دراسة لغوية معرفية حول الاستعارة المفاهيمية للموت في أقوال الإمام علي (عليه السلام)

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A Cognitive Linguistic Study of Conceptual Metaphor of Death in Imam Ali's (PBH) Sayings

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Abstract

This study is devoted to the investigation of conceptual metaphor of death in select sayings of Imam Ali (PBH). Based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory in accordance with Kövecses's (2010) theory, this study shows that the sayings exploit a rich metaphorical system anchored in human corporeality and supported by Arabic-Islamic scripts. The prevailing metaphors located are LIFE AS A JOURNEY; TIME AS MOTION; DEATH AS A PURSUER AND THE DESTINATION; and DEATH AS SEPARATION. These metaphors turn metaphorically constructed spiritual symbol toward experiential aspectual realities using source domains including movement, pursuit, physical force, pain and social rupture. The results show that the discourse of Imam Ali is not built upon isolated metaphors rather it is based on an elaborate network of connected conceptual metaphors, which perforce function to empower moral exigency, religious preparedness, and human mortality. Furthermore, the investigation reveals that although some metaphors cross-linguistic and bodily boundaries, their generation within the Arabic- Islamic tradition also provides them with culturally particular nuances of meaning, especially in the instance of death as hunter, thief or fearsome passer-by. This study shows that conceptual metaphors in religious texts are not simply cognitive, linguistic or semantic tools but also serve ethical and emotional functions; since the metaphor is doctrinally framed, it can lead to a particular eschatological system of thought, which can provide meaning for its adherents.

Key words: *Cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, death, Imam Ali, sayings.*

المستخلص

تُكرَّس هذه الدراسة للبحث في الاستعارة تعمل بالضرورة على تعزيز الضرورة الأخلاقية، والاستعداد الديني، وإدراك فناء الإنسان. علاوة على ذلك، يكشف البحث أنه على الرغم من أن بعض الاستعارات تتجاوز الحدود اللغوية والجسدية، فإن نشأتها المفاهيمية للموت في أقوال مختارة للإمام علي (عليه السلام). واستنادًا إلى نظرية الاستعارة المفاهيمية للاكوف وجونسون (1980) وفقًا لنظرية كوفيتشيس (2010)، تُبين هذه الدراسة أن هذه الأقوال تستغل نظامًا استعاريًا ثريًا متجذرًا في الجسد البشري ومدعومًا بالنصوص العربية والإسلامية. ومن أبرز الاستعارات التي تم رصدها: الحياة كرحلة، والزمن كحركة، والموت كمطارد ومصير، والموت كفراق. تُحوّل هذه الاستعارات الرمز الروحي المُصاغ استعاريًا إلى حقائق تجريبية واقعية من خلال استخدام مجالات مصدرية تشمل الحركة، والمطاردة، والقوة البدنية، والألم، والتمزق الاجتماعي. تُظهر النتائج أن خطاب الإمام علي لا يقوم على استعارات معزولة، بل على شبكة معقدة من الاستعارات المفاهيمية المترابطة، والتي ضمن التراث العربي الإسلامي تُضفي عليها دلالات ثقافية خاصة، لا سيما في حالة الموت كصياد أو لص أو عابر سبيل مخيف. تُبين هذه الدراسة أن الاستعارات المفاهيمية في النصوص الدينية ليست مجرد أدوات معرفية أو لغوية أو دلالية، بل تؤدي أيضًا وظائف أخلاقية وعاطفية؛ فبما أن الاستعارة

مُؤطَّرة عقائديًا، فإنها قد تُفضي إلى نظام فكري أخروي مُحدد، يُضفي معنىً على أتباعه.
الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغويات المعرفية، الاستعارة المفاهيمية، الموت، الإمام علي، الأقوال.

1. Introduction

Throughout history and prehistory (and across cultures and languages), human beings have come to understand death, not simply as a natural occurrence, but as a profoundly significant passage expressed through metaphor. Unmatched in the Islamic intellectual and spiritual tradition, no words are more eloquent or definitive than those of Imam Ali (P.B.U.H.). The remarks on death, which are strewn throughout his sermons, letters and aphorisms, serve more than an instructive function they rewrite the conceptual edifice in whose resources to perceive death forlornly. Applying the CMT to these sayings is a productive means for unpacking cognitively how this religious discourse works (Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Kövecses 2010).

Building on the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), CMT proposes that abstract domains, such as morality, time, and death, are rooted in repeated bodily experiences or cultural practices. The claim of this theoretical approach is that metaphor is not just a figure of style, but also an essential cognitive mechanism that structures thinking, perception and action. Subsequent work by Kövecses (2010) emphasizes the systemic, intercultural nature of conceptual metaphors and their capacity to mirror culturally specific models of reality. In this perspective, death is usually thought about on metaphorical reasons that make it more concrete and comprehensible, since abstract and unknown elements of reality are enough to incommensurable, reflected by schema such as DEATH IS A JOURNEY; DEATH IS A GUEST; or LIFE IS A TEMPORARY RESIDENCE (Kövecses 2010).

The speech of Imam Ali about death contains many metaphorical utterances like these. His sayings variously portray death as an approaching traveler, a gateway between realms, a release from illusion, or a call to divine truth - linguistic patterns that parallel the cognitive sorts of mappings identified in recent metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Nevertheless, while these metaphors function not just as linguistic embellishments, but also as a mechanism of fostering religious epistemology, how the believer is to know spiritually, emotionally and morally in relation to death. As death is depicted as meaningful, imminent and morally significant, Imam Ali's statements correspond with metaphysical tenets of Islam, affirming a worldview in which worldly life is temporary and consummation is not achieved until after the end of time.

Thus, examining the metaphors of Imam Ali through CMT can serve several scholarly objectives. Linguistically, this illustrates the extent to which abstract theological doctrines are cognitively processed via metaphorical structuration (Kövecses, 2010). Theologically, it clarifies how Imam Ali uses metaphors to promote spiritual watchfulness, modesty and ethical commitment for the faithful. Culturally, it places his teachings in a larger Islamic framework in which life and death are not diametrically opposed but both connected to the stages of human soul's journey (Nasr, 2006). Finally, this analysis highlights the intricate relationship between language,

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thought and spirituality in one of the richest bodies of Islamic ethical reflection.

This paper therefore tries to analysis of conceptual metaphors related to death found in the words of Imam Ali, depicting their cognitive structures, cultural base and spiritual aspects. Building on classical CMT theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010) and recent discussions of Islamic discourse, the argument is advanced here that sacred language conditions believers' attitudes towards death by incentivising them to live in this world with existential awareness, responsibility and otherworldly expectation.

1.1. Problem Statement

Life, death and journey to the afterlife in Nahj Al Balagah While they can be argued that some of Imam Ali's words bear the deepest contemplations on life, mortality and the spiritual odyssey of human beings, what has yet failed in scholarly production is to pay notice whether this teachings shape our idea about death through systematic metaphorical models. Although the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), as laid down by e.g., Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and elaborated by Kövecses (2010), has provided a popular tool with which to analyze various religious, philosophical, and literary texts, to its application in Islamic ethical discourse, in particular with reference to the Nahj al-Balāgha as well as other collections of sayings accredited to Imam Ali, little attention has been paid. Consequently, little is currently known about the mental processes through which Imam Ali's rhetoric determines believers' conceptualizations of death.

Significant gaps are presented in that Imam Ali's sayings are expressed in thick, multilayer metaphors, which become not only a way of representing theological principles but also ethical behavior, emotional orientation and spiritual experience. Without an in-depth systematic cognitive-linguistic examination, these metaphors are prone to be explained at their shallow face value and miss the deeper role in shaping the Islamic conceptualization of Death. Furthermore, many extant interpretations consider Imam Ali's eloquence as sheer rhetoric or style forgetting that his metaphors may also work at providing conceptual models which shape how dying is thought of and feared, accepted or spiritually embraced.

Thus, the main issue being tackled in this study is the inadequacy of an encyclopedic cognitive-linguistic investigation of the notions of death referred to by and construed from among Imam Ali's aphorisms. Particularly, this research is interested in examining how these metaphors so conceptualize death as a multi-dimensional concept, what hypothetical mappings are drawn on and why such metaphorical constructions would be necessary for interpreting Imam's Ali ethical and spiritual teachings? Addressing these metaphors from a CMT perspective, the study seeks to identify the cognitive models and cultural structures informing Islamic views of death and provide an insight into the spiritual worldview expressed in Imam Ali's discourse.

1.2. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer to the following questions:

1. How does Imam Ali employ conceptual metaphor in his description of death?
2. What are the types and the functions of conceptual metaphor that are employed in the selected of Imam Ali's sayings?
3. What are the types of source domains and target domains that are adopted in the selected sayings?

1.3. Aims of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Identifying the ways Imam Ali employ conceptual metaphor in his description of death.
2. Investigating the types and the functions of conceptual metaphor that are employed in the selected of Imam Ali's sayings
3. Discussing the types of source domains and target domains that are adopted in the selected sayings.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cognitive View of Metaphor

Modern cognitive approaches to language have changed the perception of metaphor from being a rhetorical and poetic type of language towards being employed in daily speech (Gibbs, 1994, p.20). The conventional view of metaphor holds the exact opposite before Lakoff and Johnson presents their revolutionary idea in their book "Metaphors We Live By" (1980). Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is another name for the cognitive theory of using metaphor. This theory is established by Lakoff and Johnson in (1980) and it refers to the idea of understanding and experiencing one concept in terms of another, "metaphor is presented and widespread in everyday life, not just in language but also in thought and behavior ," (Lakoff and Johnson,1980, p.3).

2.2. Contemporary Definitions of CMs

CMs or cognitive metaphors are the conceptual abstract cross-domains that map from a better-known conceptual domain, which is known as the SD to a less well-known conceptual domain, which is known as the TD (Hurford et al, 2007, p.331).

CMs are the outcome of the conceptualization of two elements as comparable notions, which function as a representation of the structural relationship between an abstract notion and a more concrete one. CMs occur on four levels of schematicity; a vertical hierarchy of levels, and they are image schemas, domains, frames, and mental spaces (Kövecses, 2017, p.16). The image schemas, domains, and frames are part of what we can conceive of collective semantic memory. Modern linguists, cognitive scientists, and philosophers now define metaphor differently and because of this, different explanations are used to illustrate the same metaphor. Lakoff and Turner, in their work 'More than Cool Reason' draw a connection between metaphor and mental processes and give the following definition: “Metaphor is a matter of thought-all kinds of thought: thought about emotion, society, human character, language, the nature of life and death” (1989, p.xi). According to Baake (2003, p.68), metaphor works through enabling two concepts to interact in the human mind to produce knowledge that exceeds what is contained in the individual concepts.

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The importance of metaphor is described in the following way by the linguist Galperin (1981, p.140) in his book Stylistics: "the power of realizing two lexical meanings simultaneously." According to him, metaphors can help individuals build up mental images. Meanwhile, Simpson (2004, p.41) points out that the definition of CM is "a process of mapping between two different conceptual domains. Kövecsess (2019, p.2) proposes a more technical definition of CMs as follows: “a conceptual metaphor is a systematic set of correspondences between two domains of experience”, the unique meaning of metaphor that it is typically used as an exceptional rather than everyday form of language. In other words, metaphor is not only making our ideas more vivid but also help to organize our perceptions. It is obvious that these definitions of various linguists, scientists, and philosophers concerning CMs are similar.

These linguists and scientists reject all the traditional beliefs that metaphor is founded on the principle of similarity and discourses. Instead, they show that metaphors are part of our experience and everyday knowledge because they help us express our ideas and are used in both literature and everyday speech. Some of the most common CMs, which attract the attention of many researchers, are (Stockwell, 2002, p.110): LIFE IS A JOURNEY, FORTUNES ARE BALANCES, COMMUNICATION IS A CONDUIT, GOOD IS UP, 15 ANGER IS A DANGEROUS ANIMAL, DEATH IS. DEPARTURE, IDEAS ARE PLANS, LIFE IS A DAY, WAR IS A GAME, ARGUMENT IS WAR, AND TIME IS MONEY.

2.3. Metaphor and Cognitive Linguistics

Lakoff (1980) may be regarded as the first ardent defenders of metaphors, as they believe that metaphors are conceptual, and that many of the ways people think and behave are essentially metaphorical. The Lakoffian notion is founded on the significance of human experience, specifically the value of the body of a human being, the human mind and language cannot be studied detached from human embodied interpretation of the intended meaning (Lakoff, 1980).

As Moran (1997) believed, metaphor difficulties in poetry, rhetorical analysis, aesthetics, epistemological theory of mind, and cognitive science cannot be completely separated. Cognitive linguists have long claimed that metaphor is essential to human language (Evans & Green, 2006). The core assumption is that metaphors (metaphorical utterances) are founded on peoples' bodily experiences and provide context for metaphor analysis in a synchronic frame. Figurative language needs to be more accurate and is typically the field that the poets and storytellers use, in contrast to idiomatic phrases, which are based on a literal comprehension of the words, employed. Figurative language is unusual or literary and should only be used by imaginative authors (Moran, 1997).

Gibbs (1994, p.75) distinguishes four types of literalities; “conventional, non-metaphorical, truth-conditional literality, and context-free literality”. He further adds that many notions are impossible to define

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non-metaphorically, such as time without reference to space and motion.

According to (Moran,1997), When a speech uses a metaphor, the listener interprets it to imply something different from what the words would mean if they were used literally. This indicates that when words or statements are understood figuratively, they change their meaning. Metaphors convey pictures, feelings, values, cognitive processes, and so on.

Lakoff (1980) argues that the core of metaphor is recognising and interacting with one sort of object in terms of another, and behaving accordingly. Lakoff (1997) accomplishes the picture concerning metaphors by adding that similarity and difference are also components when metaphor is at stake, as they are all implicated in the knowing process. One of the effects is that it is hard to separate metaphors from regular language.

2.3. Conceptual Metaphor

According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, non-literal language is fundamental to human comprehension and expression. Metaphor is not a mere decoration or amusement-oriented tool of human expression and communication; rather, it signifies the cognitive organisation of an abstract and conceptual domain (such as love, life, or war), according to the central tenet of conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff, 1980).

Metaphor entails conceptualising a distinct domain of experience, namely love, to gain insight into another domain of experience, namely journeys. The mapping is carefully organised. Based on ontological correspondences, entities within the domain of love (such as the lovers, their shared goals and difficulties, and the love relationship itself) systematically correspond to entities within the realm of a journey (including the travellers, the vehicle, the destinations, and so forth) (Gruyter, 2005). The set of ontological correspondences that define a mapping are as follows:

THE¬LOVE AS JOURNEY¬MAPPING

The lovers correspond to travellers.

The love relationship corresponds to the vehicle.

The lovers' common goals correspond to their common destinations on the journey.

Three general types of conceptual metaphors have been distinguished: structural, orientational, and ontological.

.3.1. Structural Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson (2003) think that structural metaphor enables us to understand one aspect of a concept by relating it to another (for instance, understanding an aspect of arguing by connecting it to battle) but does so inherently hides other elements of the concept. A metaphorical concept can prevent us from concentrating on different aspects of the idea that are incompatible with that metaphor by permitting us to focus on one aspect (e.g., the conflicting elements of arguing). For example, the CM in (3), "LIVE IS THEATRE ".

2.3.2. Orientational Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson (2003) assure that metaphorical concept organises an entire system of concepts about one another instead of structuring one concept in terms of another. Most of these metaphors pertain to spatial orientation; thus, they are referred to as orientational metaphors: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-

shallow, and central-peripheral. The spatial orientations people possess depend on the characteristics and functions of their bodies within their physical surroundings. Orientational metaphors convey a spatial orientation to a concept; for instance, HAPPY IS UP. Because the idea of HAPPY is oriented up, it leads to English expressions such as “I’m feeling up today”.

2.3.3. Ontological Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson (2003) state that ontological metaphors enable the perception of non-physical entities and substances, including concepts, events, emotions, states, actions, and activities. They promote thinking skills regarding our personal experiences. Using ontological metaphors, one can conceptualize their experiences with substances, containers, and objects. Specifying the type of substance, container, or object that refer to these concepts is unnecessary (Kövecses, 2010).

3. Methodology

The present study is qualitative where the researcher intends to investigate six sayings of Imam Ali (PBH) that are rich with expressions of death. It describes the cognitive strategies of death in six selected sayings of Imam Ali (PBH). There are many reasons for conducting qualitative research, as stated by Merriam and Grenier (2019). First, qualitative research is a powerful tool for describing the social context in which humans live. Second, the main idea behind qualitative research is that meaning is socially constructed. (Merriam & Grenier 2019).

Schreier (2012) asserted that qualitative research employs symbolic materials, including artefacts, verbal data, and visual data which provides considerable latitude for interpretation. Qualitative research, according to Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2020, p.10), is ‘'a broad umbrella term that encompasses a variety of methodologies and philosophies". Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2020, p. 10) opined that qualitative research permits a comprehensive examination of people's experiences through a unique set of research methods, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, life histories, or biographies. According to McEnery and Wilson (1996), qualitative analysis methods provide a comprehensive and intricate understanding of the data.

The researcher employs a qualitative approach to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subject under investigation rather than merely connections between variables (Moleong, 2009). Therefore, the current study adopts Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) conceptual metaphor theory.

4. Data Analysis

Extract (1)

فَإِنَّمَا أَنْتُمْ فِي أَيَّامِ أَمَلٍ وَمِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ أَجَلٌ، فَمَنْ عَمِلَ فِي أَيَّامِ أَمَلِهِ قَبْلَ حُضُورِ أَجَلِهِ نَفَعَهُ عَمَلُهُ، وَلَمْ يَضُرُّهُ أَجَلُهُ. أَلاَ وَاعْمَلُوا فِي الرَّغْبَةِ كَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ فِي الرَّهْبَةِ)

“Indeed, you now live in the days of hope, while death stands behind you. Therefore, whoever acts during the days of his hope, before his appointed end arrives, his deeds will benefit him, and his end will not harm

him? So act in times of comfort just as you act in times of fear…"

Imam Ali's metaphorical use of "the days of hope" in Sermon 83, and the counterpart "death stands behind you," makes apparent that a complex phenomenon of metaphor can be observed here. The shaping of the abstract sense state "days of hope" into a spatial-temporal location enables individuals to be embedded within such, and the representation death as "standing behind" them mobilizes schemas based on embodied orientation with past or unseen forces located in space relative to an individual's body. These embodied metaphors emerge in the physical basis of human perception: what is up is in front and what lies behind us threatens or brings forth the unknown, which makes the metaphor cognitively very natural.

This cultural anchoring turns the metaphor not just into universal spatial mapping, but also into a deeply resonant cultural schema. In addition, the idea that he would act "before his time has come for to die" supports DEATH IS A DESTINATION which is a metaphor that appears in many religions (it's not just in Christianity) where death is presented as not an end, but a stopping point. The sermon combines spatial-temporal metaphors and moral ones, including guidance to "act in times of comfort (as) you would in times of fear" by deploying the conceptual metaphor EMOTIONAL STATES ARE LOCATIONS. As a result, the text links embodied cognition with cultural conceptualization in imaging of life as journey (for mover) or pursuit (for pursuer), physical action as motion towards off away from destinations that are spiritually significant.

Extract (2)

(أَيْنَ الَّذِينَ سَارَعُوا إِلَى الْمَنَايَا، وَبَادَرُوا بِالأَعْمَالِ، وَقَطَعُوا أَيَّامَهُمْ فِي طَاعَةِ اللهِ؟)

"Where are those who hastened toward death, rushed to perform deeds, and spent their days in obedience to God?"

The phrase "*hastened toward death*," which is an expression that illustrates the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A DESTINATION very clearly capturing the abstraction event as reaching an end-point in physical space. In depicting death as something people can "move towards," the sermon in effect viscerally re-frames mortality along a structured pathway, endowing the prospect of death with a dynamism that can be internalized and understood. The verbs "hastened," "rushed" and "spent their days" feed into the larger metaphor of LIFE IS A JOURNEY AND TIME IS MONEY seen in the cost-benefit analysis of how many days are to be controlled – how much TIME is a RESOURCE that can be SPENT on obedience. Nevertheless, these metaphors are rooted in deeply human experiences, as Lakoff and Johnson argue: you acquire goals through physical movement, and expend resources like time and energy. Kövecses also notes that religious settings heighten these metaphors, since they increase the degree of moral urgency "hastening toward death" is in a theological framework not foolish but zealous hastening to perform one's divine calling before its destination. This metaphor is meaningful because the society of early Islam was a death-preparing one: life was conceived as a test whose

outcome would be clear in the afterlife. Therefore, the idea of "hastening" is indeed a moral topsyturvey: not folly but wisdom. Seen in this perspective, the metaphor accentuates the unquenchable existential certainty of human finitude and punishment as well as the spiritual valorisation of active obedience to God.

Extract (3)

(فَإِنَّ الْمَوْتَ لاَ يُفَوِّتُ مَنْ تَخَلَّفَ، وَلاَ يُعْجِزُ مَنْ تَجَهَّزَ. وَلَيْسَ مِنْهُ مَفَرٌّ، وَهُوَ لاَحِقٌ بِكُمْ، وَإِنْ طَالَتْ فِرَارُكُمْ مِنْه)

"Death does not overlook the one who lags behind, nor is it unable to overtake the one who prepares himself. There is no escape from it; it will reach you, even if your flight from it is prolonged."

In this extract, Imam Ali (PBH) compares death to striking images as part of his tafsir on life after death: "Death is that which does not overlook a laggard and catches up to an escaper. This metaphorical depiction personifies death into an agent in pursuit, which fits the ontological metaphors DEATH IS A HUNTER/PURSUER and DEATH IS AN ENEMY: processes open to human intervention (Lakoff & Johnson). This metaphor is based in the embodied human experience of being chased, emphasizing the non-escapability of death on an emotional and cognitive level. In contrast to Kövecse's extended model, however, these metaphors are culturally based: Arab poetic and religious discourse frequently expresses the idea that death (al-manīyah) is an unrelenting hunter, from which one cannot escape, thus reinforcing a cultural reasonating cognitive model.

The spatiality of being "behind" and then being "passed" also works to reinforce the metaphor of journey by framing life as a trajectory on which people travel at different rates, but that ultimately all are captured by the pursuing force of death. The element "you can't get out of it, it will come for you" strengthens the inevitability of the encounter due to utilizing a metaphor INEVITABLE EVENTS ARE FORCES – forces cannot be sidestepped; their coming does not depend on one's wish. This combination of metaphors, journey, chase, destiny, gives us a well-rounded image where death is at once proactive and overwhelming; it forces you to give up on escaping, and instead concentrate on getting right with God.

Extract (4)

(أَلاَ وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ أَدْبَرَتْ، وَإِنَّ الآخِرَةَ قَدْ أَقْبَلَتْ، وَلِكُلٍّ مِنْهُمَا بَنُونَ... أَلاَ وَإِنَّ الْمَوْتَ طَالِبٌ حَثِيثٌ)

"Behold, this world has turned its back and is departing, while the Hereafter has approached and is coming forth; and each of the two has its followers... Behold, death is a swift pursuer."

The statements "this world has turned its back and is leaving" and "the Hereafter is near" illustrate the metaphors WORLD/AFTERLIFE ARE MOVING ENTITIES and ABSTRACT SPIRITUAL REALITIES ARE AGENTS. Dunyā is made a person who physically "turned (its) back" and walked away from the listener, while Ākhira is a traveler approaching the hearer. These metaphors presuppose embodied experience: humans grasp the

arrival and departure of objects through seeing and experiencing movement, thus rendering abstract eschatological concepts more tangible. Kövecses's model points out that these metaphors are culture-based: in Islamic metaphorical thought, the world and the afterlife are compared to competing caravans or drivers, which pick up passengers or attract followers (i.e., people pass away), representing a culturally entrenched moral opposition.

The expression "each has followed" even compounds the metaphor LIFE IS A PATH and PEOPLE ARE TRAVELERS, stereotypical concepts in religion with respect to tracking a leader moving in a particular direction. The further portrayal of "death as a racing pursuer" serves to reinforce the imagery of death itself being an agent, and returns once more to an image (of predators or avengers) culturally deep-rooted in the desert chase. The merge of cluster of metaphors, world and otherworld as travelers, people as followers, and death as a pursuer- constructs a dense web of interconnected metaphors that conceptualizes life as part of an existential moving space between two competing destinations.

Extract (5)

(يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، اتَّقُوا اللهَ تَقِيَّةَ مَنْ سَمِعَ فَخَشَعَ، وَوَقِفَ فَخَضَعَ، وَعَمِلَ فَنَفَعَ... وَاذْكُرُوا غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَسَكَرَاتِهِ)

"O people fear God with the fear of one who hears and is humbled, who pauses and submits, who acts and is thus benefited… And remember the deep agonies of death and its overwhelming pangs."

In the metaphoric process, the agentive spatial structures turn into world experience ones. The collocations "deep agonies of death" and "its overwhelming pangs" are textbook examples of the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A PHYSICAL FORCE, in which death is conceived to be a force in the physical domain, which is experienced by us pain-wise and pressure-wise. Lakoff and Johnson argue that the physical experience of the human body provides the basis for fundamental metaphors regarding relations with others, self-knowledge, morality etc. Insofar categories like those of abstract emotions or existential states are relationally structured, as they are indexed to these fundamental physiology-based ontological domains. Here again, the death is not simply as transition but an indescribable force which is "overwhelming", consistent with the metaphor INTENSE EXPERIENCES ARE PHYSICAL FORCES.

Kövecses nuances this image describing emotion metaphors, which show that only appearing through drowning, shaking, or over powering metaphors can (secondary) culturally salient fears be seen. Here the poetic simile strikes a chord with Islamic tales of the spiritual agony (sakrāt) experienced at death, a culturally symbolic moment of spiritual testing. Ep 3 Through the image, physical pain is connected to spiritual struggle and it transforms the nebulous experience of dying into an emotional journey. Imam Ali is in this call to "Remember" calling forth the cognitive as well as moral register: conceiving of death as an imbuing invader that provokes humility, spiritual preparedness, and un-

worldly detachment. Therefore, the metaphor is not only descriptive but, even more importantly, a motive force: it places eschatological teaching in real human bodies.

Extract (6)

(المَوْتُ طَالِبٌ لاَ يُفُوتُ، وَآخِذٌ لاَ يُعْطِي)

"Death is a seeker that never misses, and a taker that never gives back."

The extract includes a metaphorical expression represented in the phrase "a seeker that never misses, and a taker that never gives back." This is an instance of DEATH IS A HUNTER and DEATH IS A THIEF, acknowledged as sub-metaphors within the larger category EVENTS ARE AGENTS according to Lakoff and Johnson. By endowing ("seeker"), accuracy ("never misses"), and irreversibility of action ("never gives back") to death as terms of intentionality, precision and acutance, the word renders an abstraction into a concrete agentive force. This personification is not purely poetic, but grounded in cognitive experiences of humans being chased or robbed, conceiving one's death as inevitable becomes cognitively and affectively real. This culturally sensitive view of Kövecses's explains why such metaphors resonate within the Arabic-Islamic tradition: hunters, raiders and thieves had been known in premodern Arabian life as figures whose appearance was erratic but formative. Rendering death as a thing in this way places mortality on the familiar framework of cultural threats, adding to its weighty nature. The metaphor also suggests asymmetry: death is a consumer; it never gives back; thus irrevocable. This framing summons existential humility and moral vigilance, by making the abstraction of 'death' an active reality in human life.

5. Conclusion

Utilizing Lakoff and Johnson's CMT and Kövecses's culturally embedded framework, the study of seven sermons attributed to Imam Ali unveil an intricate system by which abstract spiritual realities are conceptualized, expressed, or experienced. Throughout the selected passages, metaphors of travel, time, agency, force or separation function as the dominant cognitive instruments by which the Imam expresses life's temporality, death's inescapability and human being's moral obligations. Instead of rhetorical tidbits in the sauce, however, these metaphors define a unified field of concepts that invite audiences to grasp existential truths with which they are already familiar via the body and culture. In this metaphor, for example, LIFE IS A JOURNEY structures the moral universe by understanding human life in terms of paths with destinations, followers, transitions and obstacles, which intertwine ethical decision making naturally with directional movement. Likewise, the frequent representation of death as a stalker, hunter, stealer, or overwhelming force epitomizes the metaphor DEATH IS AN AGENT and renders mortality cognitively available and emotionally salient. Such an agentive framing of death emphasizes its certainty and unpredictability, urging constant spiritual readiness while discouraging complacence.

Kövecses's insights provide evidence into the cultural basis of these metaphors: within the Arabic-Islamic

'mind', pursuit and hunt metaphors refer to culturally widespread premodern experiences stemming from desert life, tribal war and environmental unpredictability. This cultural sedimentation reinforces the cognitive and emotional power of the metaphors; they are not just grasped intellectually, but felt in our guts. In addition, metaphors like TIME IS A RESOURCE, DEATH IS A DESTINATION and DEATH IS SEPARATION map the universal human experiences of devoting time, arriving at places, losing relationships onto theological concepts such as accountability, eschatology and the afterlife. The cognitive integration between the universal embodied metaphors and culturally shaped ones means that, Imam Ali's sermons yield a spiritual discourse that is necessarily grounded in everyday experience while maintaining an enormous level of depth.

Finally, the metaphor system of these sermons has various functions: cognitive (ordering abstract concepts with concrete experience), communicative (communalizing doctrine), affective (eliciting fear and urgency, or humility), and ethical (judging righteous actions and spiritual preparedness). The interconnectedness and complexity of these metaphors reveal how religious discourse is not constructed from doctrinal lists but from complex conceptual networks that articulate the ways in which believers cognitive, affective and active minds are shaped. By illuminating the network of metaphorical connections that constitute much of Imam Ali's wisdom, this study fashions a deeper understanding of the cognitive role of these structures in sacred texts and highlights the unifying power of metaphor between human embodiment and spiritual perception.

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