Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung: A Critical Analysis of Toshihiko Izutsu's Works

Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu

Abstract

This paper examines the structural semantic approach based on the theory of linguistic relativity to scriptural language as exemplified in Toshihiko Izutsu's studies of the Qur'anic weltanschauung. According to this theory, each language contains a particular worldview that causes its speakers to view the world in a way different from the speakers of other languages. By an analytical study of the semantic fields and contextual use of the Qur'an's key conceptual terms, Izutsu explores the semantic factors believed to have been employed by the Qur'an in its Islamization of the *jahili* (pre-Islamic Arab) worldview. Such an approach exhibits that the Qur'an's linguistic vision of reality is internally coherent but culturally and historically conditioned. Following a textual analysis, this study critically examines, from both an ethical and a theological perspective, the semantic theory that Izutsu applies to the Qur'an's key concepts in his two works: *God and Man in the Qur'an* and *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'a*n. The objective is to investigate the extent to which semantic analysis could enrich our understanding of the ontological problems raised in the Qur'an.

Introduction

God speaks in language but does not speak language; rather, He makes His will known to humans through the languages they speak among themselves.

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The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic, a widely spoken language in seventh-century Arabia. It is by design, not by accident, that Arabic was chosen to carry the speech of God as articulated in the Qur'an. Given this, what type of worldview is articulated in Qur'anic Arabic that is not already expressed in the mother Arabic language of the pre-Islamic period? What is it of the divine message expressed in Arabic that cannot be expressed in other languages? Could the Qur'anic conception of reality and vision of the universe be known outside its Arabic language or through a non-linguistic medium, or is it the Arabic language that makes the Qur'anic vision of reality in the first place? These are among the queries that arise when the Qur'an is approached from an analytical framework of semantics, broadly defined as "the study of meaning in language."[1]

There is no doubt that language is a boon to the human species. Through language our understanding of the world is articulated, preserved, and communicated from one person to another and bequeathed from generation to generation. Within semantics, however, a theory known as the "linguistic relativity hypothesis" takes the function of language to a greater extent by postulating that a given language embodies the weltanschauung[2] of the people who use it as a tool for conceptualizing and interpreting the world in which they live. Scriptural language is no exception. The word of God, so far as it is couched in human language, is believed to contain a particular weltanschauung that can be grasped by an analytical study of the semantic fields[3] of its conceptual key terms, as promulgated in a structural semantics technique.[4] Toshihiko Izutsu's (1914-93) study of the Qur'an's conceptual terms exemplifies the semantic analysis of the scriptural language.

Izutsu is undoubtedly a leading modern scholar of Islamic thought. He is generally considered to be the first Japanese scholar to write on Islam in a European language[5] and the greatest scholar of Islamic thought that Japan has ever produced.[6] Born and nurtured in the Japanese classical culture of Zen Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism, and Shintoism, Izutsu's research activities cover a wide range of world cultures, including those of Arabia, Europe, Iran, India, China, and Japan. His method of research, as Shinya Makino observes, has always been linguistically or semantically oriented, founded on the Araya-consciousness of meaning and semantics.[7]

He wrote prolifically on the core disciplines of Islamic scholarship, ranging from Islamic philosophy and theology to Sufism and Qur'anic studies. He produced two outstanding works on Qur'anic studies.[8] The first work is *God and Man in the Qur'an*,[9] in which he analyzed the Qur'an's key conceptual terms, or the major materials furnished by the Qur'anic vocabulary,

with a view to arriving at the Qur'anic weltanschauung as distinct from the predominant outlook of the *jahili* (pre-Islamic) period. In the second work, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*,[10] he gave an exposition of key concepts and structures of the Qur'an's ethical terms. In both works, he introduced to the Qur'anic materials a methodological framework of structural semantics with which he was more concerned than the materials themselves. In the second work, in particular, he outlined what he considered to be "a more fundamental theory of the linguistic or semantic worldview" intended to apply not only to the Qur'an's ethico-religious concepts, but also to the entire fabric of its language. Drawing on contemporary western linguistic discourses on linguistic relativity and structural semantics, Izutsu demonstrated the dynamic relationship among language, culture, and reality and their centrality to forming a worldview. His semantic-hermeneutical theory is thus a method of understanding the Qur'anic worldview through its key conceptual terms and of understanding the world through the Qur'anic worldview.

This present study seeks to examine critically, from both ethical and theological perspectives, the semantic theory Izutsu applied to the Qur'an's key concepts primarily in *God and Man in the Qur'an* and *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*. The first part examines the basic epistemological postulates of linguistic relativity theory on the relationship among language, culture, and reality and their centrality to worldview construction. In the second and third parts, the study explores the factors believed to have been employed by the Qur'an to Islamize the *jahili* worldview at the semantic level and whether those factors can be utilized again to render Qur'anic concepts and values into non-Arabic languages and cultures. The last two parts deal with the meaningfulness and efficacy of semantics to the conceptual and practical problems of ethical and theological discourses. The objective here is to investigate the extent to which structural semantics can enrich our understanding of the ontological and methodological problems that the Qur'an has posited to be of ultimate concern to human beings of all ages.

Language and Reality

Semantics, as a culture's weltanschauung, has its origin in western linguistic discourse. The philosophy of language and semantics contains a theory that postulates that each language contains a specific weltanschauung that causes its speakers to view the world in a way different from the speakers of other

languages. The earliest formation of this theory, which later came to be known as the "linguistic relativity hypothesis," is usually attributed to Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835); however, a foreshadowing of it can be traced back to the writings of Etienne Bonnot de Condillac (1715-80), Johann Georg Hamann (1730-88), and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803).[11]

The main tenet of Humboldt's linguistic philosophy is that the world-view of one people significantly differs from that of another people due to the extreme difference in the "internal structure" (*inner Sprachform*) of their respective languages. Each language is believed to draw a closed circle within or through which the people who speak it can see the world.[12] Leo Weisgerber (1899-1985), a leading spokesman of the neo-Humboldtians, considers language to be not only a medium that stabilizes the flux of impression for us, but also the reason why impressions have any meaning in the first place. In his view, any judgment that a person can make depends largely on the types of categories available in one's native language; yet language is capable of making value judgments for which there are no corresponding facts in nature. Since language is believed to mediate between the nature of reality and the human understanding of it, Weisgerber concluded that speakers of different languages live in different "linguistic intermediary worlds" (*sprachliche Zwischenwelten*).[13]

The notion that language is the embodiment of a weltanschauung reverberated in what is typically known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which holds that "the grammatical categories of a language determine or at least influence greatly the general manner of conceiving the world of those who speak it."[14] Edward Sapir (1884-1936), maintains that "the worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds … because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation."[15] Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941) develops Sapir's claim further and calls it "a new principle of relativity" that postulates that the forms of a person's thought are controlled by the "inexorable laws" of linguistic pattern of which he/she is unconscious.[16]

Working within the same framework of Humboldt's weltanschauung hypothesis, Izutsu formulates his semantic theory, a hybrid of semantic theory called *sprachliche Weltanschauungslehre* as developed by Weisgerber, and the linguistic relativity hypothesis advanced by Sapir and Whorf.[17] Against this backdrop, he describes his understanding of semantics as:

> an analytic study of the key-terms of a language with a view to arriving eventually at a conceptual grasp of the Weltanschauung or world-view of

> the people who use that language as a tool not only of speaking and thinking, but, more important still, of conceptualizing and interpreting the world that surrounds them.[18]

Thus defined, semantics is a cultural science that, through the analysis of the key words of a culture's language, enables a semanticist to reconstruct analytically the whole structure of the culture's worldview as it is lived in the people's conception.[19]

Izutsu believes that each ethnolinguistic culture classifies the world of reality into totally different categories based on entirely different principles and that any given aspect of reality, needless to say of the reality as a whole, is capable of being divided and subdivided into many different segments, in many different ways, and from many different angles. The reason he provides for this view is that reality, before its linguistic articulation, is comprised of formless and meaningless objects in perpetual flux and that our immediate experience of it is also an undifferentiated whole.[20] This creative interpretation of the world around us is a mental process of gathering, labeling, and rearranging many different chaotic things that exist in a formless state of undifferentiated whole into a unity. Through the medium of language, the human mind within given historical and cultural constraints has managed to subjectively draw an infinite number of lines and segments and thus brought order into the original chaos.[21] This implies that no worldview experiences or expresses reality objectively.

While the reality is not explicitly denied per se, it is extremely difficult to talk of it, or even to imagine how it could have been, before or without linguistic articulation. Only with language, as Whorf explains, did people of different cultures manage to "weave the web of Maya or illusion, to make a provisional analysis of reality."[22] Izutsu believes that the process of conceptualization, articulation, and the mental act of dividing the raw materials of immediate experiences into separate segments is so important that without it the world would have been completely meaningless and absurd.[23]

How beneficial is language in this act of reality construction? While language is necessary to make sense of the world, it is believed that it can also become a hindrance to a proper understanding of the world.[24] The reason provided for this assertion is that we do not have direct access to the real world, but rather an indirect access to the incomplete data provided by our imperfect senses.[25] As Izutsu explains, words and concepts behave like an intermediary screen between the human mind and objective reality, which might be distorted by the screen's particular articulation.[26]

Whether any worldview is the "correct" one or is "more correct" than others, or whether a particular language comes closer to the truth and provides a better picture of reality than do others, does not appear to be a valid question. What is interesting is the aspect of reality to which a given language has drawn attention and how it does so. Still more important is that each people has carved out a different number of separate objects in its own way: "a rich vocabulary like that of Arabic indicates that the people who use the language have isolated more independent units out of the whole of reality than a people with a poor vocabulary."[27] In effect, the merit is attributed to the language (i.e., Arabic) and not to the nature or the content of the message (i.e., Islam).

With these semantic postulates in mind, Izutsu inquired into the Qur'an's semantic weltanschauung, which he construed as an ontological exploration into the structure of Being, its major constituents, and the internal relationships among them. It is "a concrete, living and dynamic ontology," as he described it, one that deals with concrete historical issues rather than a static systematic ontology stranded at a metaphysical abstraction.[28] The next two sections explicate analytically Izutsu's semantic formula.

From the *Jahili* to the Qur'anic Weltanschauung

Central to Izutsu's semantic project is to exhibit analytically the Qur'anic language's internal coherence and the mechanism it employed to reorient the worldview from the *jahili* era's "pessimistic hedonism"[29] to Islam's theocentric monotheism.[30] Following the structural semantics formula, he identified the semantic fields and word meanings of the Qur'anic vocabulary's key words.

The key words upon which the Qur'an's semantic weltanschauung is founded, as compared to its ordinary words, are those that presumably play a decisive role in forming the Qur'an's basic conceptual structure of reality and vision of the universe. The primary task of a semanticist is to identify these key terms and isolate them from the bulk of the Qur'anic vocabulary. Among the outstanding key terms Izutsu identifies are *Allah*, *islam* (submission), *iman* (belief/faith), *kafir* (infidel), *nabi* (prophet), *rasul* (messenger), and *wahy* (revelation).[31] These key terms and concepts do not stand in isolation from others, but rather are closely interdependent and derive their concrete meanings and semantic structure precisely from the entire system of relations, thereby forming an extremely complex network of conceptual associations. Such a tight-knit and complex association of concepts, embod-

ied in the vocabulary of a culture in a particular historical context, is what Izutsu refers to as a weltanschauung, or rather a semantic weltanschauung.[32]

When these words are looked at from their multiple relationships among themselves and their overlapping sectors, they form a "semantic field," a subsystem within a larger system of vocabulary. Vocabulary is, therefore, a multi-strata structure formed by groups of key words, otherwise known in its internal connectivity as a semantic field. Within each group of key words is a focus word, the most important word in a semantic field, around which other key words revolve and from which they derive their relational meaning. It unifies other key words within the same semantic field and delimits a particular semantic field from other semantic fields of a vocabulary.[33]

Izutsu identifies several important semantic fields in the Qur'anic vocabulary, each of which represents a relatively independent conceptual sphere that is similar to the nature of the vocabulary of which they are constituents. This categorization applies primarily to this particular vocabulary and its subsystem (semantic field) and looks at it in its entirety as a subsystem within a lager vocabulary system of the *jahili*-era Arabic language.

To demonstrate these technicalities, *iman*, along with its derivatives, is considered a focus word. In its positive cluster it comprises such key words as *Allah*, *shukr*, *islam*, and *taṣdiq*; in its negative cluster it includes such key words as *kufr*, *takdhib*, *`iṣyan*, and *nifaq*. Each of these words may not be confined to the *iman* field, for it may appear as a key word in another field or even stand as a focus word forming its own field. Now *kufr*, which is simply a key word of *iman*'s semantic field on the negative side, is a focus word of a relatively independent semantic field. The semantic field of *kufr* comprises such key words as *fisq*, *ḍalal*, *zulm*, *shirk*, *`isyan*, and *takdhib*; its negative cluster is comprised of the positive key words of *iman* (i.e., *Allah*, *taṣdiq*, and so on). The term *Allah*, which appears in both the *iman* and *kufr* fields as an ordinary key word, is, as Izutsu explains, the most important and highest focus word in the Qur'anic vocabulary, for it reigns over the entire domain as its field.

Izutsu points out that none of the key terms that play a decisive role in forming the Qur'anic worldview were unfamiliar to the *jahili* Arabs, for almost all of them had appeared in one form or another in their literary discourse. As a result, he draws heavily on *jahili* poetry to elucidate the semantic structure of the Qur'anic vocabulary.

To demonstrate the continuity and change (in the meaning values of individual words) between the semantic worldview of the pre-Islamic era

and that of the Qur'an, Izutsu introduces one major methodological concept of semantics concerning word meaning: He makes a technical distinction between a word's *basic* and *relational* meaning. The basic meaning is the constant semantic element that remains attached to the word and is unchanged in whatever context the word is used, even if it is used in a non-Qur'anic context. This basic meaning is a methodological, theoretic postulate that is very useful when analyzing the meaning of a word scientifically, although it has no abstract form in the world of reality.[34]

While the basic meaning is something inherent in the word itself and always remains with it, a relational meaning is something connotative that comes to be attached to the word when it has assumed a particular position in a particular field and thereby stands in diverse relations to all other important words in that system. For example, *kitab* literally means a "book" or a set of (printed) pages that can be read. This basic meaning remains unchanged, irrespective of whether this word is used inside or outside the Qur'anic context or whether it is used as a key word or not. When it is introduced into the Qur'anic conceptual scheme in close relation to *wahy* (divine revelation), *tanzil* (sending down the divine words), and *Allah*, however, *kitab* acquires new semantic elements: a sacred or heavenly book.[35]

Another example is the word *mala'ikah* (angels; sing. *malak*). This word retained its basic meaning but acquired different, and perhaps contradictory, relational meanings between the *jahili* Arabic vocabulary and the Qur'anic vocabulary. In the former, the word refers to an angel or a supernatural being. This meaning entered and was fully incorporated into the Qur'anic vocabulary. But when the word appears in the semantic field of the polytheistic hierarchy of beings in the pre-Islamic era, a time when Allah was assigned the highest position and jinn, demons, and other gods and goddesses were regarded as intercessors or mediators between a supreme God and humans, angels were construed as God's daughters, logically worthy of veneration, and thus were deified and worshipped. When introduced into the Qur'anic monotheism appearing within the semantic field of *Allah*, *shirk*, and *rasul*, however, *mala'ikah* could no longer retain or entertain such a pre-Islamic polytheistic relational meaning. It therefore acquired a new one and was assigned a definite place within the universal hierarchy of being.[36]

According to Izutsu, what Islam brought to the world and what struck the Makkan imagination and raised a fierce resistance was not a new concept or code of ethics, but rather a creative reorientation of word meaning and the general unfamiliar context in which key familiar words were used:

> All the existent things and values were thereby subjected to a complete rearrangement and a new allotment. The elements of the universe came, without any single exception, to be uprooted from their old soil, and transplanted into a new field; each one of them was assigned a new place, and new relationships were established between them. Concepts that had formerly been quite foreign to each other were now brought into close connections; contrariwise, concepts that had been closely related to each other in the old system came to be separated in the new one.[37]

This profound inner semantic dislocation and subsequent reorientation of the concepts, together with the ensuing fundamental displacement and rearrangement of moral and religious values, as Izutsu explains, is what gives the Qur'an its distinctive weltanschauung.[38] He makes it very clear, however, that the relational meaning is "nothing other than a concrete manifestation, or crystallization, of the spirit of the culture, and a most faithful reflection of the general tendency, psychological and otherwise, of the people who use the word as part of their vocabulary."[39]

Qura'nic Values in Non-Arabic Terms

As we have seen in the previous section, the path from the *jahili* era's semantic weltanschauung to that of the Qur'an's is smooth by virtue of common key concepts and their basic meanings, both of which are believed to be lacking when rendering the Qur'anic worldview into another language. Izutsu regards the process of expressing or communicating the same concept, especially ethical concepts, in different languages as something unattainable because all moral judgments are culturally filtered before they become accessible to the members of that language community.[40]

To illustrate this point, he gives an example of the word *kufr*, the basic semantic meaning of which is the ungrateful and unthankful attitude toward favors and benefits received. In this sense it is the opposite of *shukr*, which means thankfulness. This descriptive term's factual content is located at the primary level of moral discourse. Given that it appears very often in the Qur'an, in sharp contrast to *mu'min* (one who considers something absolutely true or one who believes) and *muslim* (one who has completely surrendered to God's will), *kufr* came to acquire a secondary, relational meaning of the attitude of "one who does not believe in God." As a result of this frequent use and by virtue of the neighboring words, the semantic category of *kufr* is strongly influenced and thus acquires a noticeable semantic value.[41]

Now coming to the possible equivalent words in English, which are "misbeliever," "disbeliever," or "unbeliever," we observe a fundamental difference in the word structures. *Kufr* is a single, independent unit that cannot be further subdivided. By contrast, its English equivalent is composed of two parts: first, an element designating a negative meaning (mis-, dis-, un-) and second, the part that represents the material side of the meaning: "belief." This means that the semantic category of the English equivalent is fundamentally based on the concept of belief. Izutsu reiterates that *kufr*'s first and original semantic meaning remains "ingratitude" and that the secondary meaning is "unbelief." This first meaning is completely lost the moment we interpret or translate *kufr* or *kafir* in terms of belief.[42] Izutsu calls this attitude a "semantic discrepancy" that reads into an Arabic term a meaning that is not primarily intended.[43]

This means that two different cultures of different languages would not hold on to the same moral code, except perhaps at the "high level of abstraction," which has no practical implication or influence on worldview formation.[44] Since the nature of the moral value is seen as inextricably drawn from the peculiarity of a language, different people of different cultures submit to different moral values based on the difference in their languages. Izutsu makes this idea clear:

> On the topic of the interconnection between language and culture … I shall strongly incline to a pluralistic theory which holds that people's views of what is good and bad, or right and wrong, differ from place to place and from time to time, and differ fundamentally, not as trivial details to be explained away as degrees in the scale of a unitary cultural development, but as more basic cultural divergences having their roots deep down in the language habits of each individual community.[45]

There is no doubt that the transposition of ethical terms from one linguistic culture to another compromises the methodological principle of linguistic relativity and the structural semantic theory of semantic fields. While there are culturally filtered concepts that enable a given linguistic community to live and bequeath its values from one generation to another, the entire semantic mechanism of splitting up the complex structure and the semantic field of each word of a language is, in effect, impractical. It is all "a programmatic ideal," as Izutsu himself admitted in some cases, which is "in practice impossible to hope for more than a rough approximation."[46]

Unless we find alternative ways of expressing the same meaning in different languages, the semantic theory, as applied to the Qur'anic weltan-

schauung, will be self-defeating and self-contradictory. Here is a scenario in which a speaker of Language A can comprehend only what can be conveyed in that language, and to the extent that Language B structures reality in a different way, it must remain incomprehensible to the speaker of Language A. The scenario becomes more complex when a speaker of Language C enters the equation, attempting to expound Language A's peculiarities in Language B as a medium of explanation. If it is true that speakers of different languages experience and express reality in their respective distinct ways and live in different mental worlds, then any attempt to channel a mutual understanding is doomed to failure. This also undermines the credibility of Izutsu's study of the Qur'anic weltanschauung. Here is the Qur'an revealed in Arabic (Language A), the meaning or explanation of which is written in English (Language B) by a Japanese scholar (Language C). The more credible this semantic theory is, the less credible Izutsu's semantic analytical study of the Qur'anic conceptual key terms would be.

Semantics and Ethico-Theological Discourse

The implication of semantic analysis for the ethical and theological concepts of the Qur'an is enormous. In classical Islamic theological discourse, an inquiry into the nature of meaning in language took place within the discussion on *kalam* (speech) as a divine attribute, whether the Qur'an is the created or uncreated speech of God, and the discussions on *i`jaz al-Qur'an* (the inimitability of the Qur'an).

The conventionality of linguistic categorization has been well established by mainstream Muslim theologians, precisely the Ash`arites, with a view to arriving at what is not conventional in the word meaning. Al-Baqillani (338-403/950-1013) explained that the essence of *kalam* is the inner speech in the mind that conventional words, spoken or written, designate. This is due to the obvious fact that the same speech can be expressed in non-linguistic terms. A person born mute and deaf also possesses an inner speech that he/she can make known to others through symbols and signs.[47] Similarly, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (543/44-606/1149/50-1209), in his Qur'anic commentary, noted that not all quiddities (*al-mahiyat*) have been named because the quiddity is infinite, and what is infinite cannot be perceptible in detail and thus cannot receive a name. Conversely, what is more perceptible and needed to be expressed among the members of a given society will, by convention, receive a name. Thus the meaning of a word is a mental image (*al-surah al-dhihniyah*) of the objective reality. This means that the relation between a word and its designatum is not necessarily natural, but arbitrary.[48]

The Ash`arites sought to establish the essence of *al-kalam al-nafsi* (the inner, internal speech) of God and its eternity and precedence over *al-kalam al-lafzi* (the outward linguistic expression, articulated speech). The former refers to the inner, eternal, and uncreated word of God that exists as an attribute in the divine essence, whereas the latter is that which is read and recited in the Qur'an, consisting of signs or symbols pointing to that essential *al-kalam al-nafsi*.[49]

Dividing the divine speech into *al-kalam al-lafzi* and *al-kalam al-nafsi* is one way of establishing the integrity of *kalam* regardless of the diversity in its outward linguistic expression. As al-Baqillani indicated, the speech of God is eternal and self-existing in His divine essence, from which emanated the heavenly books. This eternal, inner speech of God is made known to human beings through the languages they have conventionally and mutually agreed upon as their medium of expression and communication. When it is expressed in Hebrew it is known as the Torah, when it is communicated in Syriac/Aramaic it is known as the Gospels,[50] and when it is revealed in Arabic it is known as the Qur'an. Despite their outward linguistic diversity, these books signify the same eternal, inner speech of God.[51]

The fact is that as the prominent Mu`tazili theologian al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar (d. 415/1024) explained, God's speech has to be intelligible to the people to whom it is primarily addressed. This requires that it be conveyed in a language agreed upon (*muwada`ah*) prior to God's use of it in His *kalam*.[52] This is in accordance with the Qur'anic recognition of the indispensability of a common language for human communication, as stated in: "We sent not a messenger except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people, in order to make (things) clear to them" (14:4). Reflecting upon this verse, Abdullah Yusuf Ali explains that:

> There is even a wider meaning for "language." It is not merely a question of alphabets, letters, or words. Each age or people – or world in a psychological sense – casts its thoughts in a certain mould or form. God's message – being universal – can be expressed in all moulds and forms, and is equally valid and necessary for all grades of humanity, and must therefore be explained to each according to his or her capacity or receptivity. In this respect, the Qur'an is marvelous. It is for the simplest as well as the most advanced.[53]

Whether one agrees with this division of *kalam* or not, the integrity and indivisibility of God's speech is thoroughly maintained in the Qur'an. We may take *wahy* (revelation) as an example not only because it is one of the

important key words, but, most importantly, because other key words were its constituent parts and were known to us through *wahy*. The Qur'an explains that the concept or phenomenon of *wahy*, of God revealing His message to messengers so that they can convey it to their respective nations, is not something unknown to earlier nations. Quite the contrary, *wahy*, as the Qur'an describes it, has been present from time immemorial and revealed to human beings at regular intervals in history. The messengers' response to God's revelation are also said to be similar (3:79-83). Furthermore, the Qur'an states that just as God revealed His message to Prophet Muhammad, He had revealed it to earlier prophets, such as Nuh, Ibrahim, Isma`il, Ishaq, Ya`qub, Musa, `Isa, and many others, irrespective of whether their account is given in the Qur'an or not (4:163-65). While the term *wahy* might be unique to Arabic, the concept it carries and the phenomenon it portrays are presented in the Qur'an as being common to chosen messengers throughout history. *Wahy* simply characterizes the Qur'anic version of the same vision of reality. What is said about *wahy* equally applies to other key words, such as *kufr*, *imam*, *islam*, *Allah*, and *shirk*.

Such continuity equally applies to major moral concepts. To be just, faithful, steadfast, righteous; to do good to others and give alms to the needy; to respect one's parents; and to refrain from killing an innocent person, cheating, lying, stealing, or spreading corruption in the land are among the primordial ethical virtues common to different linguistic cultures. Prophet Muhammad considers his message, as compared to those of the early messengers, as the last brick in a well-decorated mansion and that he came to fill the vacuum:

> My similitude in comparison with the other prophets before me, is that of a man who has built a house nicely and beautifully, except for a place of one brick in a corner. The people go about it and wonder at its beauty, but say: "Would that this brick be put in its place!" So I am that brick (with which you give the finishing touch to the building), and I am the last of the Prophets.[54]

In another hadith Prophet Muhammad sums up the main objective of his message: "I have been sent only for the purpose of completing good morals."[55] Based on this common heritage, the Qur'an assigns to itself, in its relation to the earlier revealed books, the double task of *musaddiqan* (confirmation) by preserving the remaining well-established fundamentals and of *muhayminan* (preponderance) by correcting and restoring the missing principles back to their natural order (5:48).

Izutsu does recognize the link and a type of continuity between Qur'anic ethics and pre-Islamic ethics. He clearly states that "in spite of the bitter attacks on the pagans and their idolatrous customs, the Qur'an adopted and revived, in a new form suited to the needs of monotheism, many of the outstanding virtues of paganism."[56] But that is true only because of the common Arabic language that the Qur'an shares with them. The appearance of major religious concepts of Judeo-Christian origin in the Qur'an was made possible only because they had passed through and been filtered by the Arabic of the pre-Islamic era.[57] As for other people of different linguistic cultures, Izutsu does not believe they could be similar in their moral outlook, as indicated above.

Now Izutsu explains *wahy* in contact with *kalam* (speech), *qawl*, and *tanzil*, and other negative words such as *waswasah*, *kahin*, *sha`ir*, and jinn of the same semantic field. He demonstrates how the true and divinely based sense of *wahy* made its way out of a pseudo- and jinn-based sense of revelation.[58] But according to the Qur'an this is not unique to the Qur'an-Prophet's experience, but rather a common human characteristic that when a prophet was sent to them some people would hastily accuse him of sorcery, hallucinations, or being possessed. This has been a common response of the *kuffar* across generations and cultures and so parallel that it seems as if there were a consensus of opinion among them, despite their cultural and linguistic diversities and geographical and generational gaps. On such a parallel inclination, the Qur'an remarks:

> Similarly, no messenger came to the peoples before them but they said (of him) in like manner, "A sorcerer, or one possessed!" Is this the legacy they have transmitted, one to another? (51:52-53)

A closer look at the Qur'an reveals that these key concepts of *wahy*, *kufr*, *imam*, *islam*, *Allah*, *shirk*, and so on form a single bloc within every community's religious psyche. Whenever a focus word, *wahy*, for example, is introduced into the scene, other constituents of the bloc become operative.

This means that understanding *wahy* in the context of other similar (positive or negative) terms in Arabic does not mark the Qur'anic weltanschauung off from other worldviews, as long as the Qur'anic language has firmly entrenched its concepts in the similar concepts experienced by earlier nations in different languages. There is a need to study not only how and in what language the Qur'an is making its point, but, more importantly, the very point it is trying to make. At some point, when Izutsu is comparing the stylistic genre of the Qur'an and *saj`* (rhythmic) style of the *kahin* (sooth-

sayer), he does acknowledge that the Qur'an looks more at the content than the language of expression. He admits that "what is far more important from the Qur'anic point of view is the content itself of the message conveyed, and not the form of expression which conveys the message."[59] Nevertheless, Izutsu considers language a substructure of the worldview's structures.

The problem here is that the Qur'anic concepts, although couched in Arabic, have internalized similar concepts articulated in different languages and made them a whole, an integral part of its own vision of reality. These concepts can be studied diachronically based on the historical comparative method of the Qur'anic Arabic vocabularies and those of other Semitic languages, namely, Abyssinian, Hebrew, Aramaic, Assyrian, and even of the larger Afro-Asiatic (Hamitic) language family of which Semitic is a member.[60] This will illustrate what is special to the Qur'anic worldview and what common concepts and characteristics the Qur'an shares with other heavenly books, particularly the Bible. What is more obvious is that if the Qur'an is divested of its longstanding historical footing and such cross-cultural or trans-linguistic concepts are denied, its concepts will become very difficult to comprehend properly. Thus the problem cannot be resolved at a semantic level, if semantics is confined to the analytical study of key words without reference to the history of the concept or experience expressed in different terms.

It is obvious that reading a scripture exclusively through such a semantic epistemological framework will inevitably lead to the desacralization of the religious language and deconsecration of its moral values. As Julia Penn points out, linguistic relativity is posited to free us from the assumption of innate categories endowed to humanity by God, just as the notion of the cultural relativity of values is to liberate us from the conviction that there is a preordained *Sittengesetz über uns*, a transcendent moral law to which all cultures at all times are subject.[61] However, Izutsu is quick to draw the line between the sacred and the profane bases of God's speech. The sacred basis is recognized by virtue of the ontological hierarchy that exists between God (sender) and humanity (recipient). God, the Infinite, represents the highest level of being, whereas humanity, the finite, represents a far lower level of being. Approached from the angle of its sacredness, revelation is construed as a theological mystery incapable of being understood and approached analytically; it is something only in which one must believe.[62]

While Izutsu recognizes this basis of revelation, he makes it clear that there is another and equally important basis of revelation that makes it accessible to human beings. As a *speech* (of God), revelation is within human

reach and therefore must have all the essential attributes of human language. According to him, pre-linguistic concepts, or what is classically referred to as *al-kalam al-nafsi* (the inner, internal speech), if they do exist, fall outside the scope of semantic scientific inquiry.[63] Drawing from these attributes of revelation, Izutsu concluded that

> although revelation in itself is a phenomenon that goes beyond all comparison and defies all analysis, yet there is a certain respect in which we can approach it analytically and try to discover the basic structure of its concept by considering it an extreme, or rather, an exceptional case of the general linguistic behavior common to all beings that "speak" at all.[64]

The sacred basis of revelation, upon which theology – at least Islamic theology – is founded, has been excluded, although not necessarily denied, from any semantic analytical study. The theological fundamentals believed to transcend the cultural peculiarities and linguistic barriers are, within the semantic jurisdiction, put on trial. This puts semantic premises and theological postulates of scriptural studies at loggerheads.

Beyond Semantics

As far as the origin of human language can be traced, based on the Qur'anic account, it all started with Prophet Adam. The materials from which Adam was fashioned and the transformation or mutation of these materials from one stage to another were recounted in the Qur'an (15:26 and 23:12), a variant of which was also told in the Bible (Genesis 1 and 2). After he was created, he was endowed with the capacity to identify the name of things. It is possible that the materials from which he was created were among those items he was later asked to identify by name. While Adam came to know them only after his existence and by virtue of his language, the reality of these objects and the laws governing them were there long before him, and with or without his recognition of them.

How are we to account for this type of reality without compromising the force of human language? This requires a non-linguistic inquiry into the nature of reality at the sub-linguistic and pre-linguistic levels. It is possible that there are properties of reality subsisting outside the human mind that subtly find their ways into human minds or are made known through the human linguistic apparatus. Grounded on the homogeneity of human nature, or to use the Qur'anic term *fitrah* (humanity's innate, natural disposition), reality transpires in humans' mental framework (or what may be called the

"objective mind") and then crystallizes in their diverse languages. The Qur'an gives accounts of these realities in Arabic and holds that similar accounts have been given in earlier heavenly books. Semantics provides a systematic account of the linguistic dimension of reality; however, reality is not reducible to a semantic category because other dimensions of reality defy semantic categorization.

Izutsu's semantic project would perhaps better be appreciated when reading it against the problem he was addressing at different stages of inquiry. In *God and Man in the Qur'an*, Izutsu was more concerned to demonstrate analytically the semantic structure of the Qur'anic language. To establish a place for semantics within Qur'anic studies, he equated it with philosophical, theological, grammatical, exegetical, and sociological approaches. Semantics is then seen as another particular approach that addresses the Qur'an from a particular point of view.[65] The materials and analysis he provided in this regard are indispensible for those interested in the Qur'anic discourse.

In *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, he was more concerned with the problems of the ethical language of ancient Arabic as reflected in the Qur'an. Rather than being a particular frame of reference, the semantic category became all that mattered and the entire structure of reality was intelligible only when construed linguistically.

When he was addressing mystical experience, which is characteristically ineffable,[66] in his later writings, his interest, as Kojiro Nakamura rightly observes, shifted from the semantic categorization of reality to reality itself prior to linguistic articulation. In this respect of philosophical and mystical planes, Izutsu made a number of comparative studies that obviously compromise the premises of his semantic theory. For example, he compared Heidegger's philosophy of existentialism and Sabzawari's concept of *wahdat al-wujud* by applying an elementary phenomenological procedure of epoche to both philosophical systems. Having removed what seem to be secondary factors and protective layers from the surface of both concepts, he stated that existentialism and *wujud* are very close to each other in their basic structure and deepest stratum of the fundamental vision or experience of "existence."[67] Here the existential experience seems to override the linguistic barrier.

A similar comparison was made between Ibn al-`Arabi's philosophy of *wahdat al-wujud* in Sufism and Chuang-tzu's concept of *t'ien ni* (heavenly leveling) and *t'ien chün* (heavenly equalization) in Taoism. Izutsu believed that there could be a central concept common to two linguistically and culturally diverse systems of thought and found no difficulty in borrowing and

applying the Sufi term *wujud* to the Taoist *t'ien ni* and *t'ien chün* experience. He did this while searching for a common philosophical ground on which to establish what he called "a meta-historical dialogue" (which should rather have been called "a meta-linguistic dialogue") between Ibn al-`Arabi's philosophical thought and those of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu.[68]

At this level of inquiry, Izutsu agreed that it is possible to know this bare unarticulated reality directly through mystical experience. He recognized the reality of "a state of non-linguistic fluidity or amorphousness" that preceded a linguistic labeling and could be experienced.[69] It is probably upon this type of reality that he established his meta-historical dialogue project among the major philosophical and mystical thoughts of different traditions, a project that he believes will inevitably culminate in a *philosophia perennis*.[70]

Conclusion

It is acceptable in almost all major approaches to the Qur'an that the best way of interpreting it is to let it interpret itself. This axiom is taken in a special way in the structural semantics as espoused by Izutsu. By focusing on the semantic field of the Qur'anic vocabulary, Izutsu is determined to engage the Qur'an on its own terms and let it interpret its own concepts and speak for itself. To some extent, this has shown practically that the Qur'an is internally coherent. Such a conclusion is perhaps the most that can be expected from an outsider's critical analytical study of a scripture.

A synchronic semantic analysis demonstrates very vividly the historicity of the Qur'anic events. It also indicates that the Qur'an was revealed not in a historical vacuum, abstraction, or speculation, but rather in the full light of concrete historical context. By the analysis of *basic* and *relational* meanings, Izutsu shows how the Qur'an adopted and assimilated many of the outstanding pre-Islamic virtues but let their energy flow in a different direction, one suited to the emerging Islamic values. While he considers this semantic transformation of meaning as the major characteristic of the Qur'anic weltanschauung, he reiterates in the same breath that the relational meaning is nothing but the concrete manifestation of the culture's spirit and the most faithful reflection of the general tendency of the people who use the word as part of their vocabulary. Within this framework of semantic analysis of the scriptural language, the meaningfulness of the world lies in the worldliness of meaning.

No one can deny the force of language in channeling ideas and meanings among the people who speak it. Due to this frequent association and

heavy dependence on language in meaning making, it is possible that in a given language there might be – and indeed there have been – a number of concepts that have been colored by their cultural norms and thus might not properly find their denotations in another culture's linguistic apparatus. But the very fact that we can identify these concepts and articulate their peculiarities and unique properties, perhaps through paraphrasing, has, at least partially, solved the problem. The possibility of decoding a complex idea in a relatively roundabout way, or of encoding a loose, paraphrased idea in a more precise and concise word, makes it possible to bypass the constraint that might be imposed by the peculiarity of a given language.

Other than the current issues that requires an immediate response, the Qur'an aligns itself in making and authenticating its point within a broader historical context of God's message and messengers in history than the Arabs' immediate history prior to the emergence of Islam. Such a historical perspective is so central to the Qur'anic worldview that if that part were to be removed or suspended from the Qur'anic account, the whole fabric of the Qur'anic foundations would crumble and fall apart. Now, most of the key words forming the structure of the Qur'anic worldview, as Izutsu presented them, can be studied from this comparative extended historical perspective. Otherwise, a synchronic reading of a book such as the Qur'an, which takes history very seriously, or reducing the history of its concepts to that of *jahiliyah,* will highlight, at best, a Qur'anic worldview in transition and how the Qur'an was first received, not necessarily how it wants itself to be conceived. Such a reading tells us more about the Arabian Peninsula's immediate context than the Qur'an's main import and broader context.

Endnotes

1. David Crystal, *A Dictionary of Linguistics & Phonetic*s (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 410.
2. Translated into English as "worldview," ***weltanschauung*** is a German term that refers to a comprehensive conception of the universe and humanity's relation to it. It is also in wide use in English. See ***Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*** (New York: Gramercy Books, 1989), 1622.
3. Semantic field theory is the view that the vocabulary of a language is organized into areas or fields with which words interrelate and define each other in various ways. Since different languages are believed to categorize a particular conceptual field in different ways, there might be no translational equivalence of semantic values between terms. See Crystal, *Dictionary,* 411; Alan Cruse,

A Glossary of Semantics and Pragmatics (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 172.

4. As a branch of structural linguistics, structural semantics refers to the theory that word meanings are basically relational, in the sense that a word's meaning is determined by its position in a network of semantic relations with other words in the same semantic (lexical) field. See Cruse, *Glossary*, 161 and 171.
5. W. Montgomery Watt, review of *God and Man in the Koran: Semantics of the Koranic Weltanschauung* and *The Concept of Belief in Islamic Theology*, by Toshihiko Izutsu, *Journal of Semitic Studies* 12, no. 1 (spring 1967): 156; Harry B. Partin, "Semantics of the Qur'an: A Consideration of Izutsu's Studies," review of *God and Man in the Koran: Semantics of the Koranic Weltanschauung: Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* and *The Concept of Belief in Islamic Theology*, by Toshihiko Izutsu, *History of Religions* 9, no. 4 (May 1970): 358.
6. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, preface to *Consciousness and Reality: Studies in Memory of Toshihiko Izutsu*, ed. Sayyid Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2000), xii.
7. Shinya Makino, "On the Originality of 'IZUTSU' Oriental Philosophy," in *Consciousness and Reality: Studies in Memory of Toshihiko Izutsu*, 253-57. "Araya-consciousness of meaning" in Buddhistic Yuishiki philosophy refers to a subconscious stratum from which meaning arises, accumulates, and perishes. For this element in Izutsu's philosophy, see Ibid.
8. Besides these two works, he produced a translation of the Qur'an in three volumes, which is the fourth Japanese-language translation. See Bushra Anis, "The Emergence of Islam and the Status of Muslim Minority in Japan," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 18, no. 2 (1998): 333. According to Abdul Karim Saitoh, this work was first printed at Kaizosha in 1945. See his "The Historical Journey of Islam Eastward and the Muslim Community in Japan Today," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 1, no.1 (1979): 123.
9. Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an: Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, reprint. 2008, 2002), first published as *God and Man in the Koran: Semantics of the Koranic Weltanschauung* (Japan: Keio Institute of Cultural Studies, 1964). The book was translated into Arabic by `Isa `Ali al-`Akub as *Bayna Allah wa al-Insan fi al-Qur'an: Dirasah Dilaliyah li Nazrat al-Qur'an ila al-`Alam* (Halab, Syria: Dar al-Multaqa, 2007).
10. Toshihiko Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, reprint. 2007, 2004), first published under the same title by McGill University Press (Montreal: 1966). This work is a revised edition of his *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran: A Study in Semantics* (Tokyo: Keio Institute of Philological Studies, 1959). The book was translated into Arabic by `Isa `Ali al-`Akub as *Al-Mafhumat al-Akhlaqiyah-al-Diniyah fi al-Qur'an* (Halab, Syria: Dar al-Multaqa, 2008).

11. For more on the origin and historical development of "linguistic relativity," see Robert L. Miller, *The Linguistic Relativity Principle and Humboldtian Ethnolinguistics: A History and Appraisal* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968) and Julia M. Penn, *Linguistic Relativity versus Innate Ideas: The Origin of Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis in German Thought* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972).
12. Penn, *Linguistic Relativity*, 19; I. M. Schlesinger, "The Wax and Wane of Whorfian Views," in Robert L. Cooper and Bernard Spolsky, eds., *The Influence of Language on Culture and Thought: Essays in Honor of Joshua A. Fishman's Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1991), 14
13. Miller, *The Linguistic Relativity Principle and Humboldtian Ethnolinguistics*, 54-56.
14. Joseph Greenberg, "Language and Linguistics," in Bernard Berelson, ed., *The Behavioral Sciences Today* (New York: Basic Books, 1963), 138.
15. E. Sapir, "The Status of Linguistics as a Science," in David G. Mandelbaum, ed., *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), 162 and Paul Henle, ed., *Language, Thought, and Culture* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1958), 7.
16. Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, ed. John B. Carrol (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1956), 214 and 252.
17. Izutsu acknowledged his indebtedness to the semantic theories of Weisgerber, Sapir, and Whorf. See his *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, 6-7 and *God and Man in the Qur'an*, 29.
18. Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an*, 3.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., 8-11.
21. Ibid., 7-10.
22. Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, 263.
23. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, 11.
24. Ibid.
25. George W. Grace, *The Linguistic Construction of Reality* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 6.
26. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, 10.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 3.
29. Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an*, 87.
30. Ibid., 7, 76, and 100.
31. Ibid., 3, 18, and 74.
32. Ibid., 4-5 and 27.
33. Ibid., 3, 18, 74, and 16-29.
34. Ibid., 11 and 16.
35. Ibid., 11-12.
36. Ibid., 8-10.

37. Ibid., 7. See also *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, 83 and 295-97.
38. Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an*, 5.
39. Ibid., 17.
40. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, 14.
41. Ibid., 26-27.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., 27.
44. Ibid., 6.
45. Ibid.
46. Izutsu, *The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran*, 6.
47. Al-Qadi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani, *Al-Insaf fi ma Yajibu I`tiqaduh wa la Yajuzu al-Jahl bihi* (Beirut: `Alam al-Kutub, 1986), 158-59.
48. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *Al-Tafsir al-Kabir* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 2000), 1:30-33.
49. Al-Baqillani, *Al-Insaf*, 158.
50. It must be noted that the Gospel was first written down in Greek, a language that Jesus Christ did not speak. That simply means that the Gospel, in its written form, is fundamentally a translated book (see David Jasper and Stephen Prickett [eds.], *The Bible and Literature Reader* [Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1999], 3-5.). The point here is, however, the first language of the scripture through which that scripture was communicated or known to the prophet. Whether it was later written down or not, the Gospel was orally given to Prophet `Isa in Syriac/Aramaic. Similarly, the Qur'an had already become the Qur'an the moment it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad in Arabic, even before he would ask the scribes to write it down.
51. Al-Baqillani, *Al-Insaf*, 158.
52. Al-Qadi `Abd al-Jabbar, *Al-Mughni fi Abwab al-Tawhid wa al-`Adl* (Cairo: Matba`at Dar al-Kutub, 1960-69), vii and 182; Margaret Larkin, *The Theology of Meaning: `Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani's Theory of Discourse* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1995), 31.
53. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Beirut: Dar al-`Arabiyah, 1970), 620.
54. Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, "Kitab al-Manaqib," iv, book 56, no. 735; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, "Kitab al-Faḍa'il," chap. 7, book 30, no. 5673.
55. Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi, *Sunan al-Bayhaqi al-Kubra*, ed. Muhammad `Abd al-Qadir `Ata (Makkah: Maktabat Dar al-Baz, 1994), 10:191; Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Qurtubi, *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, ed. Ahmad `Abd al-Halim al-Barduni (Cairo: Dar al-Sha`b, 1373 AH), 14:197.
56. Izutsu, *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*, 82.
57. Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an*, 36, 104-06, 114, and 115.
58. Ibid., 169-99.
59. Ibid., 188.

60. Malik Bennabi (1905-73), following some classical Qur'anic commentators, identifies some terms (e.g., *Malakut*) and names (e.g., Jalut, Harut, and Marut) that the Qur'an adopts from Aramaic. According to him, the New Testament's concept of "the Kingdom of God" is also reconceptualized in the Qur'an as *Ayyam al-Allah* (literally, "Days of God," meaning God's final judgment of humanity on the Day of Resurrection). See Malik Bennabi, *The Qur'anic Phenomenon: An Essay of a Theory on the Qur'an*, trans. Mohamed el-Tahir el-Mesawi (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2001), 145-49; see also Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an Translated and Explained* (Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1980), 21-22, n. 83 and 371, n. 5.
61. Penn, *Linguistic Relativity versus Innate Ideas*, 11.
62. Izutsu, *God and Man in the Qur'an*, 165-66 and 179-81.
63. Ibid., 27-28.
64. Ibid., 167.
65. Ibid., 1.
66. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (London: Longman, repr. 1928, 1902), 380.
67. Toshihiko Izutsu, *The Concept and Reality of Existence* (Tokyo: The Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1971), 25-33.
68. Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, 472; see also Kojiro Nakamura's Forward to Izutsu's *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, reprint. 2007, 2004), 472.
69. Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, 472; see also Kojiro Nakamura's Forward to Izutsu's *Ethico-Religious Concepts*, viii.
70. Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, 469.