

Shah Waliullah Dehlawi's Contributions to Eschatology in His *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*

Seyed Mohammad Mahdi Hosseinpoor¹

Received: 22 June 2023 / Accepted: 09 December 2023

Abstract

One of the fundamental beliefs in Islam is the concept of resurrection and eschatology. Since the inception of Islam, this subject has been a focal point for Islamic scholars, leading to various interpretations, some of which are considered innovative. Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, a prominent figure within Deobandiyyah and an authority of Mātūrīdiyyah in eschatology and the afterlife, introduced significant innovations in his seminal theological work, *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*. This research aims to analyze and evaluate these contributions. The central question addressed is: What innovations did Shah Waliullah Dehlawi introduce in *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha* regarding theology, and how can they be analyzed and evaluated? Key findings of this research include his belief in the existence of a non-elemental world where meanings and actions are manifested in appropriate forms before their earthly creation, with actions being associated with soul forms that determine punishment in both this world and the hereafter. This realm, termed the Imaginal Universe (*'Ālm al-Mithāl*), is perceptible to certain individuals, such as the Holy Prophet. Additionally, Shah Waliullah Dehlawi posited that God's actions during resurrection encompass both extraordinary and ordinary actions. He also rejected the notion of eternal damnation (*khulūd*) for perpetrators of major sins in Hell. Furthermore, he contended that following death, a person's experiences of suffering or pleasure will manifest in a manner most suited to their condition, disregarding intellectual concomitance. The research methodology employed in this article is descriptive and analytical.

Keywords: Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, eschatology, Imaginal Universe, *al-Malā' al-A'lā'* (the High Council), reality of the spirit, death, grave, purgatory.

Introduction

Eschatology, the study of the world after death and the concept of resurrection, is fundamental to all Muslims. This topic is extensively addressed in numerous verses

1. Assistant Professor, Department of Theological Denominations, University of Religions and Denominations, Qom, 13357, Iran. Email: smm.hosseinpoor@urd.ac.ir

of the Holy Qur'an and is reaffirmed in the *mutawātir* (consistently narrated) traditions of the Holy Prophet.

However, Muslims and Islamic scholars have held various views and interpretations regarding eschatological issues. Each has sought to explain these matters based on their own beliefs, leading to diverse opinions and occasional innovations.

Meanwhile, Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, one of the most significant Māturīdī scholars and a key figure in the intellectual and spiritual leadership of Deobandiyyah, gained renown for his innovative perspectives within his seminal theological work, *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*. Claimed by him as his most important theological treatise, this work introduces novel ideas that warrant careful analysis and evaluation. Given their significance, it becomes imperative to scrutinize these opinions. Such scrutiny holds potential benefits, including a deeper understanding of the causal factors underlying certain theological stances within the *Kalām* tradition embraced by both Waliullah and his Māturīdī and Deobandī followers. Additionally, it offers an opportunity to engage in critical discourse and possibly counter or address any doctrinal extremities espoused by Waliullah and his adherents.

The central question of this research revolves around the contributions of Shah Waliullah Dehlawi in his seminal theological work, *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*, particularly concerning eschatology. What forms of analysis and evaluation can be offered regarding these innovations?

In terms of the research background, it is safe to assert that, up until now, there has been a notable absence of substantial written research in this field. The only existing treatise on this subject is the author's previous work titled "Analysis and Evaluation of the Religious Thoughts of Shah Waliullah Dehlawi with an Emphasis on Innovations."

The aim of this research is to explore Shah Waliullah Dehlawi's contributions to the field of eschatology, while also conducting a descriptive and analytical analysis and evaluation of his ideas.

Considering Shah Waliullah Dehlawi's stature as one of the most influential Islamic figures in recent centuries, and the fact that his ideas form the bedrock of many contemporary sects and tendencies within the Islamic world, a detailed and comprehensive examination of his ideas appears more necessary than ever. Particularly, his theological perspectives and insights on eschatology introduce new ideas and arguments that depart from previous conventions, marking a significant departure until his era. Through his expressions, Shah Waliullah was able to inaugurate a new chapter in Sunni beliefs and doctrinal foundations concerning eschatology.

In the subsequent discussion, we will delve into his most pivotal contributions to this domain.

1. The Imaginal Universe (*ʿĀlm al-Mithāl*)

In numerous passages across his works, Dehlawi emphasizes the concept of the Imaginal Universe (*ʿĀlm al-Mithāl*). He explicitly asserts that his exposition of the Imaginal Uni-

verse constitutes an innovation, stating that no one had previously expounded on it in this manner (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:34). Dehlawi contends that several narrations suggest the existence of another realm alongside the material world, wherein meanings are embodied in suitable forms. He suggests that entities are actualized in this realm prior to their manifestation on earth, and upon their earthly appearance, they retain the same form as in the Imaginal Universe. Dehlawi suggests that many incorporeal phenomena are transferred and manifested in this realm, yet remain imperceptible to ordinary individuals.

In support of his argument, Dehlawi cites narrations attributed to the Holy Prophet. One such narration states: "When God created kinship, kinship arose and said: This is the refuge from the cutting of the string..." Additionally, the Prophet is reported to have said: "On the Day of Resurrection, deeds such as prayer, charity, and fasting will come..." Furthermore, in the hadith of *Ṣalāt al-Kusūf* (the prayer for solar eclipse), the Prophet remarked: "Heaven and Hell were depicted for me," and it is mentioned that "the Prophet stretched out his hand to pick a bunch of grapes from Heaven..." (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:43).

Dehlawi proceeds to cite several other hadiths in support of his assertion. Moreover, he categorizes these sayings into three distinct groups. However, he does not regard the perspectives of his opponents as being correct. He argues that, upon reflecting on these hadiths, one finds oneself inevitably inclined to adopt one of three approaches:

1. Embracing their literal meaning, thereby recognizing the Imaginal Universe as tangible. This approach aligns with the stance of the Ahl al-Hadith, as elucidated by al-Suyūṭī, a position that I concur with.
 2. Arguing that these occurrences are subjective experiences perceived by the observer and manifested in their vision, despite lacking external sensory validation.
 3. Interpreting such hadiths metaphorically for elucidation purposes. However, I do not consider those who solely adopt this third approach to be correct.
- (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:44-45)

Subsequently, Dehlawi proceeds to expound upon various aspects of the Imaginal Universe. Intriguingly, he recounts several instances where he claims to have personally witnessed manifestations of the Imaginal Universe. Whenever a person passes away, a new origin is said to emerge within the breath, according to Dehlawi. He suggests that the grace of the divine spirit strengthens the remaining faculties of common sense, which, aided by the Imaginal Universe, enables functions such as hearing, seeing, and speaking. He notes that often this breath becomes susceptible to adorning bright or dark attire through the agency of the Imaginal Universe, giving rise to the wonders of the realm of purgatory. Additionally, he mentions that when this breath is blown into the *Ṣūr*, signifying the general grace from the Creator of forms, as it occurred at the genesis of creation and during the manifestation of latent forces within creatures, the grace of the divine spirit mandates that this breath dons either physical attire or attire situated between the Imaginal Universe and the body (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:53).

In another account, Dehlawi discusses the creation of Adam, the progenitor of humankind, and how the human race was to descend from him. He describes how their countenances were fashioned in the Imaginal Universe, portraying their joys and sorrows as light and darkness, shaping them in a manner conducive to obligation. He mentions that prior to any occurrence, a divine decree descends from heaven to earth, and something is conveyed from the Imaginal Universe, disseminating its directives upon the terrestrial realm. Dehlawi shares personal experiences, such as witnessing a radiant point of imaginal light descending from heaven to earth during a quarrel among a group of people, which dissolved animosities until they reconciled. He also recalls perceiving the descent of impending demise during prayer, followed by the passing of one of his children later that night (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:12-128).

From Dehlawi's writings and the narrations he references, it becomes evident that he views the Imaginal Universe as a realm existing prior to the creation of the material world, persisting through death and resurrection. In essence, he maintains that between the material realm and God, there exist spiritual and Imaginal Universes wherein God's will is initially reflected and subsequently materialized in diverse forms. According to his perspective, forthcoming events are initially manifested in imaginal forms devoid of material existence, yet containing the potential for materialization into tangible beings. Subsequently, these events transition into external existence. Moreover, following death and in the realm of purgatory, as well as in the world of resurrection, many of these realities manifest in a tangible and material manner.

Moreover, Dehlawi subscribes to the concept of physical and spiritual resurrection, or something akin to it. Ultimately, he asserts that it is possible to perceive the imaginal and unseen world with a worldly and material eye, citing examples to support this assertion. In analyzing Dehlawi's assertion, it is imperative to consider the following points.

First: Dehlawi's assertion regarding the existence of the Imaginal Universe has sparked a vigorous reaction from some of his fellow believers, who have reproached him for such a belief. They argue that this world finds no mention either in *Sharī'a* or in rational discourse, and they attribute it as one of Plato's fabrications (Kawtharī 1368 AH, 97-98).

Second: Dehlawi's assertion that his discussions on the Imaginal Universe are unprecedented and have not been previously articulated by theologians (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:34) is not entirely accurate. Firstly, many theologians fundamentally reject the concept of the Imaginal Universe, rendering it irrelevant for discussion. Secondly, prior to Dehlawi, numerous scholars, including Sheikh Shahāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (Suhrawardī 1380 Sh, 2:232), Mullā Ṣadrā (1981, 1:302), mystics such as Ibn al-'Arabi, and the commentator of his book *Fuṣū al-ḥikam*, Sharaf al-Dīn Dāwūd b. Mahmūd, known as al-Qayṣarī (Qayṣarī 1370 Sh, 483), have extensively discussed this issue. Therefore, if Dehlawi perceives himself as a sage or Sufi, it is unreasonable to claim that no one had addressed this issue before him.

Third: Dehlawi's rejection of the interpretation that these hadiths are metaphorical for understanding signifies a departure from the viewpoint held by a significant portion of his Sunni counterparts. Such a stance contradicts Dehlawi's aim of fostering unity and reconciliation among all Sunni sects.

Fourth: It can be inferred from Dehlawi's statements that, akin to his Mātūrīdī fellows (Qārī 1417 AH, 47), he espouses belief in both physical and spiritual resurrection. This viewpoint aligns with the opinions of numerous scholars within the Imāmiyya tradition, such as al-Shaykh al-Mufīd, al-Shaykh al-Tūsī, al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā, al-Muḥaqqiq al-Tūsī, 'Allāma al-Ḥillī, as well as certain scholars from Sunni schools like al-Ghazzālī, al-Ka' bī, al-Ḥalīmī, al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, and most Sūfīs and Karrāmiyya (see Mullā Ṣadrā 1981, 9:165; Fakhr al-Rāzī, n.d., 2:52-71).

2. *al-Malā al-A' lā* (the High Council)

In his *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*, concerning the causes of obligation and punishment, Dehlawi introduces a chapter titled "*al-Malā al-A' lā*" (the High Council, referring to the world of angels). He begins his discussion of this subject by citing relevant verses and hadiths. Subsequently, Dehlawi explains that in *Sharī'a*, it is widely acknowledged that there are servants of God, namely the highest angels, who are close to His court. These angels engage in continuous supplication on behalf of those who have purified and rectified their souls, as well as those who strive to reform others. Such supplication results in blessings descending upon them. Conversely, they invoke curses upon those who disobey God and endeavor to spread corruption. Acting as intermediaries between God and His servants, they inspire virtue in the hearts of humanity. They convene wherever God decrees. Therefore, they are referred to as the Friends of the Supreme (*al-A' lā*) and Companions of the Supreme (*al-A' lā*), as well as the Supreme Assembly. The righteous are expected to join their ranks (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:47-48).

Furthermore, Dehlawi divides *al-Malā al-A' lā* into three categories:

1. A group known to God as integral to the system of goodness, for whom He created luminous bodies akin to the fire of Moses, into which He breathed venerable souls.
2. Another group emerged from a blend of vapors from subtle elements, becoming receptive to high souls who utterly detest animalistic impurities, allowing them to permeate.
3. There exists a group of human souls whose origin is proximate to *al-Malā al-A' lā*. They consistently engage in virtuous actions, ultimately leading to their inclusion among *al-Malā al-A' lā*. Upon shedding their corporeal veils, they join the ranks of *al-Malā al-A' lā* and are considered as one of them. Their duty entails complete awareness of God, with unwavering attention directed towards Him. (Dehlawi, 1426 AH/2006 CE, vol. 1, p. 48)

One of Dehlawi's distinctive contributions to eschatology is his presentation of a separate chapter dedicated to the topic of *al-Malā al-A' lā* and its exploration, a move

that appears unprecedented. I have not encountered any theologian, philosopher, or Quranic exegete who has approached this issue in a similar manner. Nevertheless, several aspects of his perspectives warrant examination and analysis:

First: While Dehlawi references certain verses concerning *al-Malà al-A' lā*, such as verses 7 to 9 of Sūra 40 (al-Ghāfir), verses 27 to 30 of Sūra 79 (al-Fajr), and verse 4 of Sūra 44 (al-Dukhān), it is noteworthy that he overlooks the two verses explicitly mentioning *al-Malà al-A' lā*. These verses are verse 8 of Sūra 37 (al-Šāffāt), “they listen not to the High Council, for they are pelted from every side,” and verse 69 of Sūra 38 (Šād), “I had no knowledge of al-Malà al-A' lā when they disputed.” The reason for this omission remains unclear.

Second: In Dehlawi’s categorization of *al-Malà al-A' lā*, the first two cases pertain to non-human souls, while the last one involves human souls. In the initial scenario, Dehlawi employs the example of the fire of Moses, positing that *al-Malà al-A' lā* comprises the venerable souls breathed into the fire by God. To substantiate this claim, Dehlawi refers to verses such as verse 8 of Sūra 27 (al-Naml), “So when he came to it, he was called: ‘Blessed is he who is in the fire, and he who is around it. Glory be to God, the Lord of all Being!’” and verses 10 to 12 of Sūra 20 (Tāhā), “When he saw a fire, and said to his family, ‘Tarry you here; I observe a fire. Perhaps I shall bring you a brand from it, or I shall find at the fire guidance.’ When he came to it, a voice cried, ‘Moses, I am thy Lord; put off thy shoes; thou art in the holy valley, Ṭuwā’.” However, these verses do not explicitly indicate who uttered these words. Dehlawi thus concludes that the words emanated from the venerable breaths blown into the fire by God, which originated from *al-Malà al-A' lā*. It is worth noting that most theologians and exegetes assert that the voice belonged to angels appointed by God to speak from the fire (Ṭabarsī 1372 Sh, 7:331; Ālūsī 1415 AH, 19:160; Makārim Shīrāzī 1374 Sh, 15:407-408).

In the second scenario, Dehlawi identifies *al-Malà al-A' lā* as the amalgamation of subtle vapors and the composition of elements infused by lofty souls. Evidently, these delicate vapors are synonymous with the angels proximate to God, as per Dehlawi’s definition of *al-Malà al-A' lā*.

In the third case, Dehlawi elucidates that among *al-Malà al-A' lā* are individuals who attain membership through righteous deeds. Indeed, numerous hadiths emphasize the ascent of a believer’s soul to *al-Malà al-A' lā*. For instance, it is reported from the Holy Prophet that he said: “Zayd will rebel and be killed in Kufa, and they will hang him in Kunāsa, dig up his grave, and bring him out. Upon his soul entering *al-Malà al-A' lā*, the doors of Heaven are opened, and the inhabitants of Heaven and earth rejoice and express their happiness for his exalted status” (Amīnī, n.d., 5:129).

Third: As previously mentioned, theologians, exegetes, and philosophers have given limited attention to *al-Malà al-A' lā*, or if they have addressed it, their discussions have been brief. For instance, al-Shaykh al-Mufīd merely indicates that angels are associated with *al-Malà al-A' lā* (Mufīd 1413 AH, 88). ‘Allāma Ṭabāṭabāī, renowned for his comprehensive

Qur'anic exegesis, offers only a succinct remark about *al-Malā' al-A'lā'*, stating: "The word *al-Malā'* means the nobles of every nation, those who fill the eyes, and *al-Malā' al-A'lā'* are the noble angels whose conversations the devils want to listen to, and they are the dwellers of the high heavens" (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, n.d., 17:123). Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ṭurayhī similarly views *al-Malā' al-A'lā'* as comprising angels or a category of angels occupying the highest echelon of greatness (Ṭurayhī 1416 AH, 1:304). Al-Narāqī describes *al-Malā' al-A'lā'* as the realm of intellects, housing angels of various ranks as well as purified spirits like the Holy Spirit (Narāqī 1381 Sh, 162). Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī, representing the Mātūrīdī School, identifies *al-Malā' al-A'lā'* as the abode of angels near to God, placed there due to their eminence and dignity in the sight of God (Qārī 1421 AH, 1:417).

3. The Reality of the Spirit

In his eschatology, Dehlawi discusses the essence of the spirit, where he emphasizes its role as the vital force behind animal life. According to him, animals become animated upon the infusion of the spirit and cease to exist when separated from it. He suggests that within the body, subtle vapors are generated in the heart from the essence of various mixtures, which stimulate the faculties necessary for sustenance. The regulation of these vapors falls under the domain of medicine. Dehlawi observes that the condition of these vapors, including their density, clarity, and turbidity, influences the faculties and resultant movements. When an ailment afflicts an organ or disrupts the tailored vapors, it corrupts their functions, thus affecting life itself.

He analogizes the spirit within the body to water within a flower or fire within an ember, describing it as the vessel and conduit for the true spirit, enabling its expression. Dehlawi notes the transformations that occur as a child grows, both in body composition and the emanating spirit, ranging from small to large, dark to light, ignorant to knowledgeable, among other variations. Despite these changes, he asserts the constancy of the individual's essence, which transcends both the spirit and the body, as well as their observable characteristics.

Dehlawi contends that the spirit represents an intrinsic reality akin to a point of light, whose status surpasses the fluctuating states of being. He suggests that it shares an equal rapport with various dichotomies, such as small and large, dark and light. Initially connected with the spirit of the air, it subsequently intertwines with the body, serving as a vessel for the beauty of breath. Through this breath, divine influences descend upon the individual, rendering them worthy of blessings (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:51-52).

Then Dehlawi emphasized a significant distinction, suggesting that death signifies the separation of the breath (*nasma*), rather than the separation of the spirit. He suggests that the changes occurring in different circumstances are attributed to earthly qualities and capabilities, likening them to how the sun's heat may whiten fabric while darkening the skin of a craftsman. He asserts that when the body loses the ability to generate breath (*nasma*), death follows. However, he clarifies that death does not indicate a severance of

the connection between the holy spirit and breath. Instead, he argues that when breath weakens due to debilitating illnesses, divine wisdom dictates that a portion of it, housing the divine spirit, must endure. He compares this to the diminishing of air within a glass as it is drawn in until reaching a critical point where it cannot be further drawn, or the glass may shatter—a phenomenon resulting from the inherent nature of air. Dehlawi contends that similar to air, there exists a hidden essence and limitation within breath that does not exceed its boundary (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:53).

It should be acknowledged that the question regarding the reality of the spirit stands as one of the most significant matters that have long engaged the opinions of Islamic thinkers, prompting extensive discourse on the subject. In his own right, Dehlawi endeavors to explore this matter, articulating certain points crucial for consideration in the analysis of his assertion:

First: Dehlawi's exploration of the reality of the spirit hinges on a single verse, namely verse 85 of Sūra 17 (al-Isrā'), which states: "They will question thee concerning the Spirit. Say: 'The Spirit is of the bidding of my Lord. You have been given of knowledge nothing except a little.'"

Regrettably, Dehlawi's discourse on the reality of the spirit lacks engagement with other pertinent verses revealed on this subject. This oversight constitutes a weakness in his argument, as these verses offer valuable insights. To provide a comprehensive discussion, it is imperative to briefly outline some verses pertaining to this topic and elucidate their significance:

1. In verse 22 of Sūra 58 (al-Mudjādala), the spirit is depicted as a spiritual power that aids and fortifies believers ("and He has confirmed them with a Spirit from Himself").
2. Verse 253 of Sūra 2 (al-Baqara) portrays a holy spirit that provides assistance and empowerment to prophets in fulfilling their missions ("And We gave Jesus son of Mary the clear signs, and confirmed him with the Holy Spirit").
3. Verse 52 of Sūra 42 (al-Shūrā) describes the spirit as a celestial revelation ("Even so We have revealed to thee a Spirit of Our Bidding").
4. In verse 193 of Sūra 26 (al-Shu'arā'), the spirit is referred to as the special angel of revelation ("brought down by the Faithful Spirit").
5. Verse 4 of Sūra 97 (al-Qadr) presents the spirit as a distinguished angel among angels or a superior being ("in it the angels and the Spirit descend, by the leave of their Lord, upon every command").
6. Finally, verse 29 of Sūra 15 (al-Hidjr) depicts the spirit as a human spirit ("and I breathed My spirit in him").

Second: Dehlawi discusses the concept of delicate vapors or the vaporous spirit (*al-Rūh al-Bukhārī*) in his writings, drawing from ancient medical theories. This notion has been prevalent in ancient medicine as a widely recognized scientific theory among both laypeople and physicians. In ancient naturalistic beliefs, there existed a type of

spirit within the human or animal body, flowing throughout it like an intermediary between the soul and the body. This vaporous spirit itself is perceived as an extremely subtle substance, akin to heavenly bodies. To illustrate its delicacy, philosophers and physicians often liken it to celestial entities, emphasizing its ethereal nature (Mullā Ṣadrā 1354 Sh, 219).

Some contemporary scholars have elucidated the notable attributes of the vaporous spirit, detailing it as follows:

1. The vaporous spirit serves as the proximate cause, while the soul acts as the ultimate cause for the vitality of the body.
2. While the body encompasses the vaporous spirit, regarding the soul, it can be described as the inferior aspect of the soul.
3. Should the vaporous spirit disengage from the body, it deteriorates and perishes, whereas the cogitative soul persists and remains alive even upon separation from the body, albeit experiencing a cessation in some of its functions.
4. The vaporous spirit stands out as the most delicate, refined, and purest among the body's constituents, thereby facilitating a more receptive interaction with the soul's functions compared to other bodily components.
5. The degree of equilibrium in the higher vaporous spirit correlates with the intensity and potency of the cognitive soul's functions. In terms of equilibrium and steadiness, it merits a higher rank (Ḥasanzādih Āmulī 1362 Sh, 2:325; Mousavi 1389 Sh, 46).

Third: Dehlawi asserts novelty in his ideas, yet upon examining the statements of scholars preceding him, it becomes apparent that he has essentially replicated their content. For instance, Ghazzālī discusses the essence of the spirit in his work *al-Arbaʿīn*. According to Ghazzālī, the spirit represents one's own self and truth, a dimension that is more concealed and less known than anything else. It is a special aspect of human existence connected and attributed to God, as indicated by the Quranic verses: "Say: 'The Spirit is of the bidding of my Lord'" and "and I breathed My spirit in him." This spirit is distinct from the delicate physical spirit originating from the heart, which circulates through the body's blood vessels, facilitating sensation and movement. Ghazzālī notes that this spirit is not unique to humans but is shared with other animals. It perishes and disintegrates upon death, being a vapor whose coherence depends on the balance and stability of bodily humors. Disruption of this balance causes the vapor to dissipate, similar to a lamp extinguishing as its oil depletes. The sustenance of this spirit is akin to oil for a lamp, and the act of killing an animal is likened to extinguishing a lamp. Medicine is concerned with evaluating and regulating this spirit. However, Ghazzālī distinguishes this spirit from the unique human spirit, which bears the weight of trust and knowledge. He asserts that this human spirit does not perish with the body's demise but resides in either bliss or misery after death, determined by one's deeds. This, according to him, is the realm of understanding (Ghazzālī 1424 AH, 268-69).

Fourth: As mentioned, it is apparent from Dehlawi's remarks that he acknowledges the existence of two spirits within the body. The first spirit serves as the conduit and vessel for the primary and authentic spirit. Furthermore, Dehlawi characterizes this initial spirit as material and present in the body to facilitate the connection between the body and the authentic spirit, which he refers to as the air spirit.

Reflecting on the narrations of the Shiite Imāms, we find a similar concept elucidated, with discussions on the distinction between an animal and human spirit. For instance, a hadith attributed to Imām Mūsā al-Kāzīm suggests that during sleep, the animal spirit remains within the body, while the spirit of reason (human spirit) separates from it, and only upon death does the animal spirit depart from the human body. Allāma al-Majlisī has compiled several such narrations, ultimately asserting that these hadiths indicate a differentiation between the human and animal spirits. However, this distinction does not imply that each individual possesses two independent spirits; rather, it underscores the varying degrees of a fundamental reality termed life, with the less developed aspect termed the animal spirit and the more evolved aspect termed the human spirit.

Fifth: In Dehlawi's account, certain noteworthy points are omitted, including the ability to perceive spirits, the relationship between spirits and the afterlife, and the posthumous destination of spirits.

4. Death, Grave, Purgatory

In his work *Hujjat Allāh al-bāliḡha*, Dehlawi includes a chapter titled "the Reality of Death," where he begins by positing the existence of a bearer for every mineral, animal, or human form. Dehlawi emphasizes that each type of mineral, plant, animal, and human possesses its own unique essence and characteristics, along with inherent qualities and developmental potential distinct from others, despite any surface similarities. When fundamental elements and components combine and undergo alterations influenced by factors such as abundance and scarcity, various mixtures can emerge. These combinations can manifest in pairs, like vapor, smoke, damp earth, wet earth, embers, and flames, or in trios and quartets as previously mentioned. Dehlawi explains that for these objects, there exist properties composed of the properties of their parts, as there is nothing in the objects other than their properties, and they are termed aerial beings. He illustrates that a mineral, for instance, comes and is placed on the shoulder of that temperament, becoming its ride and bearer. He further elaborates that for every form, there must be a substance that the form relies on; this is when the material is proportional to the form. To illustrate, he compares the form to a human statue made of wax, emphasizing that the creation of such a statue requires wax. Regarding the soul, particularly for humans, Dehlawi argues against the notion that the thinking soul leaves the material completely upon death. He asserts that matter possesses an essence, which is breath (*nasma*), and an accident, which is the earthly body. Therefore, when a person dies, the disappearance

of earthly matter does not harm them. Instead, the spirit dissolves in matter, akin to a skilled scribe whose hands are cut off, yet the ingrained characteristic of writing remains strongly in his existence (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:74-75).

Then Dehlawi discusses purgatory. According to Dehlawi, it is to be understood that people in this world belong to various classes, too numerous to count, but they stem from four main sources:

1. One class consists of the people of awakening (Ahl al-Yaqza), who endure and find joy amidst the mentioned distastes and relationships. This class is referenced in a verse where God says, "Lest any soul should say, 'Alas for me, in that I neglected my duty to God, and was a scoffer,'" (Quran 39:56).
2. Another group is similar to the first but comprises people of natural light, who experience dreams consisting of sciences stored in the common sense. They distinguish between dreams and awakenings, avoiding immersion in fanciful sciences. When they dream, they perceive the dream as reality until the Day of Resurrection, without realizing its lack of external reality. Thus, naming purgatory as an external world is preferable to considering it the world of dreams.
3. Some individuals have weak animal-being and angel-being due to natural causes. They associate with lower-level angels, allowing their angel-being to remain less immersed in the animal-being or unaffected by it. Alternatively, they may join lower-level angels due to attainable reasons, being placed in their ranks. Conversely, there are groups naturally inclined towards the devil, with corrupted temperaments, who disbelieve in the Real. Upon death, they join the devils.
4. Another group comprises people of peace and reconciliation, but with a stronger animal-being and weaker angel-being. This group constitutes the majority of humanity, with most of their affairs subject to the animal form created for occupying and sinking into the body. Thus, death only separates their souls from the body's management. When they die, if they have engaged in angelic deeds, they gain proper knowledge in the form of angels with good faces and silk clothes in their hands, with a door to Heaven opened for them. Conversely, if they have committed deeds hateful to angel-being or bring curses, their knowledge appears in the form of black angels with sharp words and instructions. (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:77-78)

Then, at the end of this discussion, Dehlawi addresses the issue of the grave. He asserts that one should understand that the world of the grave comprises nothing but remnants of this world. It is a place where sciences emerge from behind the veil, and where the specific rulings of souls for certain individuals become apparent. He contrasts this with the events of Doomsday, which manifest despite individuals having perished in relation to specific rulings, yet remain under the rulings of a human form (Dehlawi 1426 AH, 1:79).

It should be admitted that one of the significant issues of eschatology that Dehlawi has explored in several separate chapters is the matter of death, the grave, the world

of purgatory, and the Doomsday. Unlike his Māturīdian fellows, who aim to validate these matters solely through a narrative approach,² he endeavored to substantiate them through a rationalistic approach, relying on both rational and narrative arguments to articulate his points.

To elucidate the reality of death, Dehlawi initially delves into the true forms of beings and God's creatures, elucidating their essential disparities. However, the exposition he provides is often vague and perplexing, necessitating a clearer elucidation of the matter. Although preceding Dehlawi, other philosophers had broached this issue briefly (Ibn Sīnā 1404 AH, 1:312), Dehlawi's exposition is more comprehensive and intricate.

Nonetheless, in expounding on this issue, it should be clarified that "compound" does not refer to the structure of our body, comprising limbs, head, and the like, but rather denotes a composition of elements. For instance, a human foot is comprised of elements and is itself a component of a compound referred to as human. In any case, compounds are divided into three main types:

1. Entities composed of two simple substances, such as vapor, which is composed of water particles and air particles.
2. Entities composed of three simple elements, such as kneaded mud and mosses.
3. Entities composed of four simple elements, such as the human body, minerals, animals, and plants.

Then Dehlawi delves into the relationship between the spirit and the body after death, positing that the spirit remains connected to the body even after death. However, he clarifies that by "body," he refers not to earthly matter, but to substantial matter, or in his interpretation, the breath (*nasma*) that continues to be in contact with the spirit, with the spirit dissolving into it. This issue is indeed intricate and significant, as sages and philosophers have articulated various perspectives and solutions to grapple with it. Due to the unique and distinct nature of the thinking soul from the material body, it necessitates a means of connection with this material body through an intermediary. Dehlawi interprets this intermediary as the breath and resolves this issue by positing that the spirit dissolves into the spiritual matter, which is the *nasma*, thus ensuring that its departure from earthly matter does not harm it.

In the following, Dehlawi delves into a discussion of purgatory, introducing an innovative and novel approach by categorizing the classes of people in purgatory into four titles. This division, unique to Dehlawi, marks a notable departure from the discourse of philosophers and theologians preceding him. Therefore, it can be

2. According to all Māturīdīs, the subjects pertaining to the resurrection (such as death, the world of the grave, purgatory, and the resurrection itself) are considered topics that can only be substantiated by narrative evidence. Consequently, these subjects are referred to as "Sam'īyyāt" (literally, the "auditory"), indicating their reliance on narrative sources. Hence, they have not presented rational arguments concerning matters related to the resurrection, including its necessity (see Ibn Hammām, quoted by Jalali 1390 Sh, 313).

regarded as another distinctive innovation of Shah Waliullah Dehlawi. However, a notable limitation of this aspect is that he confines his discussion solely to this division concerning purgatory, overlooking several other crucial points related to the topic. These include the definition of purgatory, its validation, the experiences of the grave, and the status of beings other than humans in purgatory, among others. Meanwhile, other Māturīdīs have delved into these matters in detail, offering their perspectives on them (Jalali 1390 Sh, 313-15).

In conclusion, Dehlawi presents the world of the grave and purgatory as a continuum of this world, highlighting one key distinction between the world of purgatory and Doomsday. He notes that in the world of the grave and purgatory, the rules are not universally applicable; if they are universal, they apply only to certain individuals. However, in Doomsday and on the Day of Resurrection, questions and rulings will be public, and everyone will be held accountable.

Conclusion

The following results were obtained from the analysis and evaluation of Shah Waliullah Dehlawi's contributions.

First: He regards the Imaginal Universe as a realm that existed before the creation of the material world and persists beyond death and Resurrection. However, this assertion has sparked strong dissent among some of Dehlawi's fellow believers, who have criticized him for such a belief. They argue that this world purported by Dehlawi finds no mention in *Shari'a* or in rational arguments, dismissing it as one of Plato's fabrications. Furthermore, they contend that the claim of innovation in this regard is inaccurate, as many philosophers had discussed it prior to Dehlawi.

Second: One of Dehlawi's notable contributions is his inclusion of a separate chapter on the issue of *al-Malā al-A'ālā* (the High Council) and its subdivision into three categories, a move not entirely unprecedented. However, it remains unclear why he did not reference certain verses and traditions that are relevant to this context.

Third: From Dehlawi's discourse, it can be inferred that he subscribes to the concept of two spirits within the body: the riding and bearer spirit, and the air spirit. Reflecting on the narrations of the purified Imāms within the Shi'a tradition, we find a parallel notion predating Dehlawi's, where the purified Imāms discussed a similar concept, interpreting it as the animal and human spirit.

Fourth: One of the crucial topics within eschatology where Dehlawi introduced innovations is the discourse on death, the grave, purgatory, and Doomsday. Unlike his Māturīdian counterparts, who primarily rely on narrative approaches to validate these concepts, Dehlawi employed a rationalistic approach. He substantiated these issues by incorporating rational arguments alongside narrative ones, marking a departure from the traditional narrative-centric approach.

References

The Holy Qur'an

Ālūsī, Maḥmūd al-. 1415 AH. *Rūḥ al-ma'ānī*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.

Amīnī, 'Abd al-Ḥusayn. n.d. *Al-Ghadīr*. Translated by a group of translators. Tehran: Bi'that Foundation.

Dehlawi, Shah Waliyullah. 1426 AH. *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha*. Edited by Sayyed Sābiq. Beirut: Dar al-Jayl.

Fakhr al-Rāzī, Muḥammad b. 'Umar. n.d. *Al-Arba'in fi usūl al-dīn*. Vol. 2. Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt Al-Azhariya.

Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥāmid. 1424 AH. *Al-Arba'in fi usūl al-dīn*. Edited by 'Abdullāh 'Abdul Ḥamīd 'Arwīnī. Damascus: Dār al-Qalam.

Ḥasanzādīh Āmulī, Ḥasan. 1362 Sh. *Durūs-i ma'rifat-i nafs*. Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publication.

Ibn Hammām, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wāḥid. n.d. *Al-Musāyara fi 'ilm al-kalām*. Edited by Muḥammad Muḥyi al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. Cairo: Maktaba Maḥmūd.

Ibn Sīnā, Abū 'Alī Ḥusayn ibn 'Abd Allāh. 1404 AH. *Al-Shifā*. Qom: Mar'ashi Nadjafi Library.

Jalali, Sayed Lotfollah. 1390 Sh. *Tārīkh wa-'aqāyid-i Māturūdiyya*. Qom: University of Religions and Denominations.

Kawtharī, Muḥammad Zāhid. 1368 AH. *Ḥusn al-taqāḍī fi sirati al-Imām Abī Yūsuf al-Qāḍī*. Cairo: Dār al-Anwār Li-Ṭabā'a wa-l-Nashr.

Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir al-. 1403 AH. *Bihār al-anwār*. Beirut: Dāru 'Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī.

Makārim Shīrāzī, Nāṣir. 1374 Sh. *Tafsīr-i nimūnih*. Tehran: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmiyya.

Mousavi, Hadi. 1389 Sh. "Rūh-i bukhārī dar mas'alih-yi nafs va badan az didgāhi Mullā Ṣadrā." *Ma'rifat*, no. 155: 43-56.

Mufīd, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Nu'mān. 1413 AH. *Al-Masā'il al-'Ukbariyya*. Qom: al-Mu'tamar 'Ālamī li-al-Shaykh al-Mufīd.

Mullā Ṣadrā (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī), Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm. 1354 Sh. *Al-Mabdā wa-l-ma'ād*. Edited by Sayyid Jalāluddīn Āshtiyānī. Tehran: Iranian Association of Philosophy.

Mullā Ṣadrā (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī), Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm. 1981. *Al-Ḥikmat al-muta'aliyya fi al-asfār al-'aqliyya al-'arb'a*. Beirut: Dāru 'Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī.

Narāqī, Muḥammad Mahdī al-. 1381 Sh. *Al-Lama'āt al-'arshiyya*. Karaj: 'Ahd.

Qārī, Mullā 'Alī. 1417 AH. *Sharḥ al-fiqh al-akbar*. Edited by Marwān Muḥammad Al-Sha'arīf. Beirut: Dār al-Nafā'is.

Qārī, Mullā 'Alī. 1421 AH. *Sharḥ al-shifā'*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.

Qayṣarī, Dāwūd b. Maḥmūd. 1370 Sh. *Sharḥi muqaddamih-yi Qayṣarī bar Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Edited by Jalāluddīn Āshtiyānī. Tehran: Amir Kabir.

Suhrawardī, Shahāb al-Dīn Abū al-Futūḥ Yaḥyā (Shaykh al-Ishrāq) al-. 1380 Sh. *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*. Tehran: Research Institute of Humanities and Cultural Studies.

Ṭabarsī, Abū 'Alī Faḍl b. Ḥasan al-. 1372 Sh. *Majma' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'an*. Tehran: Nāṣir Khusraw.

Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Muḥammad Ḥusayn. n.d. *Al-Mīzān fi tafsīr al-Qur'an*. Qom: Ismā'iliyān Press Institute.

Ṭurayḥī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-. 1416 AH. *Majma' al-baḥrayn*. Tehran: Murtaḍawī.