



Thesis:

MANTIQ AND THE FOUR DIVISIONS OF KNOWLEDGE IN ISLAM:

*A Study of Logic and Epistemology in the Islamic
Tradition*

Abstract

This dissertation explores المنطق (Mantiq, logic) as an Islamic science of correct reasoning, focusing on its foundational classification of knowledge into four divisions:

1. العلم القديم (Eternal) and العلم الحادث (Created) knowledge.
2. علم حضوري (Direct) and علم حصولي (Indirect) knowledge.
3. تصور (Conceptual) and تصديق (Propositional) knowledge.
4. نظري (Inferential) and ضروري (Non-inferential) knowledge.

Rooted in both revelation and reason, Mantiq functions as a discipline that refines human understanding and ensures sound inference in theological, legal, and metaphysical discourse. The study situates Mantiq within the intellectual history of Islam, tracing its integration from Greek logic through the contributions of scholars such as Al Farabi, Ibn Sina, Imam Ghazali, and Fakhr al Din al Razi etc. Emphasis is placed on the epistemological role of Mantiq in distinguishing valid reasoning from fallacious thoughts and safeguarding the truth of premises in religious and rational inquiry. This research highlights how Islamic mantiq, while borrowing structural methods from Aristotle, reoriented these methods toward spiritual truth and moral certainty. In doing so, it reveals that Mantiq in Islam is not a dry formalism but a living science; one that binds the intellect to the Divine order of knowledge.

Introduction

Mantiq (منطق) is the science of correct thinking; the disciplined art of distinguishing between sound and unsound reasoning. In Islam, it serves as a foundational tool that ensures human reasoning aligns with both intellectual coherence and divine truth. Scholars defined Mantiq as *“The instrument that protects the mind from error in thought”*.

The ultimate aim of this science is not merely to argue well but to reason correctly in the pursuit of knowledge that pleases Allah ﷻ. Mantiq, in the Islamic sense, was never a detached or secular discipline. It developed within a worldview where ‘ilm was sacred, a reflection of divine order. As the Qur’an states:

وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

“And say, ‘My Lord, increase me in knowledge.’” (Qur’an 20:114)

This divine injunction makes the acquisition and refinement of knowledge not just a rational pursuit but an act of worship. Within that sacred pursuit, Mantiq became the intellectual key that distinguished correct understanding from error.

1.1 The Nature and Purpose of Mantiq

In the classical Islamic curriculum, Mantiq was considered a preparatory science (muqaddimah); one that disciplined the intellect before engaging in higher studies such as fiqh (jurisprudence), tafseer (exegesis), and kalaam (theology). Imam Ghazali, in his Mi’yaar al-’Ilm, famously asserted:

“He who does not master logic cannot be trusted in his knowledge.”

This bold claim reflects the conviction that logic guards religious sciences from corruption by fallacy or passion. Without Mantiq, reasoning in law or theology would risk inconsistency or contradiction. Thus, logic in Islam functions as a “criterion” (meezaan); a balance by which scholars weigh thoughts, arguments, and proofs.

1.2 The Central Role of Knowledge (‘Ilm)

Before understanding logic, one must understand what knowledge is. Logicians defined ‘ilm as:

إدراك الشيء على ما هو به

“The apprehension (perception) of a thing as it truly is”

They distinguished between تصور (conceptual knowledge) and تصديق (propositional knowledge); the two primary ways knowledge manifests in the mind. Together, these form the foundation of Mantiq, since logic deals with the forms and relations between concepts and judgments.

In Epistemology, knowledge is not a mere accumulation of data but a reflection of divine order. The Qur’an continuously links knowledge with awareness of Allah ﷻ:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

“Only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah among His servants.” (Qur’an 35:28)

Here, ‘ilm is tied to humility and reverence, suggesting that correct knowledge is transformative, not just theoretical. The study of Mantiq thus refines both the intellect and the heart.

1.3 The Need for Mantiq in Religious Sciences

Human reasoning is prone to error, bias, and illusion. Mantiq was developed to provide a criterion that distinguishes correct reasoning from incorrect reasoning. This distinction is critical in all Islamic sciences. *A faqeeh who reasons about fiqh without mantiq risks invalid analogies; a theologian without logic risks contradictions in creed.*

As Fakhr al Din al Razi observed,

“Every mistake in reasoning arises either from a defect in conception (tasawwur) or in assent (tasdiq).”

1.4 The Structure of Knowledge in Mantiq

To study logic properly, one must first classify the types of knowledge that exist. Logicians divided knowledge into various kinds to identify which types are subject to logical analysis and which are beyond it. Mantiq deals mainly with created, representational, and inferential knowledge; the types that can be expressed in words and tested through reasoning.

This study will therefore focus on the four fundamental divisions of knowledge in Islamic logic:

1. **Eternal & Created Knowledge:** distinguishing between divine and human knowledge.
2. **Direct & Indirect Knowledge:** differentiating between immediate awareness and mediated concepts.
3. **Conceptual & Propositional Knowledge:** separating mere conception from affirmed truth.
4. **Inferential & Non-Inferential Knowledge:** explaining how we reason from known to unknown.

These four distinctions provide the framework for understanding the limits and possibilities of human reason within an Islamic worldview.

The Nature of Mantiq and Its Historical Development

Mantiq - منطق, literally derives from the Arabic root n-t-q (ن-ط-ق), meaning “speech” or “articulate expression.” This term is metaphorically referred to the mind’s articulate reasoning, i.e., the inner counterpart of external speech. Thus, Mantiq is the disciplined way in which the intellect “speaks to itself” through structured thought.

In Islam, Mantiq is defined as:

آلة تعصم الذهن عن الخطأ في الفكر

“He who does not master logic cannot be trusted in his knowledge.”

This definition underscores two essential ideas. First, Mantiq is not itself a source of knowledge but an instrument (aalah). It refines the intellect just as grammar (naḥw) refines speech. Second, its purpose is protective; to guard reasoning from fallacy and inconsistency.

The science deals primarily with three intellectual functions:

1. Definition (ta’reef) – clarifying what is meant by terms.
2. Proof (burhaan) – structuring valid arguments.
3. Verification (tahqeeq) – ensuring that premises are sound and correspond to truth.

Thus, Mantiq forms the scaffolding for all rational disciplines, from fiqh to aqeedah.

2.1 The Basic Form of Reasoning

At its core, logic studies how premises lead to conclusions. The fundamental pattern of inference is what logicians call قياس (syllogism).

For example: *If A, then B.... A.... Therefore, B.*

This structure, known in modern terms as *modus ponens*, ensures that if the premises are true and the form is valid, the conclusion must be true. Example: *If someone is human, they are mortal. ‘Umar is human. Therefore, ‘Umar is mortal.*

This reasoning is valid because the conclusion necessarily follows the premises. However, validity does not guarantee truth; the premises themselves must be sound. Mantiq therefore distinguishes between: *Validity of form, and Truth of premises.*

The first belongs to logic; the second belongs to epistemology and theology. Scholars insisted on both, because truth in Islam is not merely formal coherence but correspondence to reality and revelation.

2.3 Validity and Soundness

In Islamic logic, this distinction is expressed as the difference between Sidq (truth) and Sihhah (correctness). A statement may be formally correct yet false if its premises do not correspond to reality.

Example of a valid but false argument: *If science is the only truth, then religion is myth. Science is the only truth. Therefore, religion is myth.*

The logical structure is valid, but the first premise is false; hence the argument is unsound (ghayr saheeh).

Example of an invalid argument: *All cats are animals. John is an animal. Therefore, John is a cat.*

Here, even if the premises are true, the conclusion does not follow. The form itself is invalid.

Logicians emphasized this dual requirement; true premises and valid structure, because the ultimate goal of reasoning was haqq (truth), not mere consistency.

2.4 Common Fallacies

The early logicians and later scholars like Imam Ghazali listed common reasoning errors known as mughaalataat (fallacies). Among them are:

- **Affirming the consequent:** If $A \rightarrow B$; B; therefore A.
Example: *“If it rains, the ground is wet. The ground is wet. Therefore, it rained.”*
(Invalid: it may be wet for another reason.)
- **Denying the antecedent:** If $A \rightarrow B$; not A; therefore not B.
Example: *“If the sun shines, it is day. The sun does not shine. Therefore, it is not day.”*
(Invalid: it may be cloudy.)
- **Equivocation:** Using the same term in different meanings.
Example: *“Feather is light. What is light cannot be dark. Therefore, feathers cannot be dark.”*
- **Ad hominem:** Attacking a person instead of their argument.
- **Begging the question:** Assuming what must be proved.

Classical Logicians treated fallacy analysis as moral as well as intellectual discipline; to err in reasoning was not merely to think badly but to distort the divine trust of the intellect (amaanah al-‘aql).

2.5 Greek Foundations and Transmission into Islam

The roots of Mantiq trace back to Aristotle (384–322 BCE), who systematized syllogistic reasoning (qiyaas) in his Organon. His logic was later expanded by Stoic and Neoplatonic philosophers. When the Western Roman Empire declined, Greek logic was preserved largely by Syriac-speaking Christians of the Near East.

With the rise of the Abbasid Caliphate (8th–9th centuries CE), these works were translated into Arabic through the Bayt al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad. Figures such as Hunayn ibn Ishaaq and Yahya ibn ‘Adi translated Aristotle’s Categories, Prior Analytics, and Posterior Analytics.

Scholars thus encountered logic not as foreign dogma but as a structured method. They quickly adapted it, purifying it from metaphysical assumptions contrary to tawheed.

2.6 Early Muslim Engagement

- **Al-Kindi (d. 873 CE)**
Regarded as the *“Philosopher of the Arabs,”* al-Kindi was among the first to integrate logic into Arabic philosophical language. He held that logic was a necessary tool to differentiate truth from falsehood in any science.
- **Al-Faraabi (d. 950 CE)**
Titled المعلم الثاني (“The Second Teacher,” after Aristotle), al-Faraabi developed a distinctly Islamic framework for logic. In his Kitaab al-Qiyaas, he described Mantiq as the *“grammar of the intellect,”* comparing it to how nahw governs the structure of language. He emphasized its universality:

“Logic is to the intellect as grammar is to speech; it guards it from error.”

- **Ibn Sina (Avicenna, d. 1037 CE)**

Ibn Sina’s contribution to logic was transformative. He expanded Aristotelian syllogism to include modal logic; reasoning about possibility (imkaan), necessity (darooraa), and contingency (imkaan ghayr waajib). His Kitaab al-Ishaaraat wal-Tanbeehaat and al-Shifa’ became standard works for centuries. Ibn Sina viewed Mantiq as both a tool and a science.

➤ **Ibn Rushd (Averroes, d. 1198 CE)**

Ibn Rushd, in Andalusia, wrote exhaustive commentaries on Aristotle’s logical works, defending logic’s compatibility with revelation. He argued that Mantiq is indispensable for theology and jurisprudence because it clarifies the modes of assent (tasdeeq). His works later influenced Christian scholastics such as Thomas Aquinas.

2.7 Imam Ghazali and the Islamization of Logic

No figure was more decisive in integrating Mantiq into Islamic sciences than Imam Abu Hamid Imam Ghazali (d. 1111 CE). Although critical of philosophers in his Tahaafut al-Falasifah (“Incoherence of the Philosophers”), he defended logic as a neutral instrument. In his Mi’yaar al-’Ilm, he declared:

“Logic is not part of philosophy; it is its scale and measure. Whoever denies it denies the balance by which truth is known.”

After Imam Ghazali, logic entered the madrasa curriculum as a prerequisite to usul al-fiqh and aqidah. He emphasized that logic protects scholars from fallacies that distort divine knowledge.

2.8 Later Logicians, Logic and Revelation: Harmony, Not Conflict

After the 12th century, Mantiq became a standard subject in Muslim education. Scholars such as:

- **Fakhr al Din al Razi (d. 1210 CE):** integrated logic into kalaam theology.
- **Naseer al-Din al-Tusi (d. 1274 CE):** refined syllogistic theory and wrote Asaas al-Iqtibaas.
- **Athir al-Din al-Abhari (d. 1265 CE):** authored Isaaghoojee, a concise introduction to logic, still taught in South Asian madrasas.

Through these figures, logic became embedded in the Dars-i Nizami curriculum; a tradition still alive in the subcontinent, Ottoman world, and North Africa.

Scholars maintained that reason and revelation are not rivals but allies. Imam Ghazali and Imam al-Razi held that logic’s role is tahqeeq al-nazar, i.e., to verify reflection; while revelation provides the ultimate truths of faith.

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the Truth.” (Fussilat 41:53)

The Four Divisions of Knowledge

3.1 Introduction

The concept of knowledge (‘ilm) occupies the central place in Mantiq. The Qur’an begins with the command,

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

“Read in the Name of your Lord who created.” (Qur’an 96:1)

From the earliest centuries, scholars understood knowledge not as mere accumulation of facts but as a form of divine light that reveals truth and orders the intellect. Within the discipline of mantiq, this light of understanding is classified into four divisions, each representing a distinct way through which the human mind apprehends reality.

These divisions are:

- العلم القديم (Eternal) and العلم الحادث (Created) knowledge.
- علم حضوري (Direct) and علم حصولي (Indirect) knowledge.
- تصور (Conceptual) and تصديق (Propositional) knowledge.
- نظري (Inferential) and ضروري (Non-inferential) knowledge.

Each form of knowledge describes a different mode of perception, relation, and certainty between the knower and the known.

3.1.1 Eternal (العلم القديم) and Created (العلم الحادث) knowledge

Eternal knowledge (العلم القديم):

- Eternal knowledge (العلم القديم) belongs exclusively to Allah ﷻ. It is not acquired, increased, or diminished. Allah’s knowledge is perfect, encompassing all things; past, present, and future; without sequence, discovery, or change. The Qur’an declares:

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا

“And indeed Allah encompasses all things in knowledge.” (Surah at-Talaaq, 65:12)

- This knowledge is not subject to logical analysis, because mantiq deals with acquired and discursive reasoning, the movement of the human mind from ignorance to understanding. As Imam Ghazali explains,

“The knowledge of Allah ﷻ is not from the genus of our knowledge; His knowing is without renewal or succession, and our knowing is by acquisition and reasoning.” — Ihya ‘Uloom ad-Din

Created knowledge (العلم الحادث):

- Created knowledge (العلم الحادث), on the other hand, is the knowledge possessed by created beings. Humans are born without knowledge and acquire it gradually through sensory experience, reflection, and instruction. The Qur’an alludes to this process:

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

“And Allah brought you out of your mothers’ wombs not knowing anything, and He made for you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks.” (Surah al-Nahl, 16:78)

- Mantiq is concerned with this created knowledge, because it can be articulated, analyzed, tested, and improved.

3.1.2 Direct and Indirect Knowledge (العلم الحضورى والعلم الحصىلى)

The next division distinguishes between Direct or Presential Knowledge (علم حضورى) and Indirect or Representational Knowledge (علم حصىلى). Both are acquired within the nafs (soul), but they differ in how the object of knowledge is present to the knower.

Direct Knowledge (علم حضورى):

- This is knowledge that is immediate and non-representational. It is not mediated by concepts or mental images. Examples include *self-awareness, emotional states, pain, or the awareness of one’s own existence*.
- When a person feels pain, for instance, they do not infer it; they simply know it. Such awareness is immediate presence, not representation.

“The soul knows itself, not by an image, but by its own essence; its presence to itself is its knowledge.” — Mulla Sadra

- While this type of knowledge is vivid and indubitable for the one who experiences it, it cannot be easily communicated or tested. Hence, it lies outside the scope of mantiq, though it is central to taṣawwuf (spiritual psychology).

Indirect Knowledge (علم حصىلى):

- In contrast, indirect knowledge involves mental representations (صور ذهنية); concepts, sensory impressions, or linguistic descriptions of things external to the self. For example, *when one perceives a tree, the actual tree is outside the mind, but an internal representation of it forms within the intellect*.
- Such knowledge is verifiable and shareable, making it suitable for reasoning, teaching, and disputation. However, it is also fallible, i.e., susceptible to misinterpretation or sensory error.
- Mantiq thus primarily studies this type of knowledge, because reasoning requires propositions, terms, and shared meanings.

“Logic deals with ‘Ilm Husuli, since it is the field where argumentation and definition operate; knowledge that is Huduri is known but cannot be debated.” — al-Taftaazaani

Rule of Thumb:

The further knowledge is removed from immediate presence, the greater the need for verification and thus for logic.

3.1.3 Conceptual and Propositional Knowledge (التصور والتصديق)

The third division concerns the structure of human knowledge: Conceptual knowledge (تصور) and Propositional knowledge (تصديق). This classification is foundational to mantiq, because every argument is built from these two kinds of cognition.

Conceptual Knowledge (تصور):

Tasawwur refers to the formation of a mental concept, an understanding of what something is, without any judgment of its truth or falsity. It answers the question, “*What is it?*”

Examples include: (i) *Forming the concept of “horse” or “tree”*; (ii) *Understanding abstract notions like “existence” or “justice.”*

At this stage, there is no affirmation or denial, only comprehension.

“*Tasawwur is the grasp of a thing’s essence without judgment; Tasdiq is affirmation or denial concerning it.*” — *al-Abhari*

Propositional Knowledge (تصديق):

Tasdiq occurs when multiple concepts are combined in a judgment, resulting in a proposition that can be true or false. Example:

“Allah ﷻ exists.”	
Concept 1: Allah ﷻ.	Concept 2: Existence.
Judgment: Existence belongs to Allah ﷻ.	

Here, tasawwur provides the building blocks, and tasdiq joins them through affirmation or denial.

Logicians thus note that tasawwur precedes tasdiq; one must understand what “Allah” and “existence” mean before asserting that Allah ﷻ exists.

Philosophical Debate:

Scholars differed over whether the three concepts (subject, predicate, and the link between them) are arkaan (أركان) of tasdiq or merely conditions (شروط) for it.

- *The falsafah (e.g., Ibn Sina) held that they are conditions, and that tasdiq arises once they are present.*
- *The mutakallimun (e.g., Fakhr al Din al Razi) argued they are parts, integral to the structure of judgment.*

Later logicians generally adopted the philosophers’ position.

3.1.4 Inferential and Non-Inferential Knowledge (النظري والضروري)

Finally, knowledge may be inferential (نظري); acquired through reasoning, or non-inferential (ضروري), known immediately without reasoning.

Non-inferential knowledge (علم الضروري)

Non-inferential knowledge (علم الضروري) includes self-evident truths:

- *“The whole is greater than the part.”*
- *“I exist.”*
- *“Two is greater than one.”*

These do not require proof; they are grasped intuitively and form the axioms of all reasoning.

Inferential knowledge (علم النظري):

Inferential knowledge (علم النظري), however, is acquired by connecting premises to reach new conclusions.

Example: *Everything contingent needs a cause. The universe is contingent. Therefore, the universe needs a cause.*

This process is called nazar (deliberation).

“*Inference is the transition of the mind from known propositions to an unknown conclusion.*” — *al-Kaatibi*

Because the human mind is prone to error in inference, mantiq functions as a criterion to distinguish valid reasoning from invalid.

“*Logic is the instrument that protects the mind from error in reasoning.*” — *Imam Ghazali, Mi’yar al-’Ilm*

Hence, inferential knowledge requires logical discipline, while non-inferential knowledge provides the starting points from which inference proceeds.

3.2 Conclusion

These four divisions together provide a complete map of knowledge as understood in the Islamic intellectual tradition.

- علم قديم and علم حادث distinguish divine omniscience from human cognition.
- علم حصولي and علم حضوري distinguish direct presence from mediated representation.
- تصديق and تصور define the structure of thought itself.
- علم نظري and علم ضروري classify the methods of acquiring truth.

Mantiq, in this schema, is the discipline that governs the last two divisions; ensuring that our representational and inferential knowledge remain valid, sound, and free from fallacy.

The Function of Mantiq in Acquiring True Knowledge

In the Islamic intellectual tradition, the discipline of mantiq occupies a central position between the sciences of revelation and the sciences of reason. It functions as both a philosophical method and a theological safeguard; an instrument ensuring that the human intellect (العقل) moves soundly from perception to judgment and from judgment to proof.

Mantiq, therefore, is not merely a technical science; it is a means of purifying the rational soul from the errors of thought and guiding it toward certain knowledge. The scholars described mantiq as a qanoon that preserves the mind from error in reasoning.

Imam Ghazali famously wrote:

“Whoever does not master logic, his trust in knowledge cannot be relied upon.” — (Imam Ghazali, Mi‘yar al-‘Ilm)

This view did not mean that logic was superior to revelation; rather, it was seen as a necessary instrument for correctly understanding it. In an age where philosophical disputes, theological polemics, and legal debates intersected, mantiq became the key that unified rational and revealed sciences.

4.1 Introduction

Every act of knowledge begins with thought (فكر), the movement of the mind from the known to the unknown. The Qur’an repeatedly calls upon believers to engage their reason:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day are signs for those of understanding.” (Al Imran 3:190)

Here, the Qur’an places تفكير (reflection) and تعقل (rational engagement) as acts of worship, indicating that the proper use of ‘aql is integral to faith. Mantiq provides the structure through which this reflection becomes systematic, consistent, and demonstrative. In Epistemology, ‘ilm is generally defined as the apprehension of a thing as it truly is. This apprehension may be نظري or ضروري. The logician, therefore, studies the process by which the mind passes from تصور to تصديق, ensuring that each transition follows valid reasoning.

4.2 The Process of Reasoning (Nazar)

Reasoning (نظر) is the deliberate mental act of seeking knowledge by connecting known concepts and propositions to unknown ones. Scholars distinguished between correct and incorrect nazar by establishing universal rules that serve as intellectual safeguards.

“When people reason, they may err. Therefore, they require a qanoon (logical rule) to protect them from fallacious inference.” (Commentary attributed to Athir al-Din al-Abhari)

The process of nazar involves three stages:

- **Forming concepts (tasawwur):** understanding what a thing is.
- **Forming judgments (tasdeeq):** affirming or denying something about that thing.
- **Deriving conclusions (istidlāl):** reasoning from premises to a new conclusion.

When the mind correctly connects known premises to infer an unknown conclusion, it performs قياس. The role of mantiq is to ensure that such qiyaas are valid and that each premise is properly grounded in true knowledge, whether empirical, rational, or revealed.

4.3 The Structure of Argumentation in Mantiq

In mantiq, every argument (حجة) consists of three key components: definition (حد), proposition (قضية), and syllogism (قياس). Each corresponds to a distinct intellectual act.

- Definition (حد):** clarifies تصور (conceptual understanding) by identifying the essential attributes of a thing.

Example: *“Human” is defined as “a rational animal.”*

This identifies the جنس (genus) and فصل (differentia), giving complete conceptual clarity.

- Proposition (قضية):** expresses تصديق (judgment) by affirming or denying a relationship between two concepts.

Example: *“Every human is mortal.”*

This connects the subject and predicate into a complete meaning.

- Syllogism (قياس)** — the process of inferring a new judgment from two known judgments.

Example:

<i>Major premise: Every human is mortal.</i>	<i>Minor premise: Zayd is a human.</i>	<i>Conclusion: Therefore, Zayd is mortal.</i>
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Through these structures, mantiq provides the mind with precision and order. Incorrect reasoning such as affirming the consequent or denying the antecedent leads to fallacy. Thus, Mantiq serves as an intellectual purifier, distinguishing sound thought from error.

4.4 The Role of Mantiq in Theological and Philosophical Inquiry

Mantiq was never pursued as a detached intellectual exercise. It was valued as an essential tool for the religious sciences, safeguarding them from speculative confusion and misinterpretation. The theologians employed it to clarify creedal arguments, while the philosophers utilized it to establish demonstrative certainty.

For example, *in the discipline of aqidah, mantiq ensured that arguments for the existence and unity of God were properly structured.*

The Qur’an itself appeals to logical reasoning in numerous verses, inviting reflection upon signs in the universe:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۖ فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ

“Had there been within them (the heavens and the earth) gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined.” (Qur’an 21:22)

This verse contains an implicit qiyaas; if multiple deities governed the cosmos, contradiction and disorder would result. Since harmony prevails, the reasoning concludes that the Creator must be one.

Philosophers such as Ibn Sina and Al Farabi extended the use of mantiq to metaphysics and natural philosophy, regarding it as the key to all intellectual sciences. Al Farabi described it as:

“The instrument by which the mind is guided to the correct form of reasoning in all sciences.” (Al Farabi, Kitab al-Qiyas)

Meanwhile, jurists and scholars of legal theory employed logical principles to ensure sound derivation of legal rulings from their evidence. The structure of qiyaas fiqhi mirrors the logical qiyaas establishing that if a known ruling applies to a certain cause (‘illah), it extends to any case sharing that cause. Thus, mantiq unified diverse fields under a single intellectual discipline.

4.5 Logic as a Spiritual and Intellectual Discipline

Beyond intellectual precision, mantiq has a moral and spiritual dimension. It disciplines the mind to think honestly, avoiding rash judgment, emotional reasoning, and arrogance in debate. Imam Ghazali viewed logical study as part of tazkiyah al-’aql (purification of the intellect), aligning reason with revelation rather than against it. He wrote:

“Logic protects the intellect from error, just as grammar protects the tongue from mistakes.” — Imam Ghazali

This analogy became a foundational maxim in Muslim education. Just as nahw (grammar) refines speech, mantiq refines thought. The theologians of later centuries such as Fakhr al Din al Razi, al-Taftazani, and al-Jurjani argued that true reasoning requires not only mental order but also spiritual sincerity (ikhlas). For them, the proper use of logic reflected an inner submission to truth, not a mere exercise of cleverness.

From a spiritual perspective, mantiq also delineates the limits of human reason. It recognizes that divine knowledge (العلم القديم) is not subject to inference or discursive proof. Human knowledge (العلم الحادث) operates through concepts and judgments; indirect and fallible, but it is guided by the light of revelation. Thus, mantiq becomes a bridge between ‘aql (reason) and wahy (revelation), ensuring that each remains within its proper domain.

4.6 Conclusion: The Unity of Revelation and Reason

In summary, mantiq serves as both a philosophical discipline that perfects human reasoning and a religious tool that safeguards the integrity of the revealed sciences. Its four divisions of knowledge - **الضروري**, **النظري**, **الحصولي**, **الحضوري** - illustrate the diversity of human understanding, while its methods of definition, proposition, and syllogism ensure that this understanding remains orderly and sound. The enduring value of mantiq lies in its ability to harmonize rational inquiry with spiritual insight. Revelation calls upon the intellect to reflect, while logic trains it to reflect correctly. As al-Razi observed, the purpose of reason is not to replace faith but to comprehend it more deeply.

“The intellect is a light by which revelation is understood; and revelation is a guide by which intellect is directed.”
— **Fakhr al Din al Razi**

Thus, Mantiq in Islam is neither foreign nor merely philosophical. It is the grammar of thought, the qanoon al-fikr that unites knowledge, faith, and reason under the guidance of truth.

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Core Findings

This study explored the four divisions of knowledge in Islam: **العلم الضروري** (immediate knowledge), **العلم النظري** (theoretical knowledge), **العلم الحضوري** (presential knowledge), and **العلم الحصولي** (acquired knowledge) through the framework of mantiq. It demonstrated that mantiq provides structure and precision to human reasoning, enabling clarity in concepts (**تصور**), soundness in judgment (**تصديق**), and validity in inference (**قياس**).

In modern times, the study of mantiq remains vital for cultivating critical thinking, evaluating evidence, and resisting fallacy. Whether applied in theology, philosophy, or scientific discourse, the logical framework helps distinguish certainty from conjecture.

The pursuit of knowledge in Islam is not merely cognitive; it is ethical and spiritual. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever seeks knowledge for the sake of Allah, it will indeed be manifested in awe (خشوع), asceticism (زهد), and humility (تواضع).”
— **(Ibn al-Jawzī, Beacon of Basra)**

Logical training serves dual purposes: refining the intellect and aligning it with moral and spiritual objectives. The ultimate goal of this study in Islam is not prestige or debate, but comprehension, guidance, and sincere service to Allah ﷻ.

5.2 Key Insights

The integration of logic into Islamic epistemology reveals that the pursuit of knowledge (**طلب العلم**) is not merely intellectual but spiritual. Scholars such as Al Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Imam Ghazali regarded mantiq as a discipline safeguarding the intellect from error, much like grammar protects language. The logical order of thought reflects divine order in creation, and through reasoning, the human mind aligns with truth.

This illustrates that logic is both an intellectual and spiritual discipline. A scholar who neglects proper reasoning risks misinterpreting revelation or issuing invalid judgments in legal and theological contexts.

Furthermore, the distinction between divine (**العلم القديم**) and created (**العلم الحادث**) knowledge underscores the limits of human inquiry. While Allah’s knowledge is eternal and unchanging, human understanding is acquired and fallible. Thus, mantiq is a bridge. It disciplines the ‘aql while respecting the authority of divine revelation.

Qur’anic guidance emphasizes reasoning alongside revelation, where reflection (**تفكير**) is commanded, underscoring that intellectual effort is a religious duty, not a philosophical luxury:

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ مَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ بِلِقَائِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكَافِرُونَ
“Do they not reflect upon themselves? Allah created the heavens and the earth and everything between them in truth and for an appointed term. Yet many people deny that they will meet their Lord.” (Qur’an 30:8)

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