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ISLAMIC PSYCHOLOGY: THE BASICS, by G. Hussein Rassool. London: Routledge, 2023, 252 pp. ISBN: 978-1032321240.

The book under review is part of 'The Basics' guidebook series by Routledge which is intended for students approaching a subject for the first time. This is effectively accomplished by the book, which introduces the essentials of Islamic Psychology and offers recommendations for additional reading to help readers expand their understanding. The book consists of nine chapters, the first of which establishes monotheism as the foundation of Islamic psychology before outlining Islamic psychology and its application to therapy. After a chapter on the *fiṭrah*, which is referred to as the innate human disposition, two chapters are devoted to the inner world of human beings. The other chapters deal with Islamic healing and research methodology in Islamic Psychology.

Several chapters in the book refer to the concept of *tawḥīd*, or monotheism, because this is not only a fundamental characteristic of Islamic psychology but also the core of Islamic beliefs and practice. In chapter one the author briefly explains the three categories of *tawḥīd* and the six articles of faith. According to the author, the integration of rational knowledge based on reason and empirical evidence means that the sources of knowledge in Islam are not limited to the Qur'ān and Sunnah. This is also relevant to the final chapter of the book, "Research Methodology in Islamic Psychology", in which the author expands on the integration of empirical evidence within revealed knowledge. The book also gives an overview of qualitative and quantitative research methods contrasted with traditional Islamic research methods. The inclusion of these research methodologies implies that the Qur'ān and Sunnah are to be accepted as reliable sources for conducting research and analysis from an Islamic perspective.

Approaching psychology from an Islamic perspective is probably an unfamiliar ground for the intended audience of this book. Hence, chapter three, 'What is Islamic psychology?' commencing with reflective practice questions is a useful tool that could have been included in other chapters. This is especially valuable for readers new to the topic to allow them to reflect on their own knowledge and/or gaps in that knowledge. The key point that this chapter emphasises how mainstream psychology has abandoned the study of the soul with the separation between religion and science at the advent of European Renaissance. However, Islamic Psychology concerned with purifying the soul places the science of the soul at its centre. This leads to chapter four of the book which explores the role of the Islamic Psychotherapist. The author uses the term 'Islamic' instead of 'Muslim' Psychotherapist, which may be alluding to the need to practise psychotherapy from an Islamic perspective and that practising psychotherapy by a Muslim practitioner is not sufficient for psychotherapy to be Islamic. However, this does not seem to align with the author's assertion that clients prefer to consult Muslim Psychologists because of their Islamic perspective. It could be argued that this preference may be primarily linked to a shared cultural understanding and a reduced bias and stigma from a Muslim practising mainstream Psychotherapy/Psychology.

The inclusion of a chapter on the *fiṭrah*, chapter five, before proceeding to other internal parts of human components is appropriate. It links well to chapter one where *tawḥīd* and submission to God are set as the core of Islamic Psychology. One of the explanations of *fiṭrah* includes the natural inclination of the soul to submit to its Creator. One of the strengths of the chapter is its inclusion of evidence for the *fiṭrah* from Islamic sources as well as from the findings of research studies. The author uses verses of the Qur'ān, Prophetic sayings and Islamic scholarly opinions to explain the concepts of the *nafs* (self), *rūḥ* (soul), *qalb* (heart) and *'aql* (intellect) with the different categorisations these may include and their interrelationships. It is apt that a chapter on Islamic healing, chapter eight, is included in a book on Islamic Psychology, because according to the author, "the spiritual model health [*sic*] in Islam is an interrelation between the mind, spirit and body" (p.161). This chapter also includes what some may call supernatural elements that could afflict a person and presented as symptoms of

mental health problems: the evil eye and jinn possession. The author does not limit himself to explaining the impact of these phenomena but also includes recommended healing interventions.

While the book is a useful introduction to Islamic psychology, one notices a couple of shortcomings. Firstly, on a few occasions, citations from general Islamic websites are made which does not contrast well with the majority of the book's academic citations. Secondly, in chapter four, 'Role, competence and scope of practice of the Islamic Psychotherapist' provides detailed information on the qualifications required to become an Islamic psychotherapist or counsellor. These are relevant at the present because the book is current, however, any change to these details will easily make the book outdated. It may have been wiser to give a general overview demonstrating the main stages and levels of qualifications and then refer the reader to a list of organisations where current information can be sought.

In conclusion, the book is written in an easy-to-read language with chapters that build on each other and connect smoothly. Verses of the Qur'an are quoted in Arabic with their translation into English and their reference. There is a comprehensive and simple explanation of the various concepts which would be helpful to readers interested in the topic of Islamic psychology, without necessitating a background in psychology or Islamic studies.

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