

**Authenticity / *الصحة* (*as-sehah*) in Employment Relations: Theology of the  
Workplace Comparative Analysis of Islam and Roman Catholic Social Teaching**

A paper for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Lonergan Workshop,

“Lonergan’s Challenge: Healing & Creating in History,”

June 14 – 19, afternoon session on “Workplace authenticity and relations matters.”

(Revised May 2, 2015)

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# **Authenticity / *الصحة* (*as-sehah*) in Employment Relations: Theology of the Workplace Comparative Analysis of Islam and Roman Catholic Social Teaching**

## **ABSTRACT**

Authenticity / *الصحة* (*as-sehah*) serves as a criterion or predictor variable in a comparative theological investigation of employment relations parameters in light of social teachings from Sunni Islam and Roman Catholicism. Authenticity finds initial, shared significance in both religious traditions because of its critically important role in judgments concerning the legitimacy of source documents. It also stands in both traditions as an inspirational goal for human life. Particular issues of theological method for cross-cultural analysis are addressed by use of insight-based critical realism as a transcultural foundation. Workplace parameters, the minimal enabling conditions for the possibility of authentic employment relations, are then identified and compared. We explore common expectations for a theology of the workplace in terms of the direct and indirect employer: those national laws, systems, and traditions that condition the functional range of authenticity that can be actualized within national or other work settings as experienced in the direct employment contract. The method and findings are a first effort to clarify thought and aid mutual understanding for inter-faith employment circumstances, with criterion variable content now available to support research in management spirituality, corporate social responsibility and enterprise sustainability.

## **Authenticity / *الصحة* (as-sehah) in Employment Relations: Theology of the Workplace Comparative Analysis of Islam and Roman Catholic Social Teaching**

This is a contribution to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual 2015 Lonergan Workshop with the theme “Lonergan’s Challenge: Healing & Creating in History.” As part of an ongoing research project that began during a Boston College Lonergan Fellowship in 2009, this afternoon session paper is offered to elicit feedback from Workshop participants on the utility of an investigation into workplace parameters enabling authenticity in employment relations in light of Roman Catholic and Sunni Islam social teachings. Our study examines shared expectations regarding the role of the ‘indirect employer’ – whether legal structures or patterns of habit, tradition, or custom – as these are specified in both traditions. From development of authenticity as a criterion or predictor variable, we craft a simple empirical Figure to capture key elements used to evaluate work settings. The result should be a foundational complement to management spirituality research and a practical basis for the affirmation or critique of prevailing secular ideologies – those possible ‘false idols’ of social order. For this Workshop, the co-authors are particularly interested in hearing from Lonergan scholars how “successfully” the Methods section on inter-cultural foundation presents itself. For the most part, management scholars seem to perceive this exploration of cognitional structure across cultures more or less as a “distraction.”

Claims and counterclaims about religious teachings and their impact upon the commonweal are part of citizenship life throughout the world. In the United States of America, ostensibly a nation with clear separation between church and state, public policy debate frequently includes religious assertion. In 2012, the Chair of the House Budget Committee, Paul Ryan (Republican, Wisconsin, First District), produced a budget proposal calling for severe cuts to food stamps and other policies that support the poor and vulnerable. Ryan, a Catholic, claimed his work was consistent with Roman Catholic social teachings. This was promptly challenged by 60 theologians in a joint public statement; “Simply put, this budget is morally indefensible and

betrays Catholic principles of solidarity, just taxation and a commitment to the common good” (Schoeneberger, April 13, 2012).

Second, Muslims have been portrayed in Western culture as simplistic zealots who “submit” to the teachings presented in the Quran. Yet, as recently explained in an English language orientation at a leading mosque in Copenhagen, Denmark, this is an unfortunate gloss on the term “submission” (Shah, September 9, 2014). Islam has a robust epistemology for discerning an individual’s faith commitment. Steps proceed from observation, information, verification through analysis and comparison, to a personal commitment without any coercion whatsoever – and only, thus, ‘submission’ - to the will of God as manifest in the *Qur’an* and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed.

Third, a review of Islamic economics and management literature indicates a common critique of secular economic policies and management practices in light of Islamic principles (Diwany, 2003; Iqbal, 2000; Jabnoun, 2005; Mannan, 1989; Mawdudi, 2013; Siddiqi, 1996).<sup>1</sup> These sources do not share common cause with Christian scholars regarding the dangers of secularization to the human good of order. The parallel Christian critique also lacks common cause (Hughes, 2007; Volf, 2001). We wish to see what can be done about this gap by looking into the empirical parameters of shared workplace concern.

Against this background, data on social teachings will be presented and discussed. The empirical focus for this inquiry will be the concept of *authenticity* in light of these traditions. We will develop a transcultural method in epistemology, appropriate for comparative theological investigation. This grounding will identify invariant cognitional operations – a exploration in the Methods section using insight-based critical realism.(B. J. Lonergan F., 1990; B. Lonergan, 2005).

In 2010, there were 2.2 billion Christians throughout the world; roughly half are Roman Catholics: 89 million Roman Catholic in North America, 257 million in Europe (Pew Research,

<sup>1</sup> We would be remiss not to mention important efforts at modernization of Islam by scholars such as Tariq Ramadan and, on the family, Hamudah Abd Al-Ati (Al-Ati, 1995; Ramadan, 2012).

February 13, 2013). There were 1.6 billion Muslims in the world: 3.5 million in North America, 43 million in Europe. Approximately 90% of these belong to the Sunni branch of Islam (Hackett & Grim, December 2012). There is ample media coverage of strife and the misunderstandings between Christians and Muslims. Yet, *the more fundamental and dramatically compelling societal fact is the vast majority of faithful in both traditions work as a key facet of their lives, often together in the same workplace, and this on a daily basis in nations throughout the world.*

This is the predominant social fact we wish to examine through a comparative theology of the workplace. This is not an examination of juridical Christian and Islamic legalities or Roman Catholic canon law. Instead, our interest is in social teachings that can help inform a comparative evaluation of modern employment circumstances: legislation, case law, customs, and traditions. A theology of the workplace considers *“the institutional and institutionalized features that variously enable or constrain managerial prerogative and employee participation within worksite, firm, organization, sector, region, or national political economy in light of religious doctrine”* (C. T. Tackney, 2012, p. 115). We draw upon industrial relations for research methods and the definition of the explanatory variable: the “working rules” (or “web of rules”) governing employment relation (J. R. Commons, July 1899; J. R. Commons, 1968; Williamson, 1996).

A study of workplace parameters is a second order analysis. Work is the primary concept. For Roman Catholics, work is, “as a human issue...at the very centre of the “social question” to which, for almost a hundred years, since publication of the above-mentioned Encyclical (*Rerum Novarum*), the Church’s teaching and the many undertakings connected with her apostolic mission have been especially directed” (John Paul II, 1981, P:2).<sup>2</sup> Work is a “fundamental dimension of man’s existence on earth” (Ibid., P: 4). It has objective and subjective dimensions. It has historical dimensions, including technology, manufacturing, distribution, along with our evolving understanding of markets, economics, their social or institutional impact and regulation.

<sup>2</sup> Papal encyclicals are cited by paragraph, not page, numbers: thus, P: x.

Work is also important in Sunni Islam. In fact, its historical significance for Islam is closely linked to its founding. Elsaman observed that the connection of work and faith is so central that the dignity of work is noted in over 50 verses of the *Qur'an* (Elsaman, 2011). Kahlid ur Rehman wrote, “the dignity of labor has been recognized at every step. It will be more appropriate to state, that those that deny dignity to the labor are not concerned with Islam” (Rehman, 2010, Kindle locator (KL) 127). Rehman continued, “Not only did almost all the Holy prophets (S.A.S.) hold laboring professions, but told their followers to not despise any profession” (Ibid., KL 216). As Ali wrote, “From the beginning, Islam has viewed commercial activities not only as a divine calling but also a necessary aspect of human life, a source of social gratification and psychological pleasure” (A. J. Ali & A-Owaihian, 2008, p.7). He continued, “The Quran instructs Muslims to persistently work whenever and wherever it is available: “disperse throughout the land and seek the bounty of God” (*Qur'an*: 62:10) and “God hath permitted trade and forbidden usury” (Quran 2:275)” (Ibid.). Work is even a form of worship with right intention (Elsaman, 2011); most countries of Islam “ensure the dignity of work as recognized by Shari’a in their constitutions” (Ibid., p. 77).

A recent paper took up workplace theology comparison of Roman Catholic and Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) traditions, developing authenticity as a criterion or predictive variable for assessing the working rules given in employment relations (Tackney, August, 2014).<sup>3</sup> Authenticity was defined as “...a quality of being human to be sought, nurtured, and sustained through attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility in decision-making. This may be empirically assessed at individual and societal levels. When cultural patterns of authenticity obtain, these manifest a good of order in society.(Tackney, August, 2014, p.22). Published features of the Roman Catholic social teaching for theology of the workplace analysis

<sup>3</sup> An extensive review of literature on authenticity, including philosophy, management leadership, and theology references, is given in (Tackney, August, 2014).

were given in Table 1 of that text and will be introduced in the Data section of this text as part of our comparative assessment.<sup>4</sup>

Specification of a suitable Arabic term for authenticity is complex. Documentary validity is addressed by توثيق (*tawtheeq*) and موثوق (*mawthooq*); the prior is for the process of verification, the latter for that which is authenticated. معتمد (*mu'tamad*) concerns a reliable document or source. For the minimal conditions of employment relations consistent with Islamic social teachings, we have provisionally settled on authenticity as expressed by الصحة (*as-sehah*).

We take up Lonergan's conception of theology as mediating "between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix" (B. J. F. Lonergan, 1971, p. xi). In *Method in Theology*, culture is the "set of meanings and values that informs a way of life" (p. 301). The older, classicist approach, sees meanings and values are viewed as permanent. Then, theology "discourses on its nature" (p. xi). From an empirical perspective, "theology is known to be an ongoing process, and then one writes on its method" (Ibid.).

Lonergan's *Method in Theology* was primarily written for Roman Catholic theologians, but he anticipated potential "for members of other communions" (Ibid., p. xii). Powell, for example, used Lonergan's insight-based critical realism in a study of Christian-Muslim dialogue (Powell, 2004). His focus was human rights; "If Christians and Muslims can engage in the four operations of Lonergan's transcendental method – be attentive (awareness), be intelligent (thinking), be reasonable (judgment, and be responsible (acting together) – it is possible that the collective experience of gaining insight could become a foundation for real solidarity even if there is never agreement on articles of faith" (Powell, 2004, p. 4). Powell tried to anchor the transcultural basis in cognitional horizons; we will rather look to the commonality of cognitional operations.<sup>5</sup> We will take the suggestion of Volf, in a 2011 interview; "To have a robust conversation between Muslims

<sup>4</sup> This Table was first published in (Tackney, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> See (Grudzen & Raymaker, 2008).

and Christians about what provides for good living, a life that's an alternative to hedonism, is what's required of us at this moment" (Galli, April 15, 2011, p. 3; Volf, 2001).

We hope to show the potential role for a theology of the workplace in Christian-Muslim dialogue as a complement to management studies and management spirituality research (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003) and contribute to authentic and responsible leadership, by calling into question prevailing, if unnoticed, ideological presumptions of culturally-bound research (Waldman & Balvan, 2014). A theology of the workplace ensures voice to religious studies about normative questions for policy, with a view to increasing mutually beneficial relations between employers and employed. We turn to the methods section for enactment of this research agenda.

## **METHOD**

A few words about the investigators and the start of this investigation seem appropriate, due to the characteristics of a transcultural theological investigation. The co-authors are residents of Scandinavian countries. We first met as work colleagues in one of the region's national business schools. We discovered a mutual interest in theological topics, a matter made the more interesting because one author was born into a Sunni Islam family in Denmark, the other into a Roman Catholic family in the United States of America.

After the primary author began theology of the workplace research, he contacted his old work colleague in early 2014. The prospective co-author is now a Board Member of The Islamic Society in Denmark, helping in outreach and public relations at one of the leading Scandinavian capital city mosques, while holding a full time job. Email led to an initial meeting in late March to discuss a study of employment in light of faith traditions, focusing on authenticity as a criterion variable. The Board Member invited his co-author to an English language presentation on Islam at the mosque to a group of U.S. exchange students on September 9, 2014. As the steps to a faith commitment in Islam referred to in the Introduction were presented, it became clear that a strong, common epistemological basis for comparative theological research was possible.

## **Transcultural foundations of insight-based critical realism: cognitional operations**

Lonergeran's *Method in Theology* brought empirical method to a theological field long preoccupied with classicist concerns. He wrote that a contemporary method for theology "would conceive those tasks in the context of modern science, modern scholarship, modern philosophy, of historicity, collective practicality and coresponsibility" (B. J. F. Lonergan, 1971, p. xi). To this end, both faith traditions recognize a similar set of basic, human cognitional operations. These are "seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, inquiring, imagining, understanding, conceiving, formulating, reflecting, marshalling and weighing the evidence, judging, deliberating, evaluating, deciding, speaking, writing" (B. J. F. Lonergan, 1971, p. 6). In Lonergan's explication of human understanding in *Insight*, we see an unfolding of the unrestricted desire to know, which marks our species, evident in and exemplified by these operations. As Lonergan wrote,

What is transcultural is the reality to which such formulation refers, and that reality is transcultural because it is not the product of any culture but rather the principle that begets and develops cultures that flourish, as it also is the principle that is violated when cultures crumble and decay (B. J. F. Lonergan, 1971p. 283).

These "theological categories will be transcultural only in so far as they refer to that inner core. In their actual formulation they will be historically conditioned and subject to correction, modification, complementation" (Ibid., p. 284). Simple diagrams for the cognitional operations, the dynamisms of knowing and doing, are given in Figure 1 (B. J. F. Lonergan, 2001).

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As noted, a transcultural theological investigation should first ensure similar categories of understanding for cognitional operation in Roman Catholic and Sunni Islam culture / epistemology. The first functional step, then, was co-author witness to the steps described to faith in Islam and recognizing a functional cognitional equivalence. This enables the next step, "these

models will be built up from basic terms and relations that refer to transcultural components in human living and operation and, accordingly, at their roots they will possess quite exceptional validity” (Ibid., p. 285).

This feature of a theological investigation is the reason for the extended epistemology in the Methods section. The data objects to be compared derive from social teachings in two distinctly different religion, culture, and language traditions. Simply put, positivism alone will not ensure validity or reliability. In theology, knowing is more than merely sensing data, just as religious conviction is more than mere submission. Insight-based critical realism enables a transcultural bridge. Lonergan noted, “Only the critical realist can acknowledge the facts of human knowing and pronounce the world mediated by meaning to be the real world; and he can do so only inasmuch as he shows that the process of experiencing, understanding, and judging is a process of self-transcendence” (B. J. F. Lonergan, 1971, p. 239)

### **The epistemological perspective from Islam**

Islam is a monotheistic religion in the tradition of Abraham, with key teachings contained in the Quran, a text dictated as revelation received by the Prophet Mohammed. In addition, narrations (*ahadith*) about the Prophet’s sayings, actions, or silent approval were composed by his early companions.<sup>6</sup> Together, these texts present guidance for living to followers of Islam, termed the *Sunnah*, that represent the second (*Asl*) just after the *Qur’an*. They also constitute the sources that the Muslim scholar will go to in order to find theological solutions to a case. The agreed upon sources are, in order: the *Qur’an*, the *Sunnah*, the *Ijmâ’* (a consensus of previous scholars on a particular matter) and the *Qiyas* (the process of mirroring modern day problems by the earlier day solutions and deriving a verdict in order to come at a solution). From this corpus

<sup>6</sup> Azami wrote, “the *hadith* literature means the literature which consists of the narrations of the life of the Prophet and the things approved by him. However, the term was used sometimes in much broader meaning in the sense to cover the narrations about the Companions and Successors as well” (Muhammad Mustafa Azami, 1978, p. 3)

the legal principles of Islam, *shariah*, are derived. Unlike Christianity, Islam was involved in matters of civil governance from its very founding; *shariah* speaks to a proper social order.<sup>7</sup>

Verification of the authenticity of stories about the Prophet in respect of the *ahadith* has been an important aspect of Islamic studies. This reflects early Islamic concern with one aspect of authenticity, similar to Christian community canonical disputes regarding authenticity of gospels and epistles in the *New Testament*. Authenticity as an issue did not arise per se in respect to the *Qur'an*, as it was protected by God directly as a source of guidance for every time, place, and being. However, many stories arose about the Prophet. Diwany wrote, "Thereafter arose a strict scientific method, under which ahadith were scrutinized for authenticity" (Diwany, 2003, p. 125).

Distinct from a secular/ positivistic approach to science and society, Islamic epistemology starts with the absolute nature of divine knowledge and wisdom, along with the significance and utility of revelation. Divine revelation is the primary and ultimate source of knowledge and the ultimate reference for Islamic law (Diwany, 2003; Groff & Leaman, 2007). Thus, while the approach follows from faith, it is not at variance with basic principles of empiricism.

Human effort to grasp elements of this knowledge (*al-wahy*) is possible due to our created human nature (*fitrah*) and the fact of revelation from Allah, as this has been evident in the prophets, including Jesus Christ, and culminating in the life and teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (570 – 632 CE). From the revelation and the signs (*ayat*) given in the *Qur'an*, we learn of the importance of the mind as a key facet of human nature; "It is He who brought you forth from the wombs of your mother You did not know a thing, and He gave you hearing, sight, and mind in order that you may give thanks"(Q:16:78) (Khalil, 1991).<sup>8</sup> In reference to this verse, Ahmad observed "in Islam great emphasis is laid on empirical investigation and observation and

<sup>7</sup> While this point is not immediately relevant to a grasp of Islamic epistemology, it is worth noting at the outset, because it helps to explain Islam interest in the role of the 'indirect employer' in society.

<sup>8</sup>The concept of *fitrah* parallels Christian notions of natural law, that human creation in the image and likeness of the divine opens a path to the notion of "obediential potency," a useful concept to which we will later return.

it is in this sense that Allama Mohammad Iqbal rightly asserts that Islamic civilization represents the advent of the inductive intellect. (Ahmad, A., op. cit., p. 6).<sup>9</sup>

All that is, is a unity of creation by Allah, reflecting the oneness of God (tawhid), and yet “everything is separate and different from Him as a Creator” (Azram, 2011, p. 183). Given the primacy of revelation manifest in history and its unity, there should be no fundamental contradiction between proper human efforts to understand the world through science;

We had seen above that when the Source of Science and Qur’an are the same, they cannot logically contradict each other. The same is veracious for Revelation and Reason.

Revelation is by Allah (SWT) and reason, just like causality, is created by Allah (swt) to act as a stimulant for man (Ibid., p. 185).

Various authors write that all of creation is itself testimony to the Oneness of Allah (*tawhid*) as creation necessitates a Creator, not only from a linguistic argument but primarily from the abundant miracles that await discovery and recognition – even in the microcosm of a single cell. This proximity to the Creator coexists with the fact that nothing can be compared to Him; He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer (*Qur’an* 42:11).

Another tenant of Islam concerns the role of humanity as “vice regent” of Allah. There is *shariah* law to guide human activities. There are two aspects of *shariah*. One concerns devotional activities (*ibadat*), the other, of interest for workplace studies, concerns civil or commercial activities (*muamalat*). There are permitted (*Halal*) and forbidden (*Haram*) practices (Mawdudi, 2013). Explicit prohibitions under *shariah* / *muamalat* are often consistent with secular prohibitions: murder and adultery are clear instances (Diwany, 2003). There are also particular Islamic prohibitions: against usury. Islamic economists seek to develop alternative financing consistent with Islamic principles (Diwany, 2003).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See the website: <http://www.allamaiqbal.com/> .

<sup>10</sup> Our research concerns labor market practices and institutions in light of Islam scholarship, so we simply note this prohibition. It is a distinctive concern for Muslims because concrete decisions about banking and housing,

Yet, as Khalil wrote, “It is a fact that the Qur’an was not revealed as a science book or any other kind of textbook of knowledge” (Khalil, 1991, p. 2). This careful restraint about the discourse of the *Qur’an* recurs in research. Ahmad wrote, “About the character of the Quran one thing is abundantly clear. It neither is nor purports to be a book of philosophy or metaphysics. It calls itself “guidance for mankind” (hudan-lil-nas) and demands that people live by its commands” (A. Ahmad, Undated, p. 1).<sup>11</sup> Ahmad observes a unity of knowing and valuing in Islam. “Knowledge, according to the Quranic doctrine,” he writes, “is both a gift of Divine revelation as well as a creative element or aspect of the human spirit.” (Ibid., p. 5).<sup>12</sup>

Muslims observe the essential the teachings of the *Qur’an* and *Sunnah* as these have been unanimously agreed upon (*ijmâ`*) (Al-Oadah). Knowledge of prior scholarship is, thus, paramount for the believer. Authenticity in textual interpretation depends upon the original Arabic. Education is consequently very important, because the training of the human mind enables believers to live in the world and access its history (Islam Today, 2014). If there is a scholarly disagreement regarding civil life, “the student’s task is to investigate their opinions in order to select which understanding is most correct, appropriate, and suitable” (Al-Oadah, Undated). Al-Oadah continues,

It is certainly possible for us to derive new insights from the Qur'an. Today's students of Islam can find in a verse of the Qur'ân or in a hadîth of the Prophet (peace be upon him) some benefit or understanding that no one has ever set down in writing beforehand. Our different and changing perspectives do indeed provide us with different insights (Ibid.).

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investments and mortgages frequently present in Western societies. Too, Roman Catholic social teaching is not so distant from that of Islam on usury, although the former focuses more on *inappropriate* exploitation, not prohibition. See (Weyl & Lo, 2012). Both faith traditions consider the 2009 fiscal crisis as a secular failure of moral leadership. See (Ahmed, 2010) for a 2010 assessment of the fiscal crises and recent countervailing growth of Islamic financial markets as functional alternatives.

<sup>11</sup> Notice the contrast to literalist interpretation of the Bible in respect to the theory of evolution.

<sup>12</sup> Lament over the unfortunate separation of epistemology from moral philosophy is not limited certain Western scholars. Mawdudi wrote about the loss of “the culture of *Ijtihad*” (diligence, independent reasoning), the “capability to reinterpret our juridical issues” (Mawdudi, 2013, p. 100). He wrote “It is not amiss to point out here that the end of the culture of *Ijtihad* in the Muslim world today is mainly due to the expulsion from our religious studies curricula of serious studies of the Qur’an and the Sirah of the Holy Prophet. These studies have been replaced by a superficial knowledge of the various Schools of Islamic *Fiqh* (jurisprudence)” (Ibid., p. 261).

To properly grasp this approach to knowledge, Al-Oadah cautions the believer.

However, it is inconceivable that the essential meaning of the text has eluded the Companions, the Successors, and the entire Muslim nation throughout all the long centuries of its existence, only for its true meaning to be uncovered for the first time by someone living today. A clear distinction must be made between the possibility of deriving new benefits from a text and the notion of coming up with a whole new interpretation for it (Ibid.).

Clearly there is a respect for learning and for the acquisition of knowledge. But what about the learner in this process? How should one seek knowledge within the context of Islam?

Islam offers etiquette for learning. As presented in the [Islam Today](#) website,

Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah said: There are six stages to knowledge:

Firstly: Asking questions in a good manner.

Secondly: Remaining quiet and listening attentively.

Thirdly: Understanding well.

Fourthly: Memorising.

Fifthly Teaching.

Sixthly- and it is its fruit: Acting upon the knowledge and keeping to its limits" (Islam Today, 2014).<sup>13</sup>

In Islam, "Economic man is replaced here, as in other religious world views, by an altogether less materialistic kind of individual" (Diwany, 2003, p. 128). To guide daily life, *shariah* "comprises rules that are explicit in the Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as rules that are derived there from by means of *ijma* and *qiyas*" (Diwany, 2003, p. 126). *Ijma* refers to a consensus among Islamic

<sup>13</sup> Abu 'Abdullaah, Shamsud Dcen Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr, better known as Ibn al-Qayyim or ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah was born in the year 691H (1292 CE) in the city of Damascus. From an early age he set about acquiring knowledge and studied under many prominent teachers, the most notable of whom was Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah. His students include the likes of Ibn Katheer, adh-Dhahabee, Ibn Rajab, Ibn 'Abdul-Haadee and others. He authored over ninety books and booklets - all of them characterized by their touching address to the soul and the heart, as well as accuracy, precision and depth of research. He died on the night of Thursday 13th Rajab at the time of the 'Ishaa adhaan in the year 751H.

scholars, while *qiyas* refers to “deduction by analogy with existing principles” (Ibid., p. 125).

Overall, there is a remarkable range of freedom under *shariah*. Absent explicit Islamic norms, the faithful enjoy freedom of action in the social sphere.

This review in Methods was to make note of the long established Islamic embrace of empirical inquiry, scientific method, and respect for scholarship. From this we may identify the prospects of a common foundation across faith traditions in cognitional operations by noting parallels between basic Islamic epistemology and insight-based critical realism.

### **Transcultural foundations: the common cause of *fitrah* and obediential potency**

We have described a transcultural foundation in cognitional operations and summarized the Islamic approach to knowledge appropriate to social science method. Each researcher brings curiosity, a desire to know, an ever enlarging set of questions for intelligence, and an interest in bringing resolution to the research cycle through empirical testing of a stated research issue(s).

The Western social scientist proceeds in a manner characterized as a range from positivism, to phenomenology, or critical realism (Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson, & Norrie, 1998; Bhaskar, 2008; Collier, 1994). Lonergan’s insight-based critical realism explicates levels of self-appropriation and “conversion” inescapably involved in issues of human authenticity, adding depth to the scholarly endeavor (R. M. Doran, 2011; King, 2011).

Following Lonergan, research findings are arrived at from judgments that result from direct or reflective insight, with the researcher cognizant of what knowing is (cognitional theory), why this is indeed knowing (epistemology), and all this derived from some anticipatory orientation toward knowledge of that which is or can be known (metaphysics). Lonergan’s analysis of cognitional structure, cognitional operations, and horizons offers a more robust foundation for an empirically based, comparative theological investigation, particularly one that is transcultural and aimed at workplace analysis. As Robert M. Doran noted,

The common ground on which people can meet in our time is twofold. There is a common structure of consciousness shared across cultures, a structure of operations through which we come to know and through which we proceed from knowledge to action. That common structure Lonergan expresses in a shorthand vocabulary as consisting of the four levels of experience, understanding, judgment, and decision (R. M. Doran, November 16, 2006).

For each of the cognitional operations, we also have a guiding precept. For experience, be attentive. For understanding, be intelligent. For judgment, be reasonable. And for decisions, be responsible. With such insight into self-appropriation, extending beyond Bhaskar's more pragmatic critical realism, a number of consequences follow. These are important for a theological investigation of employment relations that condition the workplace.<sup>14</sup> First, the process of self-appropriation obliges greater attention to the potential role of insight and the mitigating influences of oversight or bias (individual, collective, or cultural) in research efforts. Second, insight-based critical realism permits hypothesis testing of the foundations asserted in cognitional structure across cultural divides of language. In the current project, we will explore in the Data section *the functional hypothesis that the cognitional operations appropriate to insight, as mapped by Lonergan, enable derivation of a cross-cultural collaborative approach to authenticity for assessing employment relations*. Third, the process of self-appropriation engages the researcher in a reflection about one's fundamental orientation to the world: conversions are intellect, morals, and religion – although this last does not refer to an institution. Acknowledging higher order intelligibility leads to an epistemological theorem; “knowledge in the proper sense is knowledge of reality or, more fully, that knowledge is intrinsically objective, that objectivity is

<sup>14</sup> In classical inquiry of the Middle Ages, theology was the “Queen of the Sciences.” For empirical inquiry, it is perhaps the most humble academic field, obliging explication of the researcher's own faith engagement, or its absence, as a foundational dimension and point of departure for the theological research endeavor. Absent such transparency, personal bias looms the larger as a threat to validity and reliability of empirical findings in the theological field.

the intrinsic relation of knowing to being, and that being and reality are identical” (B. Lonergan, 1988, p. 211). Fourth, this theorem enables consideration of obediential potency as an element of human behavior, no less ‘given’ than our capacity for free will.

Formalized by Thomas Aquinas, obediential potency has entered contemporary theological reflection through the work of scholars including Bernard J.F. Lonergan, Karl Rahner, and Robert Doran (R. Doran M., 1990; Egan, 2005; B. J. Lonergan F., 1990; B. J. Lonergan F., 1992). Rahner characterized the term “as the human person’s *natural* ability to receive God’s self-offer,” according to Egan (Egan, 2005, p. 16).

This line of reasoning allows us to consider the significance of obediential potency for human behaviors and their empirical assessment at an individual or societal level; “a theology of the workplace may become a useful tool in assessing relations of obediential potency in the concrete, historical institutional arrangements found in culture and history” (Tackney, 2012, p. 116). The basic Christian notion is not hard to grasp - human nature has a fundamental orientation toward the Divine initiative. A responsible human, in terms of insight-based critical realism, engages in deliberations for action grounded in judgment following on direct or indirect insight, cognizant of what knowing is (cognitional theory), why this is knowing (epistemology), with an awareness of that which is to be known (ontology / metaphysics) (B. J. Lonergan F., 1990; B. Lonergan, 2005).

As Rahner presented in his controversial construct of the “anonymous Christian,” it is possible for us to conceive of those responsible individuals who may act in accord with a divine plan without necessarily naming – or “confessing” - their explicit role in this participation (Marmion & Hines, 2005). While constructs such as free will and obediential potency are primarily conceived as matter of issue for the individual, the human ‘good of order’ is the collective, concrete, and historical manifestation of individual behaviors at a macro-level (B. J. Lonergan F., 1990, see Chapter 2, "The Human Good"). In turn, given these constructs, the

patterns of culture and human development, as well as decay, can be empirically observed and assessed as a function of emergent probability. While a simple statistical term, it offers a useful empirical basis for faith-based reflection on human history. It “results from the combination of the conditioned series of schemes with their respective probabilities of emergence and survival. While by itself it is extremely jejune, it possesses rather remarkable potentialities of explanation” (B. J. Lonergan F., 1992, p. 144). Lonergan elsewhere wrote, “The problems of interpretation bring to light the notion of a potential universal viewpoint that moves over different levels and sequences of expression” (B. J. F. Lonergan, 1971, p. 288)

The last methods step in our exploration of foundational cognitional operations and manifest historical expression concerns the potential for common ground on the basis of human aspiration for the good, even and particularly for the good of order in society, so that there is a recognized common ground of advocacy for authentic employment relations in society. Correlatives can be observed in Islam, “Although certainty remains the ideal standard of knowledge, conjecture that inclines toward probability is nevertheless accepted as a basis of judgment in practical human affairs (*mu'amalta*), such as in court decisions that are often based on *zann*, for want of certainty, in order to facilitate resolution of disputes among people” (Kamali, June 203, p. 126).<sup>15</sup>

Correlative to obediential potency in Roman Catholic Christian theology, since Vatican II, Islam maintains the view of *fitrah* (فطرة) about human nature.<sup>16</sup> In the Quran, it is written,

And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?"

They said, "Yes, we have testified." [This] - lest you should say on the day of Resurrection, "Indeed, we were of this unaware" [al-A'raf 7:172].

<sup>15</sup> *Zann* denotes conjecture, although negative overtones may dominate. See, for example (Sweetman, 1967). Our interest is in the recognition of probabilistic reasoning in Islamic jurisprudence for civil affairs.

<sup>16</sup> The author wish to thank Shaikh (Dr.) Haitham Al-Haddad for his generosity of time and insight regarding these concepts in our September 21, 2014 discussion at the Copenhagen mosque of the Islamic Religious Community (Det Islamiske Trossamfund) (Al-Haddad, Shaikh Dr. Haitham, September 24, 2014).

A *hadith* clarifies this concept of *fitrah*. “There is not a newborn child who is not born in a state of *fitrah*. His parents then make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian, just as an animal is born intact. Do you observe any among them that are maimed at birth?”<sup>17</sup> This quote, Yasien Mohamed wrote, “is the central hadith on *fitrah*”(Mohamed, 1995, p. 2). Mohamed continued, “*Fitrah* may be described as a God –given innate state or inclination to believe in God and worship Him. It can also be translated as “original purity” or “primordial faith” – an ontological state that disposes the individual to the good and the lawful” (Ibid., p. 2). In addition, *fitrah*:

- “Relates to the individual’s innate reality...
- “Has a bearing on one’s beliefs, values, and attitudes to life, worldview, and interaction with the surrounding environment...
- “cannot be viewed in isolation from one’s mind, conduct, and institutions in the phenomenal world” (Ibid.).

In an interesting parallel to the ‘anonymous Christian,’ Mohamed wrote, “According to the *hadith*, one is born in a state of *fitrah*, of primordial faith – and hence as a Muslim – and is then made to adhere to another religion by his/her parents through the process of socialization” (Ibid.). Thus, a broader view of this position, following Schreiter, helps to frame the common task of workplace analysis, in an effort to identify – from two religious perspectives – those qualities of employment that enhance the prospects for authentic work relations in the modern world.

In any social effort to establish sustainable, socially responsible employment relations, spirituality and religious perspectives will invariably come into play due to the variety of individuals engaged. We have established a transcultural methods basis in cognitional operations for comparative discourse of agreement and divergence between Roman Catholic and Sunni religious traditions. While differences obviously hold over a broad range of issues that essentially define core religious beliefs, the common bonds of view concerning human nature and the

<sup>17</sup> This *hadith* is from *Sahih Muslim, Book 033, Number 6426; Saheeh Bukhari Book 23, Hadith 138*

potential for living in accord with God's will have emerged to center stage in this methods exploration.

Next, we should explain where the data comes from and how the analysis proceeds. For Roman Catholic social teaching on the question of the worker, a thorough review of papal encyclicals and other significant teaching texts identified key features of the employment relationship based on prior research (Tackney, 2012; Tackney, August, 2014). In addition to conditions of employment and the role of direct and indirect employers, the role of the worker and expected participation in managerial prerogative were also tracked, along with the reciprocal role suggested in social teaching on managerial prerogative. Data has been updated as indicated, particularly in light of the election of Pope Francis.

Sunni Islam sources are rich in topics related to economics, the issue of interest, and management, in light of key religious documents of Islamic tradition, as described earlier. In contrast, there are fewer English language sources directly dealing with industrial or labor relations from the Islamic perspective. Still, available sources were reviewed for key principles from the Islamic perspective, with positive correlations to Roman Catholic workplace principles reported in Data to be taken up in the Discussion section. Many texts in English do touch upon different aspects of employment, so these were also part of the literature search for principles to be inferred.

## **DATA**

Here we report data on workplace parameters from each religious tradition. We begin the respective inquiries with basic notions of work as mentioned in the Introduction. There are seven key parameters: work and the concept of labor, the role of private property, the nature of the

employment contract and collective bargaining, the treatment of wages, the relationship between managerial prerogative and employee participation,<sup>18</sup> and the role of the state.

### **Sunni Islam: workplace parameters for authenticity in employment relations**

#### ***Work and the concept of labor:***

The dignity of human labor is recognized in the very foundational texts of Islam, with the words of Allah given in the *Qur'an*, as Elsaman wrote, “Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a life. That is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions”(Elsaman, 2011, p.75).<sup>19</sup> In Islam, work itself can be an act of worship when engaged with right intention. Elsaman specifies, “the *Qur'an* appreciates time and asks people to make use of it working once they are done with their prayers: ‘And when the Prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land, and seek of the Bounty of Allah: and remember Allah frequently that ye may prosper’” (Ibid., p. 76).<sup>20</sup>

From the very beginning, work and market economics were crucial for the survival and later flourishing of Islamic society and culture. In 622 CE, the Prophet and his Companions emigrated from Mecca to Yethreb (contemporary Medina) to “build a viable community. In this city-state, Mohammed assumed religious and political responsibilities along with the role of social arbitrator and, initially, the regulator of the market” (A. J. Ali & A-Owaihan, 2008, p. 9). While these authors write of market regulation, this is not in the modern sense of capitalism, rather the Prophet was a source of advice and guidance to the faithful in matters of trade and business. Work or human labor has held a particularly important role in Islam. It is “situated in

<sup>18</sup> “Employee participation” is formally considered in respect to a significant voice in managerial prerogative concerning matters above and beyond wages and working conditions.

<sup>19</sup> As noted, the authoritative language for study of the *Qur'an* is Arabic. This alternative English translation of verse 16:97 may be an aid to the reader: “As for anyone – be it man or woman – who does righteous deeds, and is a believer withal – him shall We most certainly cause to live a good life; and most certainly shall We grant unto such as these their reward in accordance with the best that they ever did” (Asad, 2003, KL 7000).

<sup>20</sup> While the Data section is intended to report each faith tradition’s approach to workplace parameters, we ought to observe one comparative theological difference that impacts attitudes toward labor. As Ali wrote, “...Islam, unlike Christianity, views man as free from primordial guilt and that engagement in economic activities is an obligation” (A. Ali, 1988, p. 576).

the core of the faith and is considered as an integral part of life” (Ibid., p. 7). Despite this importance, Ahmad wrote, “Islamic provisions regarding labor and employment relations rarely emerge in the labor codes of Muslim countries” (I. Ahmad, 2011, p. 589). The reason, he reports, has to do with post-colonized effects of labor code transplant or carry-over from colonial European nations. Accordingly, for the data of this section, we will note principles as given in religious tradition sources or more recent Islamic labor codes presented in international organization documents. Islamic scholars of labor or management studies make clear neither the *Qur’an* nor *Sunnah* are labor codes, following Ahmad, “rather these are believed to be the codes of life”(Ibid.). And in that spirit we seek to explicate data that speaks to the different dimensions of an Islamic theology of the workplace.

### ***Private property in economic life***

The right to own property is recognized in Islam. However, this right is not absolute; “for the Quran categorically states that absolute ownership belongs to Allah alone. The state can intervene if the individual misuses his ownership of property and causes harm to society” (Mannan, 1989, p. 41). Mannan identifies eight rules for proper ownership of property. First: non-use of property is inappropriate. Second: appropriate tax on property needs to be paid (*Zakat*). Third and fourth: beneficial use of property is expected, along with its use to avoid the harm of others. Fifth and sixth: property acquisition should be conducted by legal (*Halal*) means and a proper balance should be struck between over and underuse. Seventh: property utilization should be for appropriate personal benefit, while “economic affairs to the neglect of the larger interest of the community are not permissible” (Ibid., p. 42). Eighth: appropriate inheritance measures are followed.

From these rules, a set of Islamic economic principles developed over time. Mawdudi summarized their distinguishing feature as “the guiding principle that all means of production and earning wealth are unlawful where one person’s gain is another’s loss, and that every economic

activity is lawful which permits the equitable distribution of dividends among the persons concerned” (Mawdudi, 2013, p. 61). He identifies three salient objectives in Islamic economics that impact the status of labor and nature of work: personal freedom, harmony in moral and material progress, and the promotion of cooperation, harmony, and justice. Personal freedom is an objective because of the individual’s accountability “before the Lord for the deeds in his personal capacity” (Ibid., p. 88). Mawdudi wrote,

human freedom is of prime importance to Islam, which builds the entire edifice of the community’s growth and development on the cornerstone of this freedom. To deprive a person of this right and impose public ownership on all the resources of the land would naturally mean denying him his personal freedom, because under this kind of dispensation every individual automatically becomes a servant of the state machinery that controls its economics resources through its administration (Ibid., p. 91).

#### ***The nature of the employment contract and collective bargaining***

Business ethics in Islam are governed by four general doctrines: *Ibadah*, *Taehid*, *Maslaha*, and *Adalh* (Elsaman, 2011). The first links all individual activities to one’s religious beliefs, where – with right intention – *halal* acts themselves constitute a form of worship. *Tawhid* concerns the intrinsic oneness and unity of life. *Maslaha* takes up the method of discernment of novel issues, as mentioned. Here, “the rules governing business relationship and business activities shall consider the public good and support the social welfare of society” (Ibid., p. 74). Finally, societal concerns are elaborated in *Adalah*, which obliges Muslims to help supply the needs of all society, especially those unable to provide for themselves.

In Islam, the employment contract is an agreement between brothers in which the employer has a degree of authority. Ahmad wrote, “Typical employment contracts between and employer and an individual employee are not on equal footing, because the employer has greater bargaining power” (I. Ahmad, 2011, p. 602). A contract may be verbal or written; the the latter is

preferred. In all cases, the contract should manifest justice for the signatories; coercion in contractual relations is not permitted. This principle was expressly stated by the Prophet, as Elsmann reported;

Your employees are your brothers upon whom Allah has given you authority, so if a Muslim has another person under his control, he/she should feed them with the like of what one eats and clothes them with the like of what one wears and you should not overburden them with what they cannot bear and if you do so, help them in their jobs (Elsaman, 2011, p. 77).<sup>21</sup>

Collective bargaining and unionization are not directly treated in Islamic source documents. Unions and their bargaining roles are social consequences of industrialization. Still, Islamic scholars have found ample sanction for labor unions, collective bargaining, and various industrial actions in the *Sunnah*. Community gathering for worship, affirmation of freedom of association, favorable treatment of guilds, aid to others for doing good and avoiding evil, encouragements to unity and collaborative efforts against the oppressor are sufficiently recurring themes in Islamic doctrinal literature that most scholars of Islam who write on the topic affirm union and collective bargaining as consistent with basic tenets of contemporary Islam (I. Ahmad, 2011; Jabnoun, 2005). For example, Ahmad (2011) wrote the Quran obliges the role of a guardian in instances of a weaker party to contract “if one of the parties to the contract is in a greater position due to economic, physical, or intellectual advantage (02:82)” (Ahmad, 2011, op. cit., p. 606). In modern times, the union can similarly protect individual worker rights and negotiate with the comparatively stronger employer on a more equal footing.

<sup>21</sup> This particular Hadith verse recurs throughout English language texts on Islam employment relations. While some texts use “employees” others use the more likely accurate historical terms “servants” or “slaves.” If the Prophet was indeed speaking for treatment of slaves as brothers, then the strength of expected brotherhood relations between employer and employees in modern society would be the stronger given the profound status difference the Prophet traversed in his time and culture. It would seem to the authors that this is a nuance not amply captured by the simple modernization of language to “employees” alone. See (Team Hadith Collection), which locates this verse in *Saihih Muslim Book 0015, Hadith Number 4092*. Alternatively on the web, see (al-Bukhari, Book 49, Hadith 29). This hadith collection is of great importance in Islam, authored by Muhammad ibn Isma`il al-Bukhari al-Ju`fi (194 AH/810 CE, 256 AH/ 870 CE).

### *The treatment of wages*

Compensation to an employee for her or his labor power are a right, consistent with the brotherhood basis of a employment contract. Wages are not a gift to the employee. Wage rates should be agreed in advance, consistent with informed assent of both parties. A wage should reflect the going rate for a specific type of work that is generally accepted – hence, the going rate.

That noted, wages should be sufficient for life’s necessities, not simply minimum, but a “just or ‘living’ wage” (I. Ahmad, 2011, p. 598). The *Qur’an* notes that the head of family ought to earn enough to support the worker, but also partner and dependents (02:233). Ahmad’s study of *ahadith* leads to this observation, “Islam requires the employers to provide the workers with housing, medical facilities, job education or training, transportation, and meals” (Ibid., 598). The particular approach taken to the determination of a fair or just wage rate is expected to be set in light of extant conditions at the time (Siddiqi, 1996).

Prompt payment of wages is stressed. Texts routinely cite one statement attributed to the Prophet himself; “Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries”<sup>22</sup>. Furthermore, full payment is to be given, regardless of the status or type of recipient. The Prophet made this clear in reference to the prospect of differential payments to men or women; “Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female” (03:195). Non-discrimination, not only in regard to wages, is stressed in the last sermon given by the Prophet;

No Arab has superiority over any non-Arab and no non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; no dark person has superiority over a white person and no white person has any superiority over a dark person. The criterion of honor in the sight of Allah is righteousness and honest living.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, Book 16, *Hadith* 2443.

<sup>23</sup> The last sermon of the Prophet (Musnad Ahmad).

### ***The consultative nature of managerial prerogative and employee participation: Shura***

Employer authority occurs within the broader human context of a brotherly contractual relation. We have seen that a living wage is expected under *Sharia*, with the contract enacted transparently, aided by a Guardian or labor union to ensure lack of coercion. Contract and collective bargaining terms generally concern wages and working conditions for Islam, no less than secular society.

Yet, Islam expects consultation as well as profit sharing from the managerial prerogative of the employer. Consultation, termed *shura*, is “a policy and not an option” (Ahmed, op. cit., p. 606) to be conducted by representatives of workers. Put simply, the *Qur’an* “does not speak favorably of those persons who “impose their own views on others (28:23)” (Ibid.). Safi writes of Islamic leadership principles and cites the text *al Isharah fi Tudbir al ‘Imarah*, written by Muhammad ibn al Hasan al Uradi (d. 489 A.H.) on the four motivations for thorough consultation. These are, first, inadequate knowledge on the part of the one having to make the decision; second, fear of error in assessing the situation, despite adequate knowledge. Third, there is concern for emotional influence, despite confidence in the first two points. Last, there should be involvement of the consulted, “his involvement in decision would encourage him to render his utmost effort and support, because the decision reflects his choice” (Safi, 2009, p. 73).<sup>24</sup>

The goal is enhanced cooperation between employer and employed, for the mutual commitment to enterprise success that obtains. As Ahmad wrote, “these verses and Ahadith require employers to not only consult but also codetermine workplace issues with unions” (Ibid., p. 607). Given consultation and co-determination, the employed and their unions are expected to work with proper respect and commitment once decisions are taken.

The second feature concerns sharing of profits. The principle, *mudarabat*, “provides rights to the worker to also share the profit of the business, through labor he essentially becomes a

<sup>24</sup> Various cited source in English language Islamic literature is “Al-Mur ādi, *al Isharah*. 1401/1981 Pp. 61-62.” See (Jabnoun, 2005, p. 93). As presented in U.S. Islam community news, see (Safi, 2007).

shareholder” (Rehman, 2010, KL: 394). Ahmad cites the *ahadith* source of Majma Uz Zawaid for the Prophet: “Pay the workers part of the food grains produced through their efforts; labor as the servant of God cannot be deprived of the produce” (Ibid., p. 607).<sup>25</sup>

### ***The role of the state in Islamic economics***

The state is expected to ensure the potential for authenticity in the workplace through legal enactment. Ahmad finds the concept of profit-sharing within the enterprise particularly related to the more general societal obligation for Muslims to offer a proportion of their income for the sake of the poor (I. Ahmad, 2011). This concept, *zakat*, is one of the five key pillars of the faith.<sup>26</sup> Through the recycling of earnings under *zakat*, a social security redistributive effect is anticipated throughout the larger society, a concept that would become particularly effective in light of the living wage employers are expected to provide to the employed, supportive of family no less than the salaried worker.

While payment of *Zakat* is obligatory for Muslims, and Muslims only, historically the redistributive policies were not restricted to Muslims. Ahmad reports that both first and second caliphates enacted policy that included non-Muslims (Ibid.). The living wage and taxation effects contribute to enhanced monetary circulation in society. Rehman writes, “in Islam, capital is not left idle, but is in constant motion” (Rehman, 2010, KL: 396). Rehman continued, “In *mudarat* neither worker nor investor loses while the other gains, on the contrary both become equal partners. Society as a whole gains from the joint effort of the both worker and investor” (Ibid., KL: 408). Proposals for an integrated Islamic management do exist. Jabnoun offers a systematic and strategic ‘Islamic Management Model’ centered upon Islamic values of “*Tawheed* and Freedom from Tyranny” (Jabnoun, 2005p. 315). Key elements include HRM, Systems & Structures, Leadership, Strategic Planning, and Decision making. Each category has elements

<sup>25</sup> Located at Vol. 4, No. p. 98, according to this source:

[http://www.kau.edu.sa/Files/320/Files/63442\\_HiwarAlArbea1428-1429.pdf](http://www.kau.edu.sa/Files/320/Files/63442_HiwarAlArbea1428-1429.pdf) .

<sup>26</sup> These are : first, proclamation that there is but one God, and that Mohammed is God’s messenger (*Shahadah*), second, daily prayer rituals five times a day (*Salat*), third, a tax on one’s income for the poor (*Zakat*), fourth: observance of the Ramadan period of fast (*Sawm*), and fifth, a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once (*Haji*).

from contemporary management studies and compatible features of Islam, whose workplace parameters have been outlined.<sup>27</sup>

International accords in Islam and national policy reflect many of the points explored.

Article 13 of the 1990 Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islamic states:

Work is a right guaranteed by the State and the Society for each person with capability to work. Everyone shall be free to choose the work that suits him best and which serves his interests as well as those of the society. The employee shall have the right to enjoy safety and security as well as all other social guarantees. He may not be assigned work beyond his capacity nor shall he be subjected to compulsion or exploited or harmed in any way. He shall be entitled - without any discrimination between males and females - to fair wages for his work without delay, as well as to the holiday allowances and promotions which he deserves. On his part, he shall be required to be dedicated and meticulous in his work. Should workers and employers disagree on any matter, the State shall intervene to settle the dispute and have the grievances redressed, the rights confirmed and justice enforced without bias (World Conference on Human Rights, August 5, 1990).

In 2004, the League of Arab States issued “Arab Charter on Human Rights.” It was offered “In furtherance of the eternal principles of fraternity, equality and tolerance among human beings consecrated by the noble Islamic religion and the other divinely-revealed religions” (League of Arab States, May 22, 2004). Basic rights regarding work are in Article 34. The right to work is characterized as a “natural right.” The living wage, along with treatment of hours and working conditions, are dealt with in these terms:

Every worker has the right to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work which ensure appropriate remuneration to meet his essential needs and those of his family and regulate working hours, rest and holidays with pay, as well as the rules for the

<sup>27</sup> See also Diwany 2003 concerning macro-level alternative contracting (pp. 155 ff).

preservation of occupational health and safety and the protection of women, children and disabled persons in the place of work (League of Arab States, May 22, 2004).

Article 35 takes up worker rights to unionization and strikes within the limits of public order and legal structures. Notably, neither of these recent documents speaks to the Islamic workplace principles of consultation or profit-sharing reviewed earlier in this section.

Overall, “Islamic economics,” which Kuran categorized as emergent in academic research since the late 1940s, has three features, most of which we have already noted. First, “individuals are guided in their economic decisions by a set of behavior norms, ostensibly derived from the Qur’an and the Sunna” (Kuran, 1986, p. 135). In addition, as noted, there is the taxation of *zakat* and the Islamic prohibition against interest. The bases of the behavioral norms are given in Islamic personal principles; “The primary role of the norms is to make the individual member of Islamic society, *homoislamicus*, just, socially responsible, and altruistic” (Ibid., p. 136). Kuran identifies norms of production and consumption. Of the former, freedom of production for profit is, as noted, fully sanctioned insofar as harm to others is avoided and moderation is observed. In consequence, “he must pay ‘fair’ wages, charge ‘reasonable’ prices, and be content with ‘normal’ profits” (Ibid.). In terms of consumption, immoral or illegitimate activities are to be avoided, moderation to be observed, and voluntary donations for the less fortunate are expected.

### **Roman Catholicism: workplace parameters for authenticity in employment relations**

Key workplace parameters of Roman Catholic social teaching on employment relations have been investigated previously and reported, as noted in the Introduction.

#### ***Work and the concept of labor***

The treatment of work and labor in Roman Catholic social teaching begins with the May 15, 1891 encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, “On Capital and Labor” (*Rerum Novarum*). At the time, Leo observed the impact of the industrial revolution on modern society; “...by degrees, it has come to pass that working men have been surrendered, isolated and helpless, to the

hardheartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition” (Leo XIII, 1891, P:2). After noting the continued practice of “rapacious usury” despite Church condemnation, he continued, “To this must be added that the hiring of labor and the conduct of trade are concentrated in the hands of comparatively few; so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself” (Ibid., P: 3). Yet, labor itself is an intrinsic part of the human condition. This propensity for labor even pre-dates what the Church sees as the source of original sin. Leo wrote, “As regards bodily labor, even had man never fallen from the state of innocence, he would not have remained wholly idle; but that which would then have been his free choice and his delight became afterwards compulsory, and the painful expiation for his disobedience” (Ibid. P: 17).

Despite societal ills, the relation between capital and labor ought not be perceived as inherently conflictual. Instead, “...in a State it is ordained by nature that these two classes should dwell in harmony and agreement, so as to maintain the balance of the body politic” (Ibid., P:19). In contrast to, and critique of, the emerging concentration of capital wealth, Leo observed, “...it may truly be said that it is only by the labor of working men that States grow rich” (Ibid., P: 34).

The priority of labor in modern, industrial society recurs throughout more than 100 years of social teaching. This formulation achieved a singular clarity in the 1981 encyclical of Pope John Paul II, who wrote that work “is a fundamental dimension of man’s existence on earth” (John Paul II, 1981, P: 4)). He continued on the “Conviction of *the priority of human labor over* what in the course of time we have grown accustomed to calling capital” (Ibid, P: 13, italics in original text). Work is key to the social question in *Laborem exercens*, “And if the solution-or rather the gradual solution-of the social question, which keeps coming up and becomes ever more complex, must be sought in the direction of "making life more human", then the key, namely human work, acquires fundamental and decisive importance” (John Paul II, 1981, P: 3).

### ***Private property in economic life***

Private property was sanctioned in first social encyclical of Pope Leo XIII. As in Islam, this is not an absolute right, rather one of stewardship for the common good. As Pope Leo wrote in 1891, “The fact that God has given the earth for the use and enjoyment of the whole human race can in no way be a bar to the owning of private property” (Leo XIII, 1891, P: 8). Again, by 1981 Pope John Paul II crafted this position anew, against the collectivism of Marxism and the “programme of *capitalism* practiced by liberalism and by the political systems inspired by it” (John Paul II, 1981, P: 14); the church “has always understood this right within the broader context of the right common to all to use the goods of the whole of creation: *the right to private property is subordinated to the right to common use*, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone” (Ibid., P: 14, italics in original).

Ownership “has never been understood in a way that could constitute grounds for social conflict in labor” (Ibid.). Furthermore, understanding of, and sensitivity to, the subjective dimension to work obliges its incorporation into the “dynamic *structure of the whole economic process*” (Ibid., italics in original). John Paul II continued, “From this point of view the position of “rigid” capitalism continues to remain unacceptable, namely the position that defends the exclusive right to private ownership of the means of production as an untouchable ‘dogma’ of economic life. The principle of respect for work demands that this right should undergo a constructive revision, both in theory and practice” (Ibid.).

### ***The nature of the employment contract and collective bargaining***

Consistent with the first social encyclical’s critique of inordinate power held by capital, Roman Catholic social teaching has steadily recognized the unequal nature of the employment contract and has been fully supportive of the right of workers to organize in unions for the sake of collective bargaining over wages and working conditions. This theme recurs throughout the history of encyclical teaching on the social question since 1891.

But the analysis offered from encyclical sources also goes far beyond the sanction of labor unions alone, very much like Islam. From the 1931 text by Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesima Anno*, the Church has also called for creation of institutions “that embrace either workers alone or workers and employers together” ((Pius XI, 1931, P: 29). This call recurred in John XXIII’s 1961 *Mater et Magistra*; “employees are justified in wishing to participate in the activity of the industrial concern for which they work” (John XXIII, 1961, P: 91). In *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, Paul VI advanced this reasoning, “The active sharing of all in the administration and profits of these enterprises in ways to be properly determined is to be promoted” (Paul VI, 1965, P: 68). This promotion includes “Worker participation in determining economic and social conditions, in person or through elected delegates” (Ibid.).

### ***The treatment of wages***

A living, not minimum, wage is the minimal standard for compensation in light of Church teaching. This is due to the nature of the employment contract, which has personal and necessary dimensions. It is personal insofar as “the force which acts is bound up with the personality and is the exclusive property of him who acts” ((Leo XIII, 1891, P: 44). The necessary dimension of human labor extends social teaching concerns beyond the mere payment of a minimum wage. Wages are to be sufficient for living, including the support of family. And the remote goal concerns expansion of ownership; “The law, therefore, should favor ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many as possible of the people to become owners” (Ibid., P: 46). By *Mater et Magistra*, John XXII observed that compensation considerations are not strictly a market function, but are to be established in light of justice and equity (John XXIII, 1961, see P: 18).

### ***The consultative nature of managerial prerogative and employee participation***

As the encyclical history advanced, the participatory role of the employee or worker in all aspects of the managerial prerogative has been ever more substantively advocated. This position developed from basic Christian notions about work, its subjective and objective aspects, and has

been elaborated as a substantive critique of three dominant ideological positions in modern history: communism, socialism, and liberalism or pure-market capitalism.

In *Laborem exercens*, we find the prospect of a righteous labor system, whose fundamental orientation was described above, to be one shaped by “the principles of the substantial and real priority of labor, of the subjectivity of human labor and its effective participation in the whole production process, independently of the nature of the services provided by the worker” (John Paul II, 1981, P: 13). The fully expected and normative role of employee participation in managerial prerogative is reinforced in the 2005 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. In this text, the authoring Pontifical Commission wrote, “*The relationship between labour and capital also finds expression when workers participate in ownership, management, and profits*. This is an all-too-often overlooked requirement and it should be given greater consideration” (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004).

#### ***The role of the state in Roman Catholic social teachings: the indirect employer***

In *Laborem Exercens*, John Paul II noted steps being taken to redress notions of private property. These included “proposals for *joint ownership of the means of work*, sharing by the workers in management and /or profits of businesses, so/called shareholding by labour, etc. (P: 14). These were to address not only issues of historical disputes or manual labor, but “the many forms of intellectual work, including white-collar work and management” (Ibid.). His concern included, “the so-called Third World and the various new independent countries that have arisen, especially in Africa but elsewhere as well, in place of the colonial territories of the past” (Ibid.). Benedict XVI following, took a position in his 2009 text, *Caritas in Veritate*, based upon a sober recognition of the status quo in global economics and business. Recalling the work of John Paul II, he observed “*investment always has moral as well as economic significance*” (Benedict XVI, 2009, P: 40, Italics in original text). Implicit in critique of the heretofore mediating role of the state to determine the legal status of the enterprise, he wrote,

Today's international economic scene, marked by grave deviations and failures, requires a *profoundly new way of understanding business enterprise*. Old models are disappearing, but promising new ones are taking shape on the horizon. Without doubt, one of the greatest risks for businesses is that they are almost exclusively answerable to their investors, thereby limiting their social value.

Most recently, Pope Francis wrote *Evangelii Gaudium*, summarizing the Roman Catholic social teaching corpus against pure free-market advocates. He observed “We can no longer trust in the unseen forces and the invisible hand of the market” (Francis, 2013, P: 204). Among other concerns, “Debt and the accumulation of interest also make it difficult for countries to realize the potential of their own economies and keep citizens from enjoying their real purchasing power” (P: 281). Marks of authentic progress reside in manifestations of justice amidst patterns of economic growth. This “requires decisions, programmes, mechanisms and processes specifically geared to a better distribution of income, the creation of sources of employment and an integral promotion of the poor which goes beyond a simple welfare mentality” (Ibid.).

## **DISCUSSION**

As the Data section steadily reveals, there is a remarkable consonance between Roman Catholicism and Sunni Islam in respect to specific factors considered minimal conditions for authenticity in employment relations. Both traditions also share similar concerns over secular culture, along with considerable agreement about suggested remediation.

Consider the authenticity categories as modeled in Figure 2. There is the nature of the employment contract. This exchange of labor power for compensation, involving as it does the consciousness of two persons, is fundamentally different from the product market contractual relation of buying and selling goods. This special characteristic, in light of social teachings, obliges consideration of certain facts and social policy remediation. There is the recognition of a fundamental inequality in power relations between employer and employed. As Islamic teachings make clear, coercion in contract details should be avoided, with the weaker party having recourse

to advisors if necessary. Contracts should be based upon detailed and reciprocally clear agreement in regard to wages and working conditions, without discrimination.

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Figure 2 here.

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Compensation for work should be prompt and at a rate suitable for living, not strictly minimum wage. Both traditions consider this living wage to be one that can support not only the worker but also immediate dependants. This approach to compensation derives from religious principles, not a strict economic analysis of profit maximization. Indeed, *both traditions find such analyses morally deficient*. Thus, one consequence of a living wage – reduced enterprise profit level - is a societal matter: the indirect employer need to ensure uniform compliance. Ironically, the religious inspired social teachings assert such measures enhance employee commitment, corporate social responsibility, and the stability of the social ecology of the enterprise.

Steps to remediate contractual inequalities in the labor market include legal protect against arbitrary dismissal by employers; “just cause” dismissal protections replace “at will” employment circumstances where the employer can dismiss for a good, bad, or no reason. Of the two traditions, it would appear that the Islamic approach to contractual relations is explicitly more kinship in tone, due to the fraternal perspective in which employers are expected to treat their employees.

As a further corrective to the fundamental inequality of the individual employment contract, labor unions and formal levels of employee participation in managerial prerogative are clearly affirmed to be minimal conditions for the possibility of authentic employment relations in modern society. These positions spring from specific religious conceptions regarding human nature in which the subjective component of work can be said to incline towards the prospect for participation in the ultimate disposition of one’s labor power, on the one side, as well as a proportional sharing in the risk/reward elements associated with profit, reflecting the objective dimension of entrepreneurial risk/reward participation.

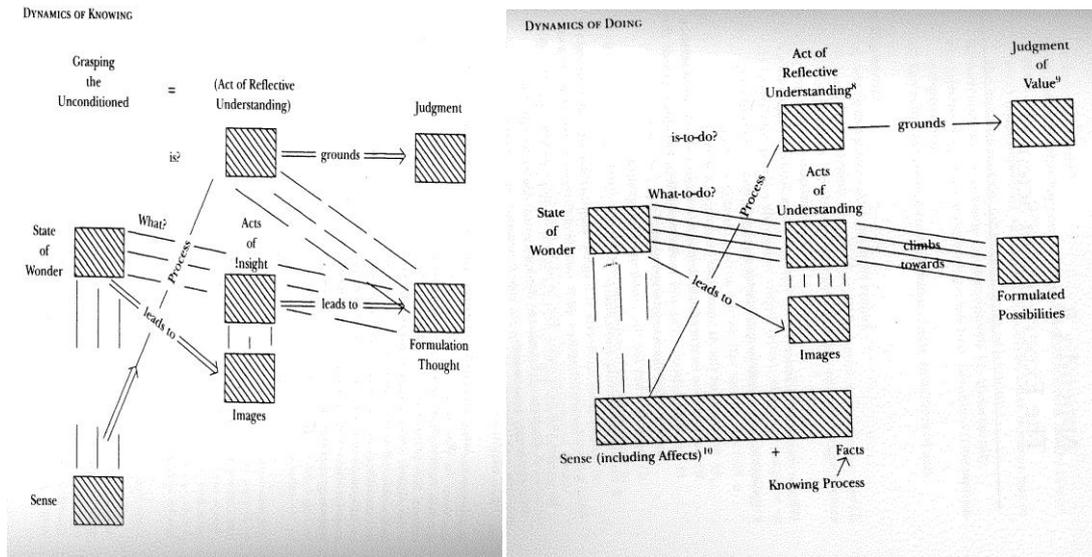
Appropriate forms of employee participation in light of Roman Catholic social teaching are varied, although representatives from amongst the employed appear normatively appropriate for *shura* forms of consultation in Islam. Clearly, informal approaches to ensure adequate consultation can obtain in small enterprises. For larger firms, something approaching the works council of the European Union or Japan's collective bargaining-based management councils are indicated.

Insofar as these religious traditions assert concern for ultimate human values, the particular categories we have distilled from the respective social teachings serve as contributors to the criterion variable of authenticity. These can serve as benchmarks to be evaluated in light of evidence given in history, manifest in different cultures and national settings. Through this study, the human resource analysis of intrinsic corporate social responsibility should be strengthened. In addition, we can postulate that the improved social ecology of an enterprise should work to enhance ecological sustainability, thanks to the broader consultation.

Common elements of religious social teaching that help constitute minimal conditions for authenticity in workplace relations do appear to be broadly validated through the study. From individual to societal levels of existence, the transcendental precepts indicated by Lonergan's insight-based critical realism enabled study of history in cross-cultural settings: be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible.

Our findings offer a basis for shared social advocacy, particularly given the common construct of obediential potency / *fitrah*. Dissemination of findings among religious scholars should further refinement of research method. An important step will be discovery and integration of complementary foundational scholarship in cognitional structure from Islamic tradition. We have only begun to offer guidance in English for an understanding of workplace parameters according to Islam. Limits of time and space precluded referencing a literature rich in anecdotal events and history, which forms a major feature of the faith's rich heritage.

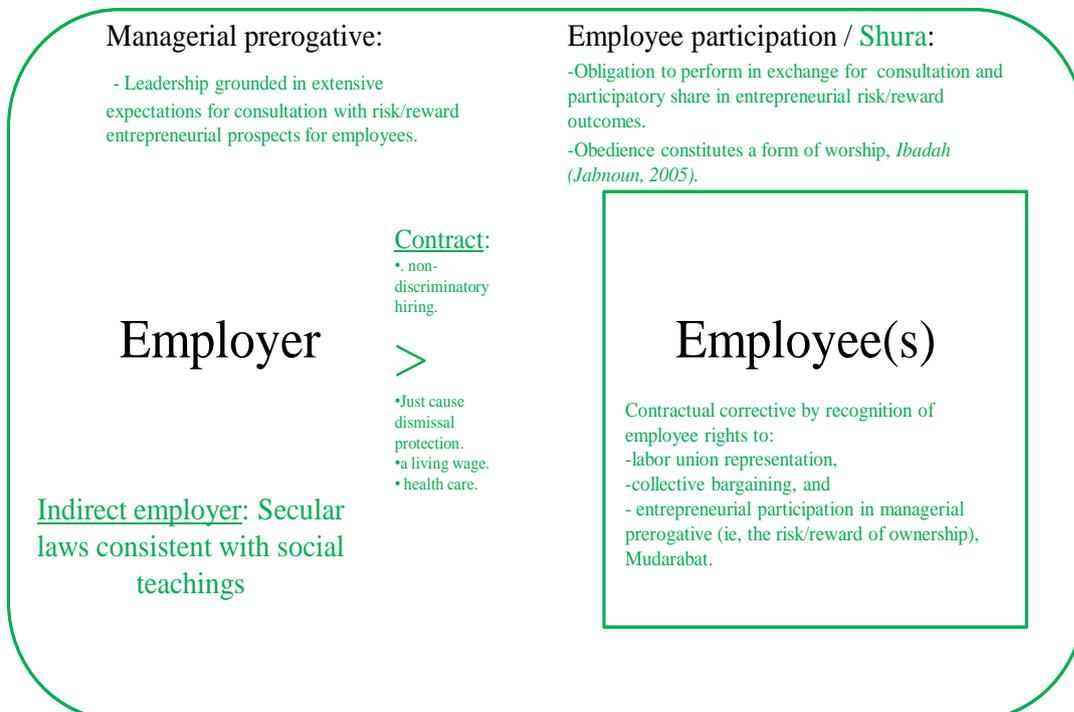
**Figure 1: The Dynamics of Knowing and Doing**



Source: Lonergan, Bernard J.F. (2001), Appendix A, pp.322 -323.

**Figure 2: Workplace parameters for Authenticity in Employment Relations from Roman Catholic and Sunni Islamic Social Teaching**

Workplace parameters from Roman Catholic and Sunni Islam social teaching:  
 authenticity in employment relations in a CSR-compliant enterprise calibrated  
 for economic and ecologically sustainable success



Color code: Black, elements are workplace categories. Green elements are specifications derived from the Data section study of Roman Catholic and Sunni Islam traditions.

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