niẓām al-Mulk's (d.1092) *Siyāsat Nāmāh* or 'Rules of King'. Within this comprehensive structure, however, certain forms of conduct were more particularly designated by the term *adab* rather than *akhlāq* ('ethics') which in this early religious context had a definitely ethical connotation too.

Before we further elaborate on this subject, it is worth enlightening here that the term '*adab*' originally comes from the word *a-d-b* in its verb form which among its meanings are 'to be well-bred,' 'well-mannered,' 'cultured,' 'urbane,' and 'have refined tastes.'²⁵ Its noun form too is also spelled in the same manner as its verb, i.e. *adab* (pl: *ādāb*) to mean culture, refinement, good breeding, good manners, decorum, decency. Interestingly, in one of its various meanings, *adab* is also translated as 'belles-lettres'²⁶ which is main interest in this study. It is therefore neither surprising nor premature to conclude here that the early 'counsel for rulers' came in the form of *adab* literature, as we will see later, and is reasonably logical and acceptable based on the etymological origin of the word.

As such, we will find in this connection that scholars like Ibn al-Muqaffa'²⁷ wrote two *adab* works, the *Adab al-Kabīr*²⁸ and *Adab al-Ṣaghīr*,²⁹ which we will again

²⁵ Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J. Milton Cowan (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1974), 9. For further understanding on the semantics analysis of '*adab*' see Nasrat Abdul Rahman, "The Semantics of Adab in Arabic," *Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) Al-Shajarah*, vol.2 no.2 1997, 189-207.

²⁶ Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, 9.

²⁷ Ibn Muqaffa', *Kalīlah wa Dimnah*, ed. Munther A. Younes, *Tales from Kalīlah wa Dimnah* (New