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*The Nature of Disposition (Fitrah) in Relation with Religion **

Din ile İlişkisi Bağlamında Fıtratın Mahiyeti

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The Nature of Disposition (Fitrah) in Relation with Religion

Abstract: The thought of the Qurʾān consists of certain concepts. The concept of “fitrah”, which expresses the physical and spiritual side of people, is one of crucial concepts which stands for the conception of the Qurʾān. It is for this very reason that the concept has caught the attention of scholars from the earliest times of Islam. Usually, the concept of “fiṭra” is interpreted as the religion of Islām and the initial creation or the potential of human’s acception to religion and whether they can change or not. In this context, a connection has been established between the “word of khalqullah” in the Sura al- Rūm and the same word in Nisā. In this study, the essence of “fiṭrah” will be examined and the basic elements of “fiṭrah” will be elaborated on. Moreover, whether wisdom, affection, love and ugliness are among the basic components of fitrah or not will be discussed. In addition, possible connections between the verse of “Fiṭrah” and the words of “tabdil” and “taḡyir” will be investigated.

Keywords: Qurʾān, Religion, Human, Disposition, Basic properties of disposition, Changing.

Din ile İlişkisi Bağlamında Fitratın Mahiyeti

Öz: Kur’an tasavvuru belli kavramlardan meydana gelmektedir. İnsanın fiziki ve manevî yönünü ifade eden fitrat kavramı, Kur’an tasavvurunu ifade eden önemli kavramlarından biridir. Fitrat kavramının ilk günden itibaren tefsircilerin ilgi odağı olması da bundandır. Genellikle fitrat, İslam dini, ilk yaratılış ve insanın dini kabul etme potansiyeli olarak yorumlanmış ve bunların değişip değişmeyeceği üzerinde durulmuştur. Rum sûresinde geçen “*khalqullah*” ile Nisâ sûresinde geçen “*khalqullah*” terkiplerinin bulunduğu âyetler arasında bu çerçevede bağlantı kurulmuştur. Bu çalışmamızda fitratın mahiyeti ile fitratla ilgili âyetlerin birbiriyle ilişkilendirilmesi irdelenecek ve fitratın temel unsurları üzerinde durulacaktır. Akıl, sevgi, aşk, güzel şeylere ilgi duyma ve çirkinliklerden kaçınmanın, insan fitratının temel bileşenleri arasında yer alıp almadığı tartışılacaktır. Ayrıca fitrat âyetinde geçen tebdil kavramı ile Nisâ sûresinde geçen taḡyir kavramının, aynı manayı ifade edip etmediği üzerinde durulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kur’an, Din, İnsan, Fitrat, Fitratın Temel Özellikleri, Değişim.

INTRODUCTION

Human beings are the most honorable being, particularly due to their spiritual *fiṭrah* like conscience and reason along with physical *fiṭrah*. Human beings resemble other living creatures with respect to their biological characteristics as they need food and shelter, reproduce and eventually die. However, they are different from other creatures in terms of the soul and body that they possess. Humans are created uniquely in terms of their physical aspects and are blown into from the divine spirit.¹ In fact, it is the divine spirit that grants a privilege to humans. Because of this divine spirit, reflections of Allah’s attributions, such as talking, hearing, seeing and willing, are observed in humans except for His al-Qayyum characteristic (everything’s existence is

¹ al-Hijr 15/29.

dependent on Him, the administrator of the universe). However, it is impossible to think that there is a similarity between Allah and human because of their physical characteristics.

Among important features of human *fitrah* are humans' characteristics such as thinking, believing, conveying their thoughts to others, recording their experiences, producing information, seeking for the truth, loving, falling in love, creating civilization, making future plans, using their rational potential, inclining to beautiful things, making new inventions and adapting themselves and so forth. The intellectual and philosophical trends that took place in the history of humanity and discoveries and creation of civilizations are the results of these features of human *fitrah*. However, even though humans understand some sort of objects with their inborn potential, understanding the real meaning of objects is limited for them. Therefore, humans need the guidance of revelation.

Associating human *fitrah* with religion in Qur'²ān² shows that there is a relationship between revelation and human *fitrah*. Ibn Taymiyyah (728/1328) also states that the reason why prophets were sent was to remind the aforementioned qualities of human *fitrah* to humans and to support the requisite of human *fitrah*.³ Thus, the basic mission of revelation is also guiding humans.⁴

In this study, we will try to determine the aspects the notion '*fitrah*' that is mentioned in the surah ar-Rūm as discussed in classic tafsirs and analyze the interpretations that are made in this regard. In general, *Fitrah* was interpreted in various ways, such as the religion of Islam, first creation of the human being, tattooing, women's act of depilation, hair transplantation and castrating animals, in tafsir books. Whether the notion '*fitrah*' consists of these situations only or not will be discussed. Likewise, it will be examined whether *fitrah* consists of human's rational potential, power to produce, seeking for truth and basic factors like love and passion. Along with these, it will be questioned whether the connection that is being established between the verse⁵ in which "khalqullah" is mentioned in the surah al-Rūm and the verse⁶ in which "khalqullah" is mentioned in the surah al-Nisā is correct or not. In this context, it will be discussed whether the concepts "conversion" and "alteration" that are mentioned together with "khalqullah" have the same meaning.

There are some studies related to this matter. However, our study is quite different from others. For example, although our study and the other study "*Fitrah* Concept In Qur'²ān"⁷ show some similarities in details, they differ from each other methodologically. As it can be inferred from the title of our article, we discuss the interpretations that are made in tafsirs about the 30th verse of the surah ar-Rūm and try to determine the nature of *fitrah* by making a comparison

² al-Rūm 30/30.

³ Ibn Taymiyyah, Abū al-Abbās Takayod Ahmad b. Abd al-Hālīm. *Majmu' fatwā* (al-Riyād: Maktabat al-'Ubaykān, 1997), 16: 347.

⁴ See, al-Īsrā 17/9; al-Baqarah 2/2.

⁵ al-Rūm 30/30.

⁶ al-Nisā 4/119.

⁷ See for details, Yaşar Kurt, "Kur'an'da Fitrat Kavramı", *Journal of Academic Researches in Religious Sciences* 5/2 (2005): 72-104.

between them. Likewise, we put emphasis on the coherence between notions and compositions, which are associated with the notion of *fitrah*, and the context. The lexical, terminological and hadith meanings of *fitrah* are discussed in the aforementioned study. Furthermore, there are two more studies on this topic, yet these studies are also different from ours in terms of the way they discuss the issue. One of these is the study named as “*The Effect of Fitrah and Social Environment on the Development of Personality (in the perspective of the verse of Isra 17/84)*”⁸. This article seeks to understand the effects of social environment on human individualism by commenting the word ‘shākile’, which is mentioned in the aforementioned verse, and the interpretations and ta’wils that are done in glossaries and tafsirs. Another one is the study named as “*On the Understanding of the Concepts on Sunnatullah, Fitratullah and Sibgatullah*”⁹. This is a study that is conducted within the scope of interpreting Muhammad Asad’s Sunnatullah, Fitratullah, Sibgatullah, Bazm-i alast (agreement) and fatrah concepts and comparing them with the meanings of M. Hamdi Yazır and O. Rıza Doğrul, and it is completely different from our study in terms of methods because fitratullah is mostly discussed in terms of the science of Kalām in this study. Another one is the study entitled “*Fitrah and the Islamic Psychology*”¹⁰, and in this study, *fitrah* is discussed and interpreted in terms of metaphysics (oneness), epistemology, ethics, psychology, will and principles of law. Briefly, our study is about the 30th verse of the surah ar-Rūm. It is different from the studies that are conducted about human *fitrah* in terms of the way they discuss the issue and content.

1. INTERPRETATION OF FITRAH AND RELATED COMPOSITIONS

A message in communication is expressed with specific concepts. The message in Qur’ān that is revealed as in the form of humane language is delivered to the people who were asking for by concepts, such as Allah, prophet, messenger, Qur’ān, taqwa and beneficence. It will be hard for them to understand the messages of Qur’ān without understanding the concepts of the message. One of the concepts of Qur’ān that attracts attention is the notion of *fitrah*. Therefore, commentators have been interested in the notion of *fitrah* since the early period of Islam have defined it in different manners. It is possible to discuss the notion ‘*fitrah*’ and interpretations about the verses that contain *fitrah* within three main sections.

1.1. Fitrah

It is seen that various interpretations about *fitrah* have been made since the earliest studies of tafsir. The ability to recognize Allah and accept Islam is one of these interpretations. Accordingly, *fitrah* is humans’ potential to know that Allah is the creator of the universe and its conductor is only Allah and that all children are born as Muslims. However, it is the parents who make him / her a Jew or Christian.¹¹ Abu Ubaidah (209/824) expresses *fitrah* as paint from Allah

⁸ See. Musa Bilgiz, “Kişiliğin Oluşumunda Fitrat ve Sosyal Çevrenin Etkisi (İsra 17/84 Ayeti Ekseninde)”, *Journal of Atatürk University Faculty of Theology* 25 (2006): 129-148

⁹ See. Mustafa Akçay, “İnsanlığın Ortak Dini Temeli: Fitrat”, *Journal of Sakarya University Faculty of Theology* 17 (2008): 125-158.

¹⁰ See. Yâsin Muḥammād, “Fitrat ve İslam Psikolojisi”, Translated by F. Mahvash Kayani, *İslami Social Science Magazine* 3/2 (1995): 43-61.

¹¹ Farrā, Abū Zakariyā Yahya b. Ziyād, *Maāni al-Qur’ān* (Beirut: Alem Al-Kitāb, 1983), 2: 324.

(sibgatullah).¹² The aforementioned composition that is used in relation to *fitrah* indicates that human *fitrah* is capable of recognizing Allah. Taberī (310/923) defines *fitrah* as a human's creation in such a form that it can be accepted by Islam. However, *fitrah* also means the religion of Islam in the commentaries done by al-Tabarī.¹³ On the other hand, al-Maturidi (333/944) interprets *fitrah* as our ability to recognize Allah, the ability to be accountable and tested eventually and accepting Allah's divinity when alone with his own mental aptitude.¹⁴

Al-Shawkānī (1250/1834) defines *fitrah* as a human's possessing of an in-born faith. However, this in-born faith is not enough for someone to be regarded as a Muslim. A religious faith is needed to fulfill mundane judgements. Another interpretation made by ash-Shawkani is that it is seen as humans' first creation, their ability to live and die and their being created in a form that they can be happy and miserable based on the lexical meaning of on *fitrah*, "the genesis of something".¹⁵

Fitrah is also interpreted as the tawhid belief and an oath that is taken human beings. Muqatil ibn Sulayman (150/767), who was supposedly the owner of the first printed tafsir, states that *fitrah* is the tawhid belief which inherently exists at a human's creation and the promise (*mīsāq*) that humans made before the soul takes the form of body (agreement).¹⁶ Also, Abū Hayyān al-Andalūsī (745/1344) says that *fitrah* means the ability to believe and the first covenant which is performed with mankind at his creation.¹⁷ Ibn Kathir (774/1373) says that *fitrah* means divine tawhid by also commenting on some hadiths.¹⁸

¹² Abū 'Ubayda, Ma'mar b. Musannā, *Majaz Al-Qur'ān*, Ed. Fuad Sezgin (Cairo: Dār Haniji, nd.), 2: 122.

¹³ al-Imām Abī Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān* (Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyah, nd), 16: 495-497.

¹⁴ Māturīdī, *Te'vilāt' al-Qur'ān*, ed. Ali Haydar Ulusoy ve Bekir Topaloğlu (Istanbul: Mizan, 2008), 11: 185-186. Also see. Ibn 'Aṭīyah, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2001), 4: 336; Nasafee, Abū-al-Barakāt Hafez al-Dīn 'Abdullāh b. Ahmad b. Mahmūd. *Madārik al-Tanzil and haka'ek al-ta'weel*, ed. Muhid-den Deeb Misto and Yūsuf Adil Badawī (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathir nd.), 2: 700.

¹⁵ Shawkānī, Muhammad b. 'Ali b. Muhammad, Fath al-Qadīr, ed. Abd al-Rahmān Amire (Dār al-wafah. 1994), 4: 295-296. Māwardā, Abū Al-Hasan Alī Hābib. *al-Nukat ve'l-uyūn*, Translated by Sayyid b. Abdulkasāt b. Abdurrāhīm (Beirut: Dār al-kutüb), 4: 312; Sam'ānī, Mansūr b. Muhammad b. Abu jabbār, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Translated by Abū Bilāl Gunayim b. Abbās Gunayim (Medār Al-Watan, 2011), 2: 210-211; Baghāvī, Muhialsunnah Abū Muhammad al-Husain b. Mas'ud, *Maālim al-tanzil*, Ed. Muhammed Abdullah al-Nemr-Osman Cuma Hamire and Sulayman Muslim al-Harsh (Riyādh: Dār Tayba, 1993), 6: 268-269.

¹⁶ Abū al-Hasan Mukātil b. Sulayman b. Basheer al-Azdee, *Tafsīru Mukātil b. Sulaymān* (Beirut: Dār al-kutüb, 2003), 3: 11. Ayrıca bk. Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū Al-Faraj Jamal al-Dīn Abd al-Rahmān b. Ali b. Muhammad Baghdādī, *Zād al-masīr fi ilm al-tafsīr* (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Isalāmiyah, 1987), 6: 300-301; Rāzī, Abū Abdullāh Fahr al-dīn Muhammad b. Omar, *Mafātihu'al-gayb* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikir, 1981), 25: 121.

¹⁷ Abū Hayyān Muhammad b. Yūsuf al-Andalusī, *al-Bahr al-muhīt*, Ed. Adil Ahmad Abdalmawjūd and Ali Muhammed Ya'ud (Beirut: Dār al-kutüb 1993), 7: 167.

¹⁸ Ibn Kathīr, 'Imaduddīn, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*, Ali Ahmad Abdulkāki, Hasan Abbas Kutub, Mustafa Seyyid Muhammed, Muhammed Seyyid Reşād ve Muhammed Fadlullah al-Ajmāriyyi (Ciyza: Mektebetü Kurtuba), 12: 26-27.

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According to al-Ālūsī (1270/1854), *fitrah* is a human's ability to recognize Allah and also the promise he made.¹⁹ al-Tafayyish (1385/1965) states that *fitrah* is accepting the truth, the ability to recognize the truth and the religion of Islam, and he goes on to say that *fitrah* is the promise obtained from humans in *bazm-i alast* in the comments he made anonymously. For him, if kids were not taught about denying Allah, they would not accept a religion other than Islam because human mind is coherent with Islam.²⁰

Ibn Āshur (1390/1970), who discusses the *fitrah* notion broadly, considers *fitrah* as the human's creation in such a form that they can accept the religion and the harmony between religious values and human structure. He states that the tawhid belief, which is the basis of Islam, is approved by reason and also accepted by correct thought. According to him, when a human is alone with his *fitrah*, no superstitious belief is instilled, it is not possible for him to accept a faith other than tawhid. Adopting a critical approach, Ashur claims that no convincing interpretation has been made as to explain what is meant with the notion of *fitrah* in the Qur'ān, and he explains the relationship between religion and *fitrah* as follows: "*Fitrah*, in general, is the expression of the order that exists in the universe of beings. *Fitrah*, specifically, expresses the structure of the human that consists of the body and mind. For him, the human's walking with his feet is an inborn action, but human's trying to take something with his feet is against *fitrah*. Obtaining results from reasons and consequences from premises forms the rational dimension of *fitrah*. Trying to obtain results without reasons is against *fitrah*. Likewise, accepting the reality of the existence of an object is due to *fitrah*. Yet sophists' idea that "Everything is imagination, and nothing has reality" is against *fitrah*."²¹

On the other hand, there are scholiasts who think that *fitrah* means the religion of Islam. We will only mention several of these whom we think are important. As mentioned before, many scholiasts think that it is religion that is meant by *fitrah* according to the comments done by al-Tabarī.²² Al-Baydawī (685/1286) states that *fitrah* can also mean the religion of Islam, besides the ability to accept the truth and the first agreement done with humans.²³ Al-Hāzin (741/1341) comments that *fitrah* means the religion of Islam, and along with this, it is also interpreted as the ability to accept the religion.²⁴

¹⁹ Ālūsī, Abū al-Fadl shihabudden Mahmūd, *Ruh al-ma'ānī*, Ed. Adnān Darweesh W Muhammad al-Misri (Beirut: Mouassasit Al-Resalah, 2015): 21: 40.

²⁰ Muhammad b. Yūsuf Attafeesh, *Taysir al-tafsir*. Ed. İbrahim b. Muḥammād Tilay (Ummān: Shirket Metabi' al-Batine, 2006), 11: 119.

²¹ Ibn Āshūr, Muḥammad Tahir b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Tunūsī, *al-Tahrir w'al-tanweer* (Dār Sahun, Tunisia, 1984), 10: 88-90.

²² Ṭabarī, *Jāmi al-bayan an ta'wil ayah al-Qur'ān*, 10: 183-184. Also see. Samarkandī Abū al-Lais, Nāshir b. Muḥammad b. İbrāhīm, *Tafsir al-bahr al-'ulūm*, Ed. 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'arrid ve 'Ādil Ahmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd (Beirut : Dār al-Kutub al-'İlmīyah, 2006), 3: 11-12; Baghavi, *Ma'ālim al-tanzil*, 4: 313; Tabarsī, Abū Ali Al-Fadl b. al-Hasān, *Majmu'u al-bayān fi tafsir al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Musasit al-Ala, 1995), 7: 45.

²³ Baydawī, Abū al-Khair Abdullah b. Omar b. Muḥammad al-Shirāzī, *Anwār al-tanzil* (Beirut: Dār Al-Marifa, 2013), 795.

²⁴ 'Aladdin 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. İbrahim al-Baghdādī al-Hazen, *Lubāb al-ta'wil*, Ed. Muḥammad Hasan Halebī, Hasan Hilmi Kutubi (Dār al-Fikr nd.), 3: 208.

Also according to some scholiasts, *fiṭrah* is the determination of human's fate in the past-eternity. We will only mention two glossators who think in this way. According to Yahya Ibn Sallam (200/815), who is one of the first scholiasts of tafsir bil-riwayah, *fiṭrah* is the determination of human as being infidel (rebel) or believer (blessed) in bazm-i alast²⁵. For him, the fate that is decided in mother's womb will get actualized regardless of human's actions.²⁶ When Ibn Sallām does this interpretation, he associates the verse that includes *fiṭrah* concept with the bazm-i alast verse and supports the aforementioned interpretation with it. Al-Qushayri (465/1072), who is one of the important sufi scholiasts, states that *fiṭrah* is writing down the good ones as good (blessed) in Allah's eternal wisdom and the bad ones (rebel) as bad. For him, *fiṭrah* is human's creation as being good (blessed) or miserable (rebel) within divine knowledge.²⁷

In the light of the discussions presented earlier, we can say that *fiṭrah* is defined in tafsirs generally as the religion of Islam, the ability of believing, creation of humans as a believer or infidel and the promise obtained from humans. However, just as Ibn Ashur stated, *fiṭrah* is human's specific creation and the harmony between this form of human and ethical and humane values, and particularly the tawhid belief which embodies religion.

1.2. The Constancy of Khalqullah

One could observe that there are different interpretations of the statement "There can be no change in Allah's creation,"²⁸ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لَخَلْقِ اللَّهِ. In fact, this idea is in connection with the *fiṭrah* concept which expresses that there will be no change in what Allah created (khalqullah). Al-Tabarī comments that khalqullah is the religion; therefore, there will be no change in the religion of Islam. Along with this, the aforementioned sentence is thought to be a reaction against some sort of physical changes like castrating animals.²⁹ According to what al-Maturidi commented, most scholiasts think that the constancy of khalqullah means the religion.³⁰ Al-Mawardi (450/1058) thinks that the sentence that expresses the constancy of khalqullah means the changelessness of human fate that is determined in religion and past-eternity.³¹ Al-Tusi (460/1067) interprets the constancy of khalqullah as the belief of tawhid and feeling of justice that exist in human's *fiṭrah* and worship's pertaining to Allah.³²

Al-Rāzī (606/1209) interprets the constancy of khalqullah that is about *fiṭrah* as the changelessness of the creed of tawhid in human *fiṭrah*. In addition, al-Rāzī also reports other

²⁵ Bazm-i alast (misaq/covenant) is a concept that expresses the dialogue between man and God. According to this, all human, before coming to existence, had accepted God's divinity. See, al-A'rāf 7/172.

²⁶ Yahyā b. Sallām, *Tafsīr Yahyā b. Sallām*, Ed. Hind Shablī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2004).

²⁷ Kushayrī, Abū-l-Kāsim Abd al-Karīm b. Havāzin b. Abdulmalik, *Latīf al-Isharāt*, ed. Abdullatif Hasan Abd al-Rahmān (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah, 2000), 3: 9.

²⁸ al-Rūm 30/30

²⁹ al-Ṭabarī. *Jāmi al-bayān*, 25: 495-497.

³⁰ Māturidī, *Ta'vīlāt al-Qur'ān*, 11: 187. Sa'labī, Abū Ishāq Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm Nisābūrī, *al-Kashf wa al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Ed. Abū 'Abdullāh Sayyid b. Kasravī b. Hasan (Beirut : Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 2004), 5: 38.

³¹ Māveridī, *al-Nukatū wa al-uyūn*, 4: 312.

³² Tusī, Abū Jafer Muhammad b. al-Hasan, *al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Ağa Buzürk al-Tahrānī (Beirut: Müesseset al-'Alā, 2013), 7: 177.

interpretations about a bad person's remaining as bad and a good one's as good and the constancy of the ability to believe that exists in human *fitrah*.³³ Ibn Kathir says that even though the sentence that expresses the constancy of *khalqullah* is formally *haberiyye* (informative sentence), it is semantically *inṣāi* (constitutive). Accordingly, the meaning of the aforementioned sentence is 'Do not change what Allah created'.³⁴ Ibn Atiyah (541/1147) states that the constancy of divine creature is the constancy of children's ability to recognize Allah. For him, when the composition of *khalqullah* is interpreted as being religion, it means that there will be no change in the basic principles of religion. In addition to this, Ibn Atiyah comments that the change of *khalqullah* means the *tawils* that are done such as castrating animals and the promise obtained from Hz. Adam's children, but he does not make any interpretations about these.³⁵

Ebusuūd (982/1574) states that the sentence that expresses the constancy of *khalqullah* is a reason for fulfilling the necessity of *fitrah*, and it is an emphasis about the necessity of not distorting *fitrah* by obeying Satan and sensual desires. Also according to Ebusuūd, the aforementioned sentence can be interpreted as not replacing *fitrah* with another *fitrah* by changing it.³⁶ According to this interpretation, conversion means removing something and replacing it with something else.

According to al-Ālūsī, the conversion that is mentioned together with the composition of *khalqullah* means someone's obeying sensual desires or removing a *fitrah* and replacing it with another. However, al-Ālūsī states that while a change of *fitrah* is possible by obeying sensual desires, it is impossible to remove a *fitrah* and replace it with another one. For him, it is more accurate to interpret the conversion of *fitrah* as obedience to sensual desires.³⁷ Accordingly for al-Ālūsī, the conversion mentioned in the verse is about *fitrah*'s changeable conditions (accidental), not about its basic features (essential), and it does not mean removing something's basic features and substituting them with others.

Sem'ānī (489/1096), who considers the constancy of *khalqullah* as the changelessness of human fate³⁸ that is determined as good (blessed) or miserable (rebel), interprets the constancy of *khalqullah* that is expressed in the aforementioned verse as not practicing castration on animals.³⁹

Al-Qasimī (1283/1866) interprets the *fitrah* concept by establishing connections between the notions mentioned in the *fitrah* verse. For him, the hanafi concept mentioned in the verse means the God is one because the reason, which is a part of human *fitrah*, concludes that only one creator is needed for the existence of creature, and there cannot be more than one. According to

³³ Rāzī, *Mafātīh al-ghayb*, 26:105.

³⁴ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*, 12: 26-27.

³⁵ Ibn 'Aṭīyah, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz*, 4: 336.

³⁶ Abussuūd *Irshād al-akīl al-salīm and mazayāā al-Qur'ān al-karīm*, ed. Abdulkādir Ahmad 'Ata (Riyādh: Maktabatu al-Riyādh al-Hadise. nd), 4: 263.

³⁷ Ālūsī, *Ruh al-ma'ānī*, 21: 40.

³⁸ Sam'ānī, Mansūr b. Muhammad b. Abd al-Jabbār. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, Ed. Abū Bilāl Gunayim b. Abbās Gunayim, (Medār al-Watan. 2011), 4: 210-211; Ibn 'Aṭīyah, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-'azīz*, 14: 336.

³⁹ Sam'ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 2: 211.

al-Qasimī (d.1332/1914), committing shirk means changing (alteration) this form of *fitrah* because the tawhid in human *fitrah* is replaced with shirk. However, the change of reason that necessitates the tawhid in human *fitrah* is not even a matter of discussion.⁴⁰

Finally, the aforementioned composition that expresses the constancy of *khalqullah* is interpreted as the religion of Islam, the ability to accept Islam, the creed of tawhid and unchanged nature of the human fate that is destined in the past-eternity. However, because some cases such as religion, the belief of tawhid and the constancy of fate that are associated with human *fitrah* do not exist in human *fitrah*, we think that it is more accurate to interpret that there will be no change in the aforementioned composition's being appropriate in human *fitrah*'s accepting tawhid, the ability to accept Islam and accepting the true religion.

1.3. The Connection That is Established Between the Compositions of Khalqullah

A connection is established between the *khalqullah* composition which comes after the *fitrah* verse⁴¹ and the *khalqullah* composition that is mentioned in the verse an-Nisā⁴² and interpreted. Al-Maturidi puts forward important interpretations about the sentence "I will command people, and they will change what Allah created"⁴³, which is mentioned in the surah an-Nisā and associated with *fitrah* verse. For him, the change that Satan swears to make in Allah's creations means worshipping other Gods like idols by abandoning to worship Allah that exists in human *fitrah* and sacrificing animals, which are created to be benefited, to these idols. Also, al-Maturidi comments on other interpretations, such as the meaning of changing Allah's creation, castrating animals, women's act of depilation, tattooing, having some plastic surgeries on their teeth and cutting some parts of animals (*müsle*). However, al-Maturidi also states that these interpretations are not consistent with the context of the verse.⁴⁴

According to al-Tusi, the meaning of *khalqullah*'s change in the surah al-Nisā is replacing the religious feeling in human *fitrah* with another feeling. In addition, al-Tusi comments interpretations of the change of *khalqullah*, such as castrating animals, women's act of depilation, tattooing and getting their teeth thinned.⁴⁵ According to Sam'ani, the manifestation of the change of Allah's creations is the shifting of permissible and non-permissible in religion, the change of religious feeling in *fitrah*, individual's being linked with someone else in terms of lineage and dying hair black.⁴⁶

Ibn Atiyah comments that various interpretations were made about the change of Allah's creations that is mentioned in the surah an-Nisā. According to Ibn Abbas (68/687), Mujahid

⁴⁰ Qāsimī, Muhammed Jamal al-Dīn. *Mahasen al-tawīl*, ed. Muḥammād Fuād Abdūlbākī (Cairo: Dār Ihyā al-Kutūb al-Arabiyya, 1957), 13: 4777.

⁴¹ al-Rūm 30/30.

⁴² al-Nisā 4/119.

⁴³ The situation that the devil wants to realize on human beings in Surah an-Nisa is expressed clearly and indirectly it is demanded that the person is awake to the devil. See. an-Nisā 4/119.

⁴⁴ Mātūrīdī, *Ta'vīlāt al-Qur'ān*, 4: 42-43. Also see. Qurtubī, Abū Abdullāh Muḥammād b. Ahmad al-Ensārī, *al-Jāmi'u li ahkāmī al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 2013), 14: 31.

⁴⁵ Tūsī, *Al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 3: 334.

⁴⁶ Sam'ānī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1: 481.

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(103/721) and Hasan of Basra (110/728), change of khalqullah means changing the religion of Allah. The sentence “There can be no change in the creation of Allah” which is mentioned in the surah ar-Rūm is shown as evidence for that. According to this interpretation, alteration (tağyir) means conversion (tebdil).⁴⁷

Al-Rāzī interprets the change of khalqullah spiritually and physically that is mentioned in the surah an-Nisā. Spiritual change is the denial of tawhid in human *fitrah*. Physical change, on the other hand, is making the permissible one, as forbidden; and the impermissible as permissible in Islam, and this appears as some sort of physical conditions like women’s act of depilation and castrating animals.⁴⁸

Ash-Shawkani states that all interpretations that are made in tafsirs about the change of khalqullah which is associated with the verse of *fitrah* and mentioned in the surah an-Nisā are possible and there are no obstacles in this matter.⁴⁹

As a result, according to the comments in tafsirs and the interpretations, *fitrah* is the religion of Islam, human’s natural form and human’s ability to accept the religion. The sentence, which is in the verse that includes *fitrah* concept and expresses that there will be no change in the creation of Allah, generally means changing religion and some sort of aesthetical changes, such as, women’s having hair transplant, depilation and having their teeth thinned, and cases, such as attributing divine qualities to some creatures and castrating animals, are considered to be against *fitrah*. However, it is difficult to say that these conditions reflect the nature and basic components of *fitrah*, which is identified with religion. For this reason, the nature of *fitrah* and the determination of its relation to religion is important.

2. THE NATURE OF FITRAH AND ITS RELATION TO RELIGION

Lexical meaning of *Fitrah*’ فِطْرٌ and its different derivatives are penetrating, the genesis of something, new invention, the ability to accept Allah’s unity and rububiyyah and camel’s teething its first teeth. Also, the first milk that is milked from animals is called as الفِطْرُ.⁵⁰ According to Abū Hilāl al-Askarī (400/1009), the first meaning of f-t-r is to bring something to existence from nothing. Accordingly, the sentence فِطَرَ اللهُ الْخَلْقَ means “Allah created humans from nothing”⁵¹.

In Arabic language, there other verbs that are near-synonyms of the verb فِطَرَ, and these are intensively used in the Qur’ān. Because knowing these verbs’ semantic nuances helps in understanding the verb فِطَرَ better, it is helpful to know meanings of these verbs. One of these verbs is بَدَعَ, and its vaz’i meaning is inventing something for the first time without taking anything as a model or stringing along with someone else. This act is Allah’s creating something independent

⁴⁷ Ibn ‘Atīyah, ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ghālib, *al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-‘azīz*, 2: 114.

⁴⁸ Rāzī, *Mafātīh al-ghayb*, 11: 50.

⁴⁹ Shawkānī, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 1: 818.

⁵⁰ Ibn Manẓūr, Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1997), 10: 285-289.

⁵¹ Abū Hilāl al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Abd Allāh ‘Askarī, *al-Furūq al-lughawīyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyah, 2010.), 152.

of matter, time and space when it is related to Allah.⁵² Another verb that is a near-synonym of فَطَرَ is the verb خَلَقَ. Its lexical meaning is to create something by ordaining / determining it.⁵³ However, this verb means creating something from nothing without taking anything as a model just as the creation of earth and skies and creating something from something as in the verses⁵⁴ like “He has created human from a sperm-drop”⁵⁵. Accordingly, the act of creation in the meaning of اِبْدَاع is used for Allah, but the act of creation خَلَقَ also means to create something by transforming it just as in the example of the verse “And behold! thou makest out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My leave, and thou breathest into it and it becometh a bird by My leave”⁵⁶ which was referred to Jesus.⁵⁷ All these show that the common meaning of these verbs is to “create”. In addition, there are semantic nuances between these verbs. Accordingly, فَطَرَ expresses the first creation, the verb بَدَعَ expresses the invention of something without having similarities and the verb خَلَقَ expresses creating something by determining its amount. Also, one of the notions that has near-synonyms with fitrah is şakile. Shakila has meanings like character, nature and creation.⁵⁸

Sharif al-Jurjāni states that fitrah means human’s creation in a form that he can accept the religion.⁵⁹ Ibn al-Athir (606/1210), who states that fitrah reflects the first and original form or creation, claims that Ibn Abbas does not know the meaning of “Fātir”, which is derived from the same root with fitrah. He states that he learned the meaning of fitrah when one of two bedouins, who approached him to solve their problems, said “I dug that well first” اَنَا فَطَرْتُهَا.⁶⁰ According to Ibn Abbas, this shows that the word “fātir” is one of the strange words whose meanings are not known very much.⁶¹

It will be helpful to examine fitrah in terms of grammar and syntax in the context of Qurʾān to understand that concept better because the rules of grammar and syntax are valuable technics in understanding a text correctly. According to science of grammar, fitrah is an infinitive that means variety. For example, while “celseten” expresses a normal act of sitting, “cilseten” expresses a special type of sitting,⁶² and this shows that fitrah means the specific manner human beings are created.

⁵² Isfahānī, al-Allame Al-Raghib. *Mufradāt alfāz al-Qurʾān*. Ed. Safvān Adnān Dāvūdī (Damascus, Dār al-kalem, 2002), 110.

⁵³ Qazwīnī, Aḥmad Ibn Fāris, *Muʿjam maqāyis al-lughah*. Ed.. Muhammad ‘Avd Murib - Anīse Fatime Muhammad Aslan (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-turath al-‘Arabīyah, 2001), 311.

⁵⁴ al-Enbiyā 21/37.

⁵⁵ al-Nahl 16/4.

⁵⁶ al-Māide 5/110.

⁵⁷ al-Iṣfahānī, *Mufradāt alfāz al-Qurʾān*, 297.

⁵⁸ See. Bilgiz, “Kişiliğin Oluşumunda Fitrat ve Sosyal Çevrenin Etkisi (al-İsrā 17/84 Ayeti Ekseninde)”, 142-143.

⁵⁹ Sayyid Shereef al-Jurjāni. *al-Tarifāt* (Beirut: Mektebetu Lebanon, 1985), 175.

⁶⁰ Ibn al-Asir, Abū Al-Sa’adāt Majduddīn Mubarek b. Muhammed, *al-Nihaya fī gharip al-hadith*. Ed. Muhammed Al-Tabahī, Tahir Ahmad Rāzī (Beirut: Dār al-hayāt al-turath al-Arabī, nd.), 3:457.

⁶¹ Fahd b. Abd al-Rahmān b. Sulaymān al-Rumī, *Buhūsun fī usūl al-tafsīr wa manāhicih* (Riyādh: Maktabat al-Tawabah, 1419), 120.

⁶² Taftazānī, Masud b. Omar, *Sharh Mukhtasar al-Tasrif al-Izzī*, ed. Salīm Mukram (Cairo: al-Maktabat al-zahniyat li al-Turas, 1997), 191.

The fitratullah composition that is mentioned in the surah al-Rūm is an incentive (urging) wording according to some commentators in terms of grammar. According to this ta'wil, a sentence, such as اِشْبِغْ (be subjected), اِزْمِ (be adhere) or اِزْمُوا (keep being adhered), is ordained before the notion of *fitrah*, and the wording of *fitrah* is its complement.⁶³ In this case, the composition of *fitrah* is an independent sentence, and the meaning of the verse that contains it is this: "Turn your face towards the hanif religion. Adhere to *fitrah*, which Allah created specially." In addition, there are also scholars who think that *fitrah* is a complement that is derived from the verb "فَطَّرَ" mahzuz.⁶⁴ Accordingly, the composition of fitratullah is an independent sentence and it means: "Allah has created human in a perfect form."

Ibn Ashur thinks that *fitrah* is explained and completed with the hanif concept, which is derived from the wording of religion that is mentioned in the verse.⁶⁵ For him, religion and the aspects of *fitrah* coincide with each other. A kind of i'rab like this evokes an image in which the essential law-maker is the human *fitrah*, not the religion at first sight, but such an inference is not correct because the aforementioned complement is bedelu'l-iṣtimāl, not bedelu'l-kūl. Bedelu'l-iṣtimāl does not involve the sameness of two things, as in bedelu'l-kūl, and something's belonging to others, as in bedelu'l-cüz. As Hasan Abbas has mentioned, bedelu'l iṣtimāl is not the essential component of the one from which the complement is made; it exists in its extent accidentally.⁶⁶ According to this ta'wil, it is possible to say that religion contains all humane and ethical values that human *fitrah* has.

One of the methods that al-Ālūsī commented about i'rab of the *fitrah* word is its being the tafsir of its preceding sentence. According to this form of i'rab, *fitrah* is the complement of the verb اَعْنِي , which is ordained before it and includes the meaning of tafsir.⁶⁷ According to this method of i'rab, there is a strong connection between human *fitrah* and religion because there is a close relation between tafsir and what is commented on. In any case, these i'rab methods show that there is an important relationship between religion and human *fitrah*, but as Ahmad Abdüsselām has mentioned, *fitrah*'s being bedelu'l iṣtimāl from religion is more reasonable.⁶⁸

Within the context of Qur'ān, *fitrah* contains spiritual qualities, such as human's ability to know Allah and piety rather than physical features⁶⁹, such as human's need for food, drink, rest, sexuality and sheltering.⁷⁰ As Saadi mentioned (1376/1956), religion and human *fitrah* are connected. Just as the relation of religion and *fitrah* is via religion's practical aspects, such as prayer,

⁶³ Zamakhsharī, Mahmūd b. Omar, *al-Kashshāf* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyah, 2015), 2: 222; Baghavi, *Maālim al-tanzil*, 6: 269. Ibn ʿAteya, *al-Muhararu'l-Veciz* 7: 23; Ālūsī, *Ruh al-Maʿāni*, 21: 40.

⁶⁴ Saʿlabī, *al-Kashf wa al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʿān*, 5: 37; Akhfesh, Abū al-Hasan Sāed b. Masade al-Balkhī, *Maʿāni al-Qurʿān*, ed. Abdulemir Muhammad Amin al-Werd (Beirut: ʿAlem al-Kutūb, 1985), 2: 657.

⁶⁵ Ibn Āshūr, *Makāsīd al-sharia al-Islāmiyyah*, Ed. Muhammad al-Tahīr al-Miysārī (Beirut: Dār al-Banen, 2011), 197.

⁶⁶ ʿAbbas Hasan, *al-Nahv al-wāfi* (Egypt: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1979), 3: 669.

⁶⁷ Ālūsī, *Ruh al-maʿāni*, 21: 40.

⁶⁸ Ahmad Abudussalām Ebu Mazirk, *Irshād al-hayrān and tawjihāt al-Qurʿān* (Beirut: Dār al-Madāri al-Islami, 2011), 9: 317.

⁶⁹ See. Okumuşlar, Muhiddin, *Fitratın Dine* (Konya: Yediveren, 2002), 82-92.

⁷⁰ Ibn Āshūr, *Makāsīd al-sharia al-Islāmiyyah*, 200-201.

fasting and hajj, they are also intertwined via the qualities that form the spiritual aspect of religion, such as love, fear and inclination towards Allah. Also human reason, which is an important component of human *fitrah*, approves that the religion of Islam's practical aspect like prayer and spiritual ones like love are appropriate for human *fitrah*. Human's congenitally accepting the truth and having the ability to choose the truth originate from this.⁷¹ Also, Ibn Kathir notes that religion and human *fitrah* are harmonious and that the sentence *ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ* (This is the true religion), which comes after the verse about *fitrah*, confirms this.⁷² Also, the word *ذَٰلِكَ*, which is in the aforementioned verse and is a demonstrative pronoun indicates the notion *fitrah*⁷³, and this is the evidence of that everything exists in the religion also exists in human *fitrah* and there is no contradiction between religion and human *fitrah*. On the contrary, essential duty of religion is to protect human *fitrah*. Furthermore, there will be no change in the relation of religion and human *fitrah*.⁷⁴

One of the verses which show that the content of revelation and human *fitrah* are coherent is the verse "Nay, here are Signs self-evident in the hearts of those endowed with knowledge: and none but the unjust reject Our Signs."⁷⁵ that is mentioned in the surah of al-Ankabut. According to al-Maturidi, while the *hüve* *هُوَ* pronoun that is mentioned in this verse can indicate Prophet Muhammad, it can also indicate Qur'an. When the aforementioned pronoun indicates Prophet Muhammad, the verse means: "Every part of Prophet Muhammad's life from his birth to his prophethood is a verse/miracle." If the verse indicates the Qur'an, then it means: "There is much evidence about Allah's oneness and the matter of resurrection in Qur'an. The same of the evidence and thoughts exist in the hearts and minds of those who are given wisdom."⁷⁶ According to this interpretation, the origins of the values that Qur'an has also exist in human *fitrah*, and the sameness of religion and human *fitrah* is allegorically expressed.⁷⁷

Still another verse that expresses the coherence between religion and human *fitrah* is the verse "Mankind was one single nation, and Allah sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book in truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed."⁷⁸ that is mentioned in sure of al-Baqarah. In tafsirs, there are different interpretations of the sentence "Humans were a single ummah" that is mentioned in this verse.⁷⁹ Rashid Rida (1354/1935) with reference to Abū Muslim al-Isfahāni (322/936), argues that what is meant with the phrase "humans as a single ummah" is that human beings behave in line with their *fitrah*. Reason as an important component of human *fitrah* determines its creed and deed. Good and evil and right and wrong are

⁷¹ Sādi, Abd al-Rahmān b. Nasir, *Taysir*, ed. Muhammed Z. Al-Najar (Beirut: Alam al-Kutüb, 1988), 6: 125-126.

⁷² Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'azim*, 12: 26-27.

⁷³ Ālūsī, *Ruh al-ma'āni*, 21: 29.

⁷⁴ Makārim Sheraze *Tafsir al-Numūne* (Tahran: Dār al-Kutüb al-Islamiyah, 1342), 16: 417-418.

⁷⁵ al-Ankabūt 29/49.

⁷⁶ Māturidī, *Ta'velātu'l-Kur'an*, 2: 113.

⁷⁷ Kadı Abd al-Jabbār, *Mutashabihāt al-Qur'an*, Ed. Adnān Muhammed Zerzūr (Cairo: Dār Al-turath. 1969), 556.

⁷⁸ al-Baqarah 2/213.

⁷⁹ Rāzī states that the concept of the Ummah in context of the verse "The people are one ummah" is interpreted as the right religion, superstition, and disposition. In addition he shows these comments belong to whom with proofs. For extensive information see. Rāzī, *Mafātih al-ghayb*, 6: 22.

distinguished from each other in this way. Because of the lack of a divine guidance, the results that are obtained by human reason can sometimes be contradictory to human *fitrah*. The dispute among humans originates from this. Rashid Rida reports earlier opinions mentioned about the *ummah* concept in tafsirs and views them from a critical perspective. He concludes that Abū Muslim's opinion about the aforementioned verse is right.⁸⁰

Another verse that shows the religion and human *fitrah* are coherent and support each other is the verse that mentions the dialog between Allah and children of Hz. Adam.⁸¹ This verse is considered in its real meaning by many scholars and therefore commentators thought that a real dialog between Allah and human has in fact occurred.⁸² However, there are also scholars who think that human's ability to accept Allah's oneness and rububiyah because of his *fitrah* is allegorically expressed in this verse. For them, a real dialog between Allah and human never took place⁸³, and the aforementioned verse means humans' accepting the oneness of Allah because of their nature.

In short, religion and the build of humans are coherent and support each other. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to correctly understanding the ethical and humane values that religion proposes. Otherwise, wrong interpretations may result in a contradiction to human *fitrah*.

3. MAIN FACTORS OF FITRAH

Fitrah concept expresses human's both physical and spiritual aspects. *Fitrah* generally means the religion of Islam and the ability to believe in tafsirs, but these are not main factors of human's spiritual *fitrah* per se. These are the facts that are approved by reason, which is a spiritual part of *fitrah*. If human mind is not blocked by the conditions, such as imitation, faith and education, it has the potential of understanding that the universe has a creator and such a creator has all virtues, and thus He is worthy of being worshipped.

Body, which is the physical aspect of human *fitrah*, constitutes the apparent aspect of human *fitrah*. Features like reason and love, on the other hand, constitutes the spiritual aspect of human *fitrah*, but what is essential is not the physical aspects of human *fitrah*, but those features of human *fitrah*, such as reason, seeking for truth, inclination to truth and worshipping, which are the components of spiritual *fitrah*. This situation is stated in a hadith in this way: "Allah does not look at your builds and bodies; instead, He looks at your hearts and deeds."⁸⁴ According to this hadith, what is essential is not the physical aspects of humans, but the acts that are performed as a result of reason and human will that constitute human's spiritual *fitrah*.

Since mentioning all features of human's spiritual *fitrah* is beyond the scope of this article, we will put emphasis on the qualifications, such as reason, seeking for truth, love, innovation,

⁸⁰ Muhammad Rashid Rizā, *Tafsīr al-menār* (Beirut: Dār al-Marifah, nd.), 2: 278.

⁸¹ al-A'rāf 7/172.

⁸² Mukātil b. Sulayman al-Balkhī, *al-Tafsīr*, 1: 423; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi al-bayan an ta'wīl ayah al-Qur'ān*, 2: 625.

⁸³ Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an haqā'iq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl*, 2: 129.

⁸⁴ Abū al-Husayn Muslim b. Hajjaj Kushayrī al-Nisāburī, *al-Jāmiḥ al-sāhiḥ*, Ed. Muhammed Fuad Abdulbāki (Dār al-Hayāt al-Turath al-Arabī, nd), "Kitābu'l-Birr ve's-Silla ve'l-Adāb", 4656.

worshipping and inclination towards beautiful things, which are the prominently essential features of spiritual *fitrah*. These are also the essential components of *fitrah* and change in them is not possible. However, these inborn abilities can be developed in contrast to the requirements of human *fitrah*.⁸⁵

Reason as one of the spiritual components of *fitrah* means to preclude, incarcerate, hold and diet. The rope that is used to tie the camel is called 'ikāl.⁸⁶ As is understood from its lexical meanings, if a normal process of reasoning is not prevented⁸⁷, reason is an important power that has the attribution of protecting human from unfavorable conditions.

Frequently emphasizing the reason, which is the most important part of human *fitrah* and individualism, Qurʾān emphasizes the protection and functional use of reasoning. Therefore, people who do not use their reasons are condemned in Qurʾān.⁸⁸ Also, it is understood that there is a relationship between the rational potential and wisdom⁸⁹, taqwa⁹⁰, propriety⁹¹, Qurʾān⁹² and heart⁹³ in Qurʾān.⁹⁴ However, in order for the reason to function properly in the aforementioned cases, it always needs to be active. Otherwise, humans can deviate from the tawhid belief that is not coherent with their creation and can violate others' rights. The intense criticism of imitation in Qurʾān⁹⁵ is about protecting the human reason's functionality and productivity. Al-Qasimi (1332/1914) states that the fitratullah, which is mentioned in the surah ar-Rūm⁹⁶ and which expresses the creation of human, means reason. For him, reason is the fundamental component of the tawhid belief which is the basis of religion, and it potentially exists in human *fitrah*.⁹⁷

Qurʾān refers to wisdom and reasoning with verb forms rather than using noun forms as it expects human beings to use their reasoning all the time, because verbs refer to actions (appearing) and innovation (renewal), while nouns connote fixed meanings (certainty).⁹⁸ In brief, it is possible to say that overemphasis of Qurʾān on the function of reasoning shows that reason is an important factor of human *fitrah*.

Another important component of spiritual *fitrah* is seeking for the truth. A human's trying to understand the objects around him since early ages and asking relevant questions⁹⁹ is a

⁸⁵ Murtaza Muttahiri. *Fitrat Üzerine*, translated by Ömer Çiçek (Istanbul: Bengisu, 1992), 17.

⁸⁶ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 9: 327.

⁸⁷ Şaban Ali Düzgün, "İnsanın Doğası (Fitratı) ve Özgürlüğü Üzerine", *KADER* 14/2 (2016): 322-342.

⁸⁸ al-Baqarah 2/44-72; al-Āl-i İmrān 3/65; al-Māidah 4/58; al-A'rāf 7/169-179; al-Anfāl 8/22; al-Yūnus 10/16-100; al-Hūd 11/51.

⁸⁹ al-Zumar 39/9.

⁹⁰ al-An'ām 6/32; al-A'rāf 7/169.

⁹¹ al-Hujurat 49/4.

⁹² al-Yūsuf 12/2; al-Anbiyā 22/10; al-Zukhruf 43/3; al-Muhammad 47/24.

⁹³ al-Hajj 22/46.

⁹⁴ See. Muhammed Bessām Ruşdī ez-Zeyn, *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras* (Dār al-fikr, 1995), 2: 821-822.

⁹⁵ al-Māi'dah 4/104-105; al-Yūnus 10/79; al-Anbiyā 23/54; al-Shu'arā 26/74; al-Luqmān 31/21.

⁹⁶ al-Rūm 30/30.

⁹⁷ Kasimī, *Mahasın al-ta'wīl*, 777

⁹⁸ 'Abdulqāher al-Jurjāne. *Dalīl al-Ijāz*. Ed. Muhammad Abduh. (Beirut: Dār al-Marifa, 2001).

⁹⁹ Ahmad Izzet Rājih, *Usūl Ilm al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Arabi, 1967), 71.

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manifestation of seeking for the truth in human *fitrah*. Philosophical trends, scientific research and the data obtained from them are results of this attribute of human beings. Travelling through space by the technological vehicles manufactured by humans is also an indication of seeking the truth and what is new that exist in human *fitrah*.

Prophet Abraham, commonly known for his hanifism, always sought for the truth. Prophet Abraham struggle with the king¹⁰⁰, his requesting resurrection of the dead from Allah to satisfy his heart¹⁰¹, criticizing his father, Azar, for abandoning Allah and worshipping idols¹⁰² and concluding that owner of the universe is Allah by thinking about entities like the Moon and the Sun¹⁰³ indicates that he had always sought for the truth.¹⁰⁴ This exactly because Abraham is characterized with the concept *hanif*, which expresses this meaning.

It is also possible to understand that seeking for the truth is a part of human *fitrah* from the *hānif* concept that is mentioned in the *fitrah* verse itself. While for some scholiasts, the *hānif* concept, which is mentioned together with the *fitrah* that is mentioned in the surah al-Rūm, comes from Prophet Muhammad, who is the doer of the verb *أَفَم* that is mentioned in the verse, for other scholars, the *hānif* concept is the case of the religion concept that is mentioned in the verse.¹⁰⁵ Whether the concept *hānif* refers to the condition of addressee or the religion itself, it is a notion that is in relation to human in any case. Even though *hānif* is the condition of religion, it is indirectly the condition of a human because religion is directed towards human *fitrah*. In conclusion, as Motahhari mentioned, seeking for the truth (hanafism) shows that it is a part of human *fitrah*.¹⁰⁶

One of the spiritual components of human *fitrah* is the ability to accept the tawhid belief.¹⁰⁷ This attribute is an important qualification that constitutes the spiritual aspect of human *fitrah*. The tawhid belief is based on the creed that the only creator of beings is Allah, and therefore, only He is worthy of being worshipped. The tawhid belief not only ensures human's mental and emotional integrity, but it also prevents human individuality from being broken into pieces in terms of thought and emotion because it has reflections, such as sincerity, justice, beneficence, mercy, balance between matter and soul and coherence between individual and social life.¹⁰⁸

Humans' daily unfavorable experiences and his relevant reactions are indications of the tawhid belief in his *fitrah*. There are many examples about this issue that are presented from answerer's lives in Qur'ān. An extract from the lives of addressees in the surah of Yunus about this issue is follows: "And We brought the Children of Israel across the sea, and Pharaoh with his hosts pursued them in rebellion and transgression, till, when the (fate of) drowning overtook him, he exclaimed: I

¹⁰⁰ al-Baqarah 2/258.

¹⁰¹ al-Baqarah 2/260.

¹⁰² al-An'ām 6/74.

¹⁰³ al-An'ām 6/76-77-79.

¹⁰⁴ Ozan, Saliha, "Fitrat (Dini Kabiliyet) Kavramının Psikolojik Açılımı" (Master Thesis, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University, Social Sciences Institution, 2012): 89.

¹⁰⁵ Ibn Āshūr, *al-Tahrir wal-tanwir*, 21: 89.

¹⁰⁶ Murtaza Muttahiri, *Fitrat Uzerine*, 17.

¹⁰⁷ Yâsin Muhammad, "Fitrat ve İslam Psikolojisi", 45.

¹⁰⁸ Muḥammād Husayin Fadlullāh, *Min Wahyi'l-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dār al-malak, 1998), 18: 127.

believe that there is no God save Him in Whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am of those who surrender (unto Him)".¹⁰⁹ In the historical event that is mentioned in this verse, the tawhid belief of Pharaoh, who claimed to be a God and had this belief in his *fitrah*, emerged because of what he experienced.

Another important component of human *fitrah* is love. It is stated in Qurʾān that while *al-alaq*, from which human is created, means blood clot, or early stage of embryo, it also expresses love. Man's loving woman is also indicated by the word 'alaqa (attached).¹¹⁰ According to Ebū'l-Bekā (1094/1683), 'alaqa is the love that permanently exists in heart.¹¹¹ It is understood that love is one of the important meanings of the word 'alaqa from which human is created. Ibn Ashur says that 'alaqa means the fertilization of female's egg with male's sperm,¹¹² and this shows that before men and women take the form of a human, they are related to weak creatures that make up them. Affection is a human's intrinsic inclination towards something in which s/he finds pleasure. When this inclination strengthens, affection increases to the level of love. There is passionate desire in love, while there is no strong desire in affection, and this is the difference between love and affection.¹¹³

Love is generally expressed with the word 'hubb' in Qurʾān, and it indicates that loving the things mentioned in a given context is a part of human *fitrah*. It is stated in the surah of al-Baqarah that the idols that are divinized are loved by pagans as much as Allah.¹¹⁴ It is mentioned in the surah of Āl 'Imrān that women, children, gold, silver, animals and crops that man desires are endeared to human.¹¹⁵ However, according to Islam, the level of love that exists in the human *fitrah* should differ according to beings. It is necessary to love Allah, Prophet Muhammad and Islam more than relatives, children and possessions.¹¹⁶ Likewise, the notions, such as ihve (siblings),¹¹⁷ mevedde (love),¹¹⁸ ulfet (familiarity)¹¹⁹ and ehullā' (friends)¹²⁰, which are mentioned in Qurʾān also express love. Parental love, spousal love and friend's loving each other are expressed with the concept hubb.¹²¹ In conclusion, it is possible to say that love is a part of human's spiritual *fitrah*.

Human's inclination towards benevolence and malice is also because of human *fitrah*. In the surah of Shams, Allah ordains as follows: "And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it

¹⁰⁹ al-Yūnus 10/90.

¹¹⁰ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 9: 357.

¹¹¹ Abū al-Bekā, Eyyub b. Musa al-Kafawī, *al-Kulliyat: Mujam fī al-mustalahāt*, Ed. Muhammad Karīm Rācih (Beirut: Dār Iqraa, 1985), 397.

¹¹² Ibn 'Āshūr, *Tafsīr al-tahrīr wa-al-tanwīr* 30: 437.

¹¹³ Abū al-Bekā, *al-Kulliyāt*, 398.

¹¹⁴ al-Baqarah 2/165.

¹¹⁵ al-Al-i Imrān 3/14.

¹¹⁶ al-Tawba 9/24.

¹¹⁷ al-Al-i Imrān 3/103.

¹¹⁸ al-Tawba 9/71.

¹¹⁹ al-Anfāl 7/63.

¹²⁰ al-Zukhruf 43/67.

¹²¹ 'Afef al-Turk Huseyin, "Al-Hubb fellāh fe al-kitāb wa al--Sunne" (Master degree, Nejah University, 2011), 13.

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and (what is) right for it.”¹²² According to al-Maturidi, the meaning of this verse can be interpreted in different ways. According to one interpretation, human beings are endowed with knowledge of negativity and taqwa in their nature. According to this approach, it is undeniable that human beings are knowledgeable at their creation. Accordingly, Allah featured human’s *fitrah* with an ability to understand the beauty of beautiful things and the ugliness of ugly things. Therefore, humans can understand objects’ beauty or ugliness by their reasoning, but it is impossible for reason to absolutely comprehend the beauty and ugliness of everything. The beauty (*hüsun*) and ugliness (*kubuh*) of object can be understood by revelation or contemplation. According to another interpretation, the aforementioned verse states that beneficence and evil are personal, and no one will be punished because of others’ evil acts, or exploit another someone else’s taqwa.¹²³ Al-Zamakhshari says that the meaning of this verse is individual’s ability to reason with respect to beneficence and evil.¹²⁴ Al-Qurtubi, on the other hand, says that what is meant in this verse is the inspiration of taqwa and immoral to human, and human beings are taught beneficence and evil.¹²⁵

In the verse “And guide him to the parting of the mountain ways?”¹²⁶ that is mentioned in the surah of al-Balad, it is stated that humans can incline towards beneficence and evil¹²⁷ because of their *fitrah*. Referring to some sources, al-Qasimi interprets this verse as follows: “We placed beneficence and evil in the human’s *fitrah* and made the human’s reasoning and conscience an evidence for its existence. Then, the human is free to choose one of these paths.¹²⁸ Likewise, the verse “Lo! We have shown him the way, whether he be grateful or disbelieving.”¹²⁹ that is mentioned in the surah of al-Insān shows that human *fitrah* has the attribution of inclining towards beneficence and evil. al-Rāzī interprets the sentence “We showed human the right path” that is stated in the aforementioned verse as the invention of evidences for human to find the truth, creation of reason and revelation of books. All these show that human *fitrah* can incline to beneficence and evil.

Another important attribute of human *fitrah* is inclination towards aesthetically beautiful things and hating ugly things. Human does not only congenitally incline towards physical beauty but also inclines towards spiritually beautiful things such as reason, wisdom, chastity and bravery. In Arabic, the concept *jamal* is used for both physical and spiritual beauty. *Zeenah*, which is used for beauty mostly expresses the subsequently acquired beauty like adornment. Accordingly, beauty splits into two as being inborn and manmade.¹³⁰

Qur’ān addresses both the human’s spirit and the aesthetic aspect in human *fitrah*. It is possible to see this both in the phonetic structure of Qur’ān’s rhetoric and tafsirs of heaven and hell. When the beauties in heaven are described in Qur’ān, golden trays and chalices used for

¹²² al-Shams 91/8.

¹²³ Māturīdī, *Ta’wīlāt al-Qur’ān*, 17: 222.

¹²⁴ Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 258.

¹²⁵ Qurtubī, *al-Jāmi’u li ahkām al-Qur’ān*, 20: 76-77.

¹²⁶ al-Balad 90/10.

¹²⁷ Firuzubādī, *Majd al-dīn Basa’iru zavi’t-tamyiz*, Ed. Muhammad Alī Al-Najjār (Beirut nd.), 5: 16.

¹²⁸ Qāsimī, *Mahasin al-ta’wīl*, 6162.

¹²⁹ al-Insān 76 /3.

¹³⁰ Izzidhār bint Mahmūd b. Sabir al-Madānī, *Ahkām tajmīl al-nisā* (Riyādh: Dār al-fadīlah, 2002), 59.

serving for food and drinks, and eye-pleasing beauties are mentioned.¹³¹ Likewise, in the descriptions of hell in Qurʾān, chains, clothes made of tar, humans whose faces are covered with fire,¹³² people who bite their fingers¹³³ and the hellfire's burning in flames¹³⁴ are mentioned. These descriptions in Qurʾān's rhetoric shows that human *fitrah* inclines towards beautiful things and hates unpleasant ones.

One of the important inborn features of human is creativity and innovation of knowledge. Because creation means bringing something to existence from nothing, the act of creating is metaphorically correlated to human. This is because the human can invent something from the object that Allah created although he is actually not able to perform the act of creating. The lexical bundle 'ism-i tafdil', which expresses the correlation, is used in two verses¹³⁵ of Qurʾān, and even if we suppose that there are other creators, it is stated that Allah is the best one. The aforementioned verses with their linguistic forms state that the human is capable of inventing. All inventions that humans have come up with until today are a result of the ability of inventing in human *fitrah*. Otherwise, it would not be possible for humanity to reach its current level. In conclusion, it is understood that there is the quality of creating in human *fitrah*.

4. THE CONVERSION AND ALTERATION OF FITRAH

The sentence in the Surah al-Nisa that expresses the change of the creatures and the composition in the Surah al-Rum which expresses the immutability of the common people is related to each other and certain comments are made in this frame. While the sentence mentioned in the surah an-Nisā, which expresses the change of creature is associated with the composition that is mentioned in the Surah al-Rūm, which indicates the constancy of khalqullah, the sentence that is mentioned in the Surah ar-Rūm and expresses the constancy of khalqullah is associated with the aforementioned sentence that is stated in the surah an-Nisā, and some interpretations are made within this perspective. Thus, Qurʾān is interpreted by Qurʾān, but as a result of the analyses, it is seen that the connection that is established between these verses is not very consistent because in the relevant verse of the surah an-Nisā, while the verb *يُغَيِّرُونَ*, which means change, is used together with khalqullah composition, the infinitive of conversion is negatively used together with the khalqullah in the *fitrah* verse that is in the surah ar-Rūm, and it is stated that there will be no change in Allah's creations. Also, we think that it is not correct to interpret the conversion concept with alteration that is mentioned in the surah an-Nisā because semantic analyses show that conversion (tabdil) and alteration (tağyir) are not synonymous.

Verb patterns that consist of *b-d-l* letters show differences in terms of meaning. *tabdil* that is derived from *tefil* is replacing something with something else in general. In addition, the removed thing is not always replaced with something else,¹³⁶ but in *tebdil*, changing something's

¹³¹ al-Zukhruf 43/71.

¹³² al-Ibrāhīm 14/50.

¹³³ al-Furqān 25/27.

¹³⁴ al-Humazah 104/6.

¹³⁵ al-Mu'minūn 23/14; al-Şāffāt 37/125.

¹³⁶ Ibn al-Fāris, *Mu'jam maqāyis al-lughah*, 101.

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quality is essential, not itself. The verb pattern *ibdāl* that is in the rhythm of *if'āl* expresses removing something and placing something else to its former position. Accordingly, for *tabdīl*, changing the quality of something and for *ibdāl*, changing main component of something is essential. *Tebeddūl* that is derived from *tefā'ul* means to change the quality of something, such as pulling-apart mountains from surface, mixture of seas and earth's being flat, just as in the verse "One day, earth will transform to another earth and skies will transform to other skies"¹³⁷. However, sometimes *tebdīl* is used metaphorically in the meaning of *ibdāl* just as in the verse "Allah will replace their evil deeds with the good"¹³⁸ because the good and evil that are mentioned in this verse are two different factors. In short, *tebdīl* is the change in something's form and quality provided that its main component remains the same. *Ibdāl*, however, is replacing the main component of something with another factor.¹³⁹ However, al-Isfahani says that *ibdāl*, *tebdīl*, *tebeddūl* and *istibdāl* generally mean to change something, and he does not discuss the semantic nuances of these verb patterns.¹⁴⁰

As al-Isfahani stated, alteration (*tağyir*) that is mentioned together with *khalqullah* in the surah an-Nisā has two different meanings. The first is to change the form of house but not affecting its origin just as in the sentence "I changed my home". The second is to change something's essence just as in the example "I changed my slave".¹⁴¹ While the change of the form and plan of the house is the matter of discussion in the first example, a change in the essence of something is mentioned in the second example, and this shows that alteration is a change that is about both quality and essence. On the other hand, conversion (*tebdīl*) that is interpreted as an alteration (*tağyir*) is a change about quality. In the "تغيير" it may not always be the case that something is removed and something else replaced. But in the "تبدیل" the case is not the same. Removing something and replacing it with something else may not always be a matter of discussion in alteration, but this is not the case in conversion.

Women's having a disposition toward aesthetics, such as depilation of unwanted hair and having their teeth thinned that are mentioned in tafsirs, and situations like castrating some animals are consistent with alteration concept that is mentioned together with *khalqullah* composition in the surah an-Nisā because alternation is a change that is about both quality and essence. Therefore, interpreting the concept conversion, which is mentioned in the *fitrah* verse, with alteration is correct in terms of quality, but it is not consistent with the meaning of alteration about essence. When meaning nuances of conversion and alteration concepts are taken into consideration, then the contradiction whose existence is apparently felt between aforementioned verses that are stated in an-Nisā and ar-Rūm surahs will be solved. Accordingly, the meaning of conversion that is used with a negation word meaning "not" in *fitrah* verse means not changing qualities like recognizing Allah and the religion of Islam whose background exists in human *fitrah*, because these are the characteristics of the rational potential that is the main component of human *fitrah*.

¹³⁷ al-Ibrāhīm 14/48.

¹³⁸ al-Furqān 25/70.

¹³⁹ Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 342-344.

¹⁴⁰ Isfahānī, *Al-Mufradāt*, 110.

¹⁴¹ Isfahānī, *Al-Mufradāt*, 619.

Thus, the thing in which conversion will not happen that is mentioned in the verse is the religion of Islam and existence of Allah that is accepted by reason which is the essential factor of human's spiritual *fitrah*. The harmony of religion and human *fitrah* is the content of religion's being accepted by rational potential, which is in human *fitrah*. However, this rational potential can direct humans in a way that could cause them to refuse the religion. The verse that is mentioned in the surah an-Nisā, on the other hand, can be attributed to human *fitrah*'s physical aspects, such as aesthetic operations done on women and castrating animals, and it becomes consistent with alteration concept. Thus, the apparent contradiction which is seen between the verses that are mentioned in the surahs ar-Rūm and an-Nisā disappears. As a result, we can say that while there is no change in the main components of human *fitrah*, other beliefs can be substituted for the tawhid belief in which main factors like reason are necessary, and therefore, it is consistent with the meaning of conversion concept.

CONCLUSION

Fitrah concept in tafsirs is generally interpreted as the religion of Islam, the human's first creation form, the ability to accept the religion, human fate's being constant, humans' being created as good (blessed) and evil (rebel) and their accepting Allah's rububiyyah in the Hereafter. It can be said that the human's first creation and human beings' potential to accept the religion constitute a part of the content of *fitrah*. However, directly interpreting *fitrah* as the religion of Islam is an assertive tawil because religion does not per se exist in human *fitrah*. The content of the religion of Islam and human *fitrah* are coherent, and thus human *fitrah* is metaphorically mentioned as religion in Qur'ān.

It does not seem quite reasonable to consider the *fitrah* verse and the verse which mentions the alteration of khalqullah that is mentioned in the surah an-Nisā as tafsirs of each other because these verses that are associated with each other are different in terms of context and content. While the constancy of khalqullah is mentioned in the *fitrah* verse, the change of khalqullah is mentioned in the surah an-Nisā. Likewise, considering the conversion (tebdil) and alteration (tağyir) concepts that are stated in the aforementioned verses as synonyms is not consistent with their meanings because while alteration expresses a change both in essence and quality, conversion is a change generally about quality.

The foundation of tawhid, ethical and humane values that the religion of Islam represents exist in human *fitrah*. This qualification of human *fitrah* does not show any changes. The religion and *fitrah* concepts that are mentioned in the *fitrah* verse also support this, but humans can act contradictory to inborn belief by being tempted by sensual desires.

The values that the religion of Islam contains show that human *fitrah* has fundamental components. In the rhetoric of Qur'ān, cases, such as tawhid, rational potential, love, invention, inclination towards beautiful things and hating ugly things and choosing beneficence and evil, come into prominence. From this perspective, it is possible to say that the most important components of human *fitrah* are the ability to accept tawhid, reason, love, humane and divine love, productivity, adopting the beneficence, avoiding the evil, paying attention to beautiful things and avoiding ugly things.

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