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**Non-Western Public Administration
in Context: Contemporary Islamic Cases
from Morocco**

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List of Publications

The list of author's publications, on the basis of which the thesis has been prepared:

- I **Chafik, S.**, & Drechsler, W. (2022). In the Semi-Shadow of the Global West: Moroccan *zawāyā* as Good Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 82 (4), 747–755. **ETIS 1.1.**
- II Reinert, E., **Chafik, S.**, & Zhao, X. (2022). Geography, Uneven Development, and Population Density: Attempting a Non-Ethnocentric Approach to Development. In Reinert, E.S. & I. Kvangraven (Eds.), *A Modern Guide to Uneven Economic Development*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. **ETIS 3.1.**
- III **Chafik, S.** (2022). Plan Bee: The Case of an Islamic Honey Cooperative in Morocco. *Halduskultuur: The Estonian Journal of Administrative Culture and Digital Governance*. **ETIS 1.1.**
- IV Drechsler, W., & **Chafik, S.** Islamic Public Administration in Sunlight and Shadow: Theory and Practice. *NISPAcee Journal of Public Administration and Policy*. [In Press] **ETIS 1.1.**

Appendix

- V Jachimowicz, J.M., **Chafik, S.**, Munrat, S., Prabhu, J.C., & Weber, E.U. (2017). Community trust reduces myopic decisions of low-income individuals. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114 (21), 5401–5406. **ETIS 1.1**

Author's Contribution to the Publications

Contribution to the papers in this thesis are:

- I The starting point and core arguments of the paper were based on the prior work of the author of the thesis. Both authors equally contributed to the manuscript adaptations, peer review revisions, and editor correspondence required for publication.
- II The first author and the author of the thesis jointly developed the overall argument of a non-ethnocentric approach to development. The author of the thesis was responsible for the research, development of the argument, and write-up of the Islamic world case study within the book chapter.
- IV The author of the thesis was responsible for the Morocco case study and for developing the Uzbekistan cases study, as well as for the theoretical points section. Both authors made equal contributions to the design and framing of the research, selection of case studies, and the conclusion.

Introduction

و أن الرئاسة التي بها تمكن في المدينة أو في الأمة السير و الملكات التي تنال بها السعادة القصوى و تحفظها عليهم هي الرئاسة الفاضلة

“As for the rulership that establishes in a city or nation and preserves the ways of life and dispositions by means of which ultimate human flourishing is obtained – that is virtuous rulership.”

Abu Nasr Al-Fārābī (870-950 CE), *Book of Religion* (1986, 54-55; author’s translation and emphasis)

What the eminent philosopher Al-Fārābī, building on Aristotle’s concept of *eudaimonia* (1095a), is referring to in the statement above is, from an Islamic perspective, the existence of true human prosperity and indeed happiness: living and doing good. As a Muslim, Moroccan, and American, my personal and academic interest in what is and how to – contextually – arrive at “ultimate human flourishing” began over a decade ago, in the sophomore year of my undergraduate studies in Philadelphia. I was exploring the possibility of doing a semester abroad and accordingly needed to confirm whether or not my university, UPenn, would recognize and provide equivalent academic credits for the coursework I was interested in taking. I asked a senior economics professor, who was in charge of such decisions at the department at the time, what he thought about courses on Islamic Political Economy or Islamic Governance. He looked at me, unsure of whether I was even being serious, and replied “Islamic Governance? Islamic Economics? What is that? That’s like saying there’s such thing as Buddhist Economics or something. Of course I can’t give you credit for that.”

His response did not age well regarding Buddhist Economics, given the (Western) mainstreaming of its fundamental concepts in the form of sustainable development or Gross National Happiness (Drechsler 2019b). Today, however, I would predict that one may still comfortably scoff at the notion of studying contemporary Islamic Governance or Economics as a worthwhile endeavor within wide mainstream circles of Western academe – that is, I would have predicted as much until I arrived in Estonia to pursue my graduate studies.

Tallinn is, among other things, a hub for innovation and governance research. In particular, it is the home of one of the few remaining non-Marxist heterodox economics departments globally, i.e. the Other Canon, which, in embracing the inescapable normative aspect of social sciences, is a tradition that, following the German Historical School of Gustav v. Schmoller and Adolph Wagner, regards both neoliberal market fundamentalism and communist state-planning as entirely undesirable extremes (Reinert & Daastøl 2004). Rather, the role of the state is an essential one in the pursuit of “ultimate human flourishing”, and perhaps most significantly in a techno-economic context (Perez 2002), its formulation and implementation of an innovation policy that advances key sectors and industries that concurrently develop the economy and address pressing societal challenges (including the globally salient environmental and inequality crises). Empirically, even within the US (despite the startup and heroic entrepreneur rhetoric), we know this has been accomplished through immense public sector support, i.e. the entrepreneurial state (Mazzucato 2018), and along with it, a highly capable administrative system, i.e. state bureaucracy, to implement this support (Kattel et al. 2022).

To return to Al-Fārābī and Aristotle (*Pol.* 1309a), because societies are not identical with regards to their institutions and systems of governance (nor the “ways of life and dispositions” they reflect), the pursuit and even understanding of “ultimate human flourishing” must also legitimately vary. Indeed, from such a perspective, the diverse range of historical and contemporary administrative and economic traditions must surely

contain valuable lessons, successful institutions, and insightful practices – meaning there is no such thing as a (Western) monopoly in defining societal and individual happiness. It was in this academic context that I was able to pursue my long-standing interests not only as a worthwhile endeavor, but rather, seeing as Islam is a (if not *the*) defining element of nearly a quarter of humanity’s daily lives, as a critical one.

The initial focus and main objective of my doctoral work was the exploration of extant administrative arrangements rooted in Islam, which meant engaging with the core theoretical framework of this dissertation – Non-Western Public Administration or NWPA (Drechsler 2013a; Drechsler 2015; Drechsler 2019a) – alongside an active research group within our department in Tallinn. For Islamic Public Administration (hereafter PA) in particular, the academic literature mostly features recent case studies from Central Asia (e.g. Urinbojev 2014) and South Eastern Europe (e.g. Drechsler 2018b), together with one classic theory piece from a quarter century ago (Kalantari 1998). My aim therefore became to contribute to the empirical grounding and discussion of the underexplored theory of Non-Western and Islamic PA within the group, from a context I have ancestry in and know well (Morocco), which came to fruition in the form of two co-authored journal articles: a case study on extant institutions (I) and a fresh theory piece (IV).

In parallel, a critical aspect of furthering the theory of Non-Western and Islamic PA has been highlighting and recognizing the positive contributions of the broader Islamic scholarly tradition in governance, economics, and beyond, which in my case resulted in another collaborative publication, i.e. a book chapter (II). Furthermore, because Islamic systems of administration have a tendency towards the bottom-up (Peters 2021), I sought to understand the dynamics of significant autonomy on local communities, their institutions, their livelihoods, and their identity vis-à-vis the central state, for which I wrote a journal article presenting the case study of an indigenous Islamic cooperative in Morocco (III). Finally, prior to my doctoral studies, I worked in the field of decision-making and behavioral economics and a perennial interest in community-level perspectives led to another co-authored journal article based on a collaborative governance field experiment (in the Islamic world) on how community trust can safeguard individual livelihoods (V).

As such, the overall aim of this thesis is exploring how “living and doing good” can unfold in the paradigm of Islamic Administration, Governance, and Economics – and how this formulates a legitimate alternative to the global Western mainstream. Specifically, the following research questions guided my investigation:

- Can traditional Islamic institutions and practices constitute “good” public administration? Or are we waiting for them to modernize, i.e. Westernize? (Section 3)
- How is the Islamic scholarly tradition relevant/legitimate to statecraft, administration, and policy today? What are the legacies and contemporary applications of the Islamic natural and social sciences? (Section 4)
- How can Islamic cooperatives be successful on the community, state, and global levels? (Section 5)

The remainder of the thesis therefore proceeds with an overview of Non-Western and Islamic PA in Section 1, followed by a discussion in Section 2 of the research methods utilized. Subsequently, Sections 3-5 each explore the respective research questions above, before Section 6 concludes by summarizing the main findings and areas of further research that the thesis surfaces.

1 Decentering: Taking Up the Theories of Non-Western & Islamic Public Administration

في اختلاف المسالك راحة للمسالك

“It is in the variety of paths that the wayfarer finds respite”

Sidi Ahmed Zarruq (1442-1493), *The Principles of Sufism*, Principle 58

Despite recent setbacks and no longer being the world’s singular superpower (i.e. the end of unipolarity), the United States still enjoys “a position of primacy that is unique in modern history”, in terms of its economic, military, and soft power (Walt 2006, 22). One of the many consequences of American (and by extension Western) primacy is the unidirectional nature of how mainstream academic and scientific knowledge is defined, understood, and ‘created’ in the West and subsequently transferred to the rest (Smith 2021). The fields of Governance and Public Administration (PA), both in scholarship and practice, are no exception (Raadschelders 2003; Bouckaert 2017). Take, for instance, a concept as basic as “international” standards or practices being a euphemism for *Western* standards or practices. Whether consciously or not, by convention Western PA is considered to be the only good PA, and by extension, the only modern PA, resulting in an implicit and formulaic understanding (Drechsler 2013a):

Western = global = good = modern

For decades, this “drive towards global uniformity” (Latouche 1996) has defined the core – largely unsuccessful – strategy and agenda, not only for public management and administration reform, but it also has a direct parallel in the Washington Consensus approach to economic policy in the form of aid and international development efforts (Reinert 2006). One of the most problematic effects of this approach is that in assuming ubiquitous and perpetual Western superiority, one is required to jettison any social values, cultural traditions, and institutions that are non-Western and potentially better in specific contexts. Otherwise, to refer back to the formula, one is just stubbornly holding onto values, traditions, and institutions that are provincial, bad, and outdated (Drechsler 2019b).

The dominance of the Western PA paradigm is, however, increasingly in question (Bertelli et al. 2020, Moloney et al. 2022). Two salient reasons are the questionable track record of exporting this paradigm, and the rapid economic and political shifts occurring at the international stage, e.g. the success and rising influence of regions outside of the Anglosphere (Pollitt 2014). More broadly, a third factor is the ethnocentric status of global Western PA (Raadschelders 2003, Hummel 2019) in a post George Floyd protests world, i.e. a world where uprooting ethnocentric colonial legacies has become a priority. Indeed, the mainstreaming of decolonizing research has rendered the perspective that non-Western values, traditions, and institutions are provincial, bad, and outdated as (virtually) untenable. There are now calls in the mainstream PA literature (Althaus 2020) to recognize the validity of and even (respectfully and responsibly) take up non-Western ways of knowing and being (for an example in the Australian context, see Milroy 2019).

In an attempt to do so, I took up Drechsler’s framework of Non-Western Public Administration (NWPA) (2013a; 2015), which, instead of a wholesale transfer of Western models of governance to the rest of the world, calls for recognizing some aspects of governance that are universally applicable, and others that are not. In the case of the

latter context-specific solutions, NWPA leaves space for working with what is already present and functioning in a particular paradigm.

But firstly, how can one understand or evaluate what “good” PA is exactly? If we assume with Bouckaert that PA can be heuristically reduced to two elements: mechanics (implementation) and ethics (goals), then good PA could be conceived of as having efficient mechanics without sacrificing ethics (Drechsler 2013a; Bouckaert 2011). This accounts for a working definition of good PA – but where does one actually find it, i.e. what are the potential sources?

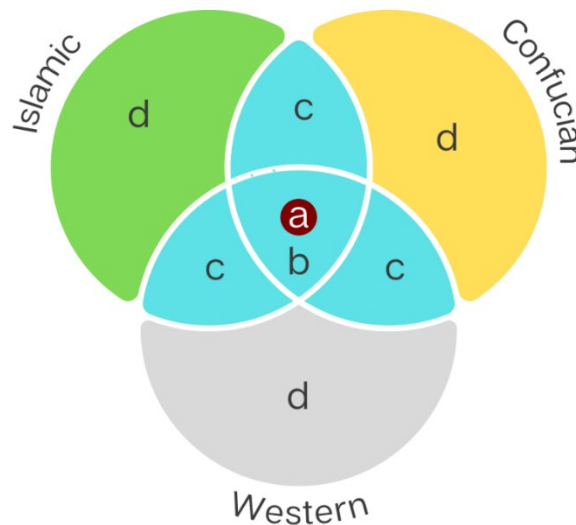


Figure 1: paradigms of good PA (from Drechsler 2013a)

NWPA taxonomizes good PA into four distinct sources (Figure 1). First, a small set of administrative principles and practices that are meant to be implemented as is, regardless of place or time – perhaps thought of as a “shared human PA” (represented by circle a). Many such principles and practices are readily found in fiscal administration, specifically public accounting, where the fundamentals of how to keep track of assets and liabilities are able to be legitimately and rapidly transferred regardless of context (for the telling case of China, see Lin 1998). Second, a wider set that must be adapted or tweaked to succeed in a particular context (represented by shuriken b). Third, a set that work in overlapping paradigms but not elsewhere (the c areas), and fourth, a set that only work in a specific paradigm (the d areas) and do, and perhaps should, not work in others (Drechsler 2013a).

Therefore with such an approach, good PA inherently encompasses elements from multiple paradigms (thereby decentering the Western one), and moreover, apart from a few exceptions (circle a), is highly contextual (requiring a paradigm-specific understanding). Arriving at a paradigm-specific understanding of good PA, both theoretical (Kalantari 1998; IV) and empirical (I, III), in the Islamic context (*d-Islamic* area) – and why this is a concern of global relevance and importance (II) – is a matter we now turn to.

1.1 Islamic PA though?

Islamic PA is controversial and (not unrelatedly) interesting. The unquestionable success of Confucian countries, with their various configurations of the development state (Amsden 2001), makes Confucian PA an obvious (and competitive) alternative to the Western paradigm (Minh Chau 1996; Drechsler 2018a). This certainly cannot be said of the Islamic paradigm, seeing as no such overall track record exists within Muslim-majority countries. Furthermore, prior to the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian War, the main theatre of violent international conflict for the previous two decades has been the Islamic world, apart from occasional but prominent spillovers of violence in the West. However, these events and dynamics are only a (recent) part of the larger Islamic tradition, which spans more than fourteen centuries. As Edward Said reminds us, the Orient, referring to the Islamic world,

is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the other (1978, 9).

Altogether, a relative lack of contemporary success from constituent countries combined with a complex legacy of inspiration, hostilities, and quintessential otherness vis-à-vis the West – which is still enjoying its primacy – means that one must address three challenges (each a proverbial elephant in the room) when discussing the notion of Islamic PA outside of the few who know and deal with it in scholarship or practice. Namely, most people (including Muslims) would at best acknowledge the existence of Islamic PA but regard it as fundamentally inferior to other paradigms (1. the challenge of recognition), or more harshly, question the existence of any good PA that is Islamic (2. the challenge of evidence/documentation), or most harshly, see it as an existential threat to be neutralized, let alone recognized as valid or supported (3. the challenge of appreciation).

Overcoming each of these challenges is a necessary step for Islamic PA to become a genuine alternative paradigm – in policy, practice, and academe – at the global level. The present thesis is a modest attempt to preliminarily address all three and thus contribute to the emergence of *maghrebi* (Northwest Africa) Islamic PA as a subfield. Indeed, immense socio-cultural and geo-political diversity exists within the *ummah* (global Islamic community), and, therefore, one can only expect significant intra-paradigm elements of contextuality within Islamic PA. It should be noted, however, that while the topic is controversial, inner-Islamic (i.e. Muslim) perspectives and mainstream scholarship stress the validity of Islam as a general, encompassing, and significant element (Drechsler 2013b, 58-60). After outlining the methodological approach taken in Section 2, Section 3 documents a functional and successful case of good Islamic PA in Morocco. Sections 4 and 5 take on the challenges of recognition and appreciation, respectively, before Section 6 concludes.

2 Methodological Approach

This thesis is an amalgamation of four original pieces: three articles in peer-reviewed journals and one book chapter in a handbook of a prominent press. Two of the articles are empirical case studies that combined fieldwork alongside desk research (I, III), whereas the other paper (IV) and book chapter (II) are theoretically oriented and therefore required only the latter. Appendix II contains a fifth publication that utilized a set of methods quite far removed from all other works that make up the dissertation; however, it is included due to its topical relevance and pertinent insights (V).

In its overall methodological approach, the thesis was fundamentally inspired by two concepts. First, in the face of global Western academic hegemony, the approach of decolonizing methodologies – whose origins can be traced back to over two decades when Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s watershed book was first published – calls not for a blanket dismissal or rejection of Western knowledge, but rather for approaching it on non-Western (in particular indigenous) terms, and in parallel bringing forward alternative “epistemic approaches, philosophies and methodologies” (Smith 2021, xii). Second, the strong emphasis in Islam on the pursuit and generation of knowledge not for its own sake but rather for a specific telos: so that it can be acted upon to improve the human condition (both in this world and the hereafter).

The primary research focus of the thesis is on PA, which at its core is not about policy per se but all about its implementation (Peters & Pierre 2006). To explore the paradigm of Islamic PA in particular, one must surely be familiar with the theology of Islam; however it is Islam *in practice* (even dating back to the early days of its establishment) that is of paramount importance. Accordingly, this thesis epistemologically assumes that meaning and understanding stem from the interpretation of lived reality, epitomized in the Islamic context by the centrality of the Prophetic *sunna*. This means that the overall methodology is premised on classical Hermeneutics (Gadamer 2013). The theoretical pieces (II, IV) are written from this perspective, whilst the empirical case studies (I, III) are within it.

In terms of tactics for the latter pieces, this thesis takes up a discursive approach to ethnographic field research (Zittoun 2009), that is, it tries to understand the subjective role and perspectives (i.e. discourses) of embedded actors to understand a social phenomenon. While one must acknowledge that the discursive tradition of Islam(ic PA) is far from homogenous, a semblance of coherence is possible and, given the impossibility of formulating a universally acceptable account of a living tradition, the best one can aspire to (Asad 2009).

As such, there were two primary sources of data collection, both of which required familiarity with the local language and customs, as well as the upholding of culturally sensitive research methods (Smith 2021, Archibald et al. 2019, Chilisa 2019). First, embedded participant observation in both the daily and occasional activities and rituals of communities and their institutions, informed by the well-established “go-along method” of ethnographic fieldwork (Kusenbach 2003). Second, *in situ* and remote semi-structured interviews with community/institution members, leaders, and neighbors that allowed participants to relay their perspectives around what is happening and how, as opposed to justifying why things are as they are.

This resulted in a detailed – almost “thick description” (Geertz 1973) minus the cultural essentialism (Matin-Asghari 2004) – case study of a village community and their cooperative (III), alongside a meso-level case study that presents shorter vignettes (i.e.

mini-cases) of how an institution of Islamic PA manifests itself across not only space, but various domains of public service delivery (I). The cases were selected to represent the regional diversity across Morocco as well as, pragmatically, the ability to coordinate in-person fieldwork, which itself required establishing trust through referrals and personal rapport. Although, hopefully, the case studies are both indicative and sufficiently representative, this is the one element of this thesis that might have been more expansive had it not been for the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic during which it was written, and so fieldwork was more limited than would have otherwise been the case.

Yet, like any other contemporary monarchy, the Alawites are faced with The King's Dilemma, i.e. whether to consolidate power, which generates (at times forcibly) social cohesion and stability, or, expand power to include other "modern" groups, which empowers popular consent via elections, parties, and legislatures (Huntington 2006). The two common responses to this dilemma are either to transition to a purely ceremonial monarchy or, conversely, for the monarchy to continue as the sole authority. Unlike most other contemporary monarchies, however, Morocco exemplifies a third possible response to the dilemma: a coexistence of the traditional and modern.

Thus, by "ritualizing its soft power", which is rooted in Islam, the monarchy's sacred status is bolstered in the popular mind – as is its legitimacy and stability (IV). In terms of PA, this position of strength affords the monarchy the opportunity to concurrently fit in to global Western standards (and rhetoric) of PA with a Rabat-based bureaucracy, and allow an already delivering traditional administrative system to proceed uninterrupted in the periphery. Morocco therefore has a bifurcated PA system: an official system representing urban elites and reflecting global Western standards and objectives, and a traditional, indigenous system representing municipal areas throughout the country and reflecting Islamic standards and objectives. This arrangement grants *zawāyā* the autonomy to continue to govern "in the semi-shadow" of the state, meaning not as a part of the formal state bureaucracy nor as a rogue enterprise. Rather, *zawāyā* are service-delivering Islamic PA institutions that the Moroccan state relies upon as a source of sacred soft power. The new (or previously neglected) elements of Islamic PA found in the practices, values, and goals of *zawāyā* must now be addressed.

3.3 The First Take: Preliminary Findings on *Zawāyā*

Our field research (I) consisted of three original case studies focused on one unique service domain that each of the three *zawāyā* is renowned for: infrastructure, education, and social services. Without fully recapitulating the cases, the following list highlights some of the more salient insights and characteristics of an Islamic PA observed in all three *zawāyā*, and how each aligns with existing theoretical literature:

- Non-hereditary selection of a *zāwiya's* primary leader (principle = merit-based leadership; Kalantari 1998)
- Immense trust and respect for *zāwiya* senior leadership based on their knowledge and practice of Islam (principle = higher the role, more rigorous standard for observation; Kalantari 1998)
- Mentorship aspect of being a student or member of a *zāwiya*, and humility-inducing discussion and advice seeking done even by *zāwiya* leadership (principle = consultative nature of decision-making, i.e. *shūra*; Samier 2017; IV)
- Organizational structure that facilitates unwavering execution of any requests, assignments, or spiritual practices issued by *zāwiya* bureaucrats (principle = non-transferability of responsibility; Nizam al-Mulk 1960; IV), while leaving room for improvisation or change to ensure that things get done (principle = imperfection within limits; Findley 1980)
- Implementation of a service (*khidma*) as both a civic obligation to one's community, i.e. *zāwiya*, and a form of divine worship (principle = concurrent social-spiritual obligation; Kalantari 1998; IV)

- Two-way observation between leaders and followers in an attempt at mutual understanding (principle = user-centric or co-produced service delivery; Bovaird 2007), albeit for the common purpose of cultivating Islamic character development (principle = self-betterment through faith as a collective responsibility; Samier 2017)

Altogether, the results from our novel field research on Moroccan *zawāyā* demonstrate that a traditional Islamic PA system can strengthen the larger state by providing soft power in exchange for governing in its semi-shadow (i.e. be concurrently supported and uninterrupted). This is a generally valuable PA lesson, as it displays how (very) alternative service providers can still work with, rather than against, the mainstream.

Moreover, the success of this indigenous Islamic model provides a clear answer to the question of whether good PA that is not Anglo-American can exist in the first place. Surely, such a model is worthy of recognition by mainstream scholars and practitioners as a valid, legitimate alternative despite having markedly different objectives and mechanics from global Western PA. Recognition – its challenges and its fundamental importance – of the vast Islamic intellectual and practical tradition (not only for PA) is the topic of the next section.

4 Recognizing: The Legacy of the Islamic Tradition

The socioeconomic history of the world since the industrial revolution, at least at the macro-level, can be seen through the surge and collapse of four “techno-economic paradigms”; we are now somewhere in the middle of the fifth (Perez 2002). Each paradigm is accompanied by an overall direction and cadence of technological change and innovation and, subsequently, a global transformation of industries, economies, and even societies.

Techno-economic Paradigm	Popular name for the period	Core Country or Countries	Watershed event	Year
First	The 'Industrial Revolution'	Britain	Arkwright's mill opens in Cromford	1771
Second	Age of Steam and Railways	Britain (spreading to Continent and USA)	Test of the 'Rocket' steam engine for the Liverpool -Manchester railway	1829
Third	Age of Steel, Electricity and Heavy Engineering	USA and Germany forging ahead and overtaking Britain	The Carnegie Bessemer steel plant opens in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	1875
Fourth	Age of Oil, the Automobile and Mass Production	USA (with Germany at first vying for world leadership), later spreading to Europe	First Model -T comes out of the Ford plant in Detroit, Michigan	1908
Fifth	Age of Information and Telecommunications	USA (spreading to Europe and Asia)	The Intel microprocessor is announced in Santa Clara, California	1971

Figure 3: Five Techno-economic Paradigms (adopted from Perez 2002)

Crucially, all five techno-economic paradigms have thus far begun in and emanated from the West, the latter three the US specifically (Figure 3). Apart from the brutal dual-legacies of imperialism and colonialism, the status of the West as *the* global techno-economic paradigm leader has not only contributed to its primacy, but for many (consciously or not) called into question the importance or even worth of other human traditions and their (past and ongoing) scientific and intellectual accomplishments (Seline 1997) – especially the Islamic (Said 1978, Islahi 2014), since the Confucian one, e.g., has become fully competitive again in the current surge.

This perspective has manifested itself within contemporary Muslim-majority countries in various ways, including in governance and administration: modernization = Westernization is the common theme to an otherwise diverse range of public management reforms happening at a global level for decades (Drechsler 2005; Pollitt 2014; Bouckaert 2017). Before one can support, in theory or practice, Islamic PA systems and arrangements (IV), a necessary first step therefore becomes catching up to the wisdom of the (original) Western tradition from over two millennia ago by recognizing “there must be different ways that all are legitimate – as Aristotle points out in *Politics*” (Drechsler 2020, 298; *Politics* 1309a; V9).

4.1 Attempting a Non-Ethnocentric Approach

We suggest (II) that even more recently, in the Renaissance for instance, a prevalent Western view was that non-European peoples and their civilizational achievements were not only legitimate, but admirable – especially given the fact that the European Renaissance was not achieved as an independent European development. The paragon of this perspective is the Italian Jesuit priest Giovanni Botero (1544-1617), who in his survey of world geography and ethnology *Relazioni Universali* (1592) unabashedly declared the sophistication and merit of non-European economic and socio-political structures in particular.

My individual contributions to and within II were therefore twofold. First, I co-developed the general argument that acknowledging the non-Western “other” is not novel and, as such, neither is acknowledging the existence and validity of qualitative differences (i.e. contextuality) in understanding and approaching development. Second, I shaped the specific argument that recognizing the legitimacy and value of the Islamic tradition in particular is a matter of rediscovering – for Muslims and non-Muslims alike – the immense scholarly, scientific, statecraft, and economic contributions Islamic civilization put forth to the world, but especially the West, through direct “pathways of transmission” to Europe (Saliba 2007). Notably, the medieval period is now regarded by some historians of technology as more technologically inventive than the Renaissance (Gimpel 2016) – surely not unrelated to the contributions of the Islamic Golden Age.

4.2 Islamic Contributions and Their Characteristics

Perhaps the cornerstone of such contributions is the first systemization of the scientific method itself, attributed to Hasan Ibn Al-Haytham (965-1040) for his pioneering work on optics and the mechanics of human vision (Smith 1992). An earlier scholar by the name of Muhammad ibn Musa Al-Khwārizmī (780-850) is singlehandedly responsible for the invention of Algebra (named after his treatise that was used as the central text in European universities until the 16th century) and the mathematical concept of zero (Afridi 2013). Within healthcare, Rufaida Al-Aslamīa, a 7th-century female nurse and surgeon, put forth the first known code of nursing conduct and ethics (Jan 1996); Ibn Sīna’s *Al-Qānūn* (Canon) of Medicine, written in 1025, only ceased to be used as the main text for teaching medicine at European universities in the 18th century (McGinnis 2010); while *bimaristan* (early Islamic healthcare institutions funded by pious endowments i.e. *awqāf*) are now recognized as the world’s first hospitals (which at times actually paid patients, although never vice-versa), with the oldest being built in 805 (National Library of Medicine 1994). The oldest continually operating university and first degree-awarding educational institution in the world was founded in Morocco by a 9th-century pious aristocrat, Fatima Al-Fihriya (Cherradi 2016); such institutions later served as the model of university development in Europe (Makdisi 1981). In the realm of economics, the polymath Abu Hāmid Al-Ghazālī (1058-1111) theorized on topics as diverse as specialization of labor, stages of production, currency debasement, and flexibility of public borrowing and expenditures for ensuring broad societal goals (Ghazanfar & Islahi 1990) – the latter of which foreshadowed John Kenneth Galbraith’s concept of “public purpose” by 900 years (1973). As for governance and especially PA, the rapid expansion of Islam since its earliest days led to an overstretch with regards to governability and administrative capacity that could only partly be countered by innovative decentralization and the inclusion of local

elites, which resulted in the existence of diverse cultural and ethnic groups even within the bureaucracy (Samier 2017).

Despite the wide-ranging nature of these contributions, one can identify perhaps two defining characteristics with regards to the nature of knowledge in the Islamic tradition – both of which retain immense contemporary relevance. First, the non-discriminatory nature of acquiring and developing knowledge (Al-Khalili 2011; Rosenthal 2007). There exists an oral tradition (*hadith*) of the Prophet Moses (عليه السلام), considered authentic in Islam, that summarizes aptly:

قَالَ مُوسَىٰ فَأَيُّ عِبَادِكَ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَالِمٌ لَا يَتَّبِعُ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ يَجْمَعُ عِلْمَ النَّاسِ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِهِ

Moses said (to Allah): Who are the most knowledgeable of your servants? Allah said: A scholar who remains unsatiated with (their) knowledge, and (accordingly) adds the knowledge of others to their own (Sahih Ibn Hibban, 6184; author's translation).

The Golden Age of Islam embodied this approach through a proactive and intentional effort to appropriate the knowledge of earlier traditions, in particular that of Ancient Greece. This is very well known, but less so that this took place, not as “a re-enactment of the glories of ancient Greece” via translation, but rather as a basis for furthering intellectual thought and scientific innovation within an Islamic worldview (Saliba 2007, 2). Which brings us to the second defining characteristic: that knowledge is not pursued for its own sake, but that it is of some larger benefit or purpose (al-Attas 2013; Ahmed 2018; IV). The very first revealed verses of Qur'an begin with:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

Read! In the name of your Lord who created (96:1; author's translation).

A leading contemporary Mauritanian scholar, Shaykh Alhaji Al-Mishrī, highlights that although ulema unanimously agree that the literal meaning of the verses were directed to the Prophet (ﷺ) via the Archangel Gabriel, the spirit of the verses are traditionally understood to be an imperative of pursuing knowledge (i.e. “read!”) for the sake of (i.e. “in the name of”) benefiting creation without violating or encroaching upon divine edicts (2016). In the Islamic context today, as ever before, such an approach effectively demands an Islamically-informed set of concurrent goalposts and guardrails for academic research, technological innovation, and economic development. Notably, there is now recognition in the West that the economy has not only a rate but a *direction* of growth (Mazzucato 2017), and therefore environmentally and socially oriented goalposts and guardrails are increasingly gaining traction at the policy level (Heins & Pautz 2021; Nersisyan & Wray 2019). In an Al-Fārābīan sense, living and doing good requires this *direction* to be informed by and embedded within a contextual system of Islamic social order premised on fulfilling divine expectations.

In summary, this section presented the case for why recognizing not only the achievements but the enduring value of the Islamic tradition of scholarship and innovation as a legitimate alternative is a critical first step in the long and perilous journey of mainstreaming good Islamic governance and PA. However, what about those who regard Islamic societies, institutions, or Islam as such as a (or the) problem? The issue here would not be recognition, which is based on achievements or performance but, arguably, appreciation, which is based on inherent value or worth (Robbins 2019). The latter is therefore the topic of the next section.

5 Appreciating: The (Contextual) Pursuit of Living and Doing Good

وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

The good and the wicked cannot be equal. Repel (the wicked) by that which is better, and he with whom mutual enmity exists will become as close as a dear old friend (41:34; author's translation and emphasis).

Appreciating the inherent worth or value of oneself and others is perhaps one of the few recurring, ongoing, and fundamental parts of being human. The Qur'anic verse above obviously, if it needed to be stated, rules out any approaches to the challenge of appreciation that increase enmity. More subtly, however, this verse hints at a way to overcome the challenge: a consistent and proactive effort of living and doing good. Indeed, it is difficult not to appreciate the value or worth of any model that has been able to successfully navigate the big, pressing, and interrelated societal challenges of today e.g. food and water security, economic inequality, sustainability, etc.

Such non-Western models of living and doing good often operate at the local, community level in the form of indigenous institutions, i.e. cooperatives (Gadgil et al. 1993). The theory of the commons is based on empirical insights of these institutions successfully managing common property resources, and more broadly societal well-being, in resilient ways (Ostrom 1990). Following this tradition, I explored an Islamic indigenous cooperative whereby rural villagers tend to their bees, generate a livelihood from artisanal honey, whilst enhancing the biodiversity of their picturesque landscape – and argue that the inherent value of such a case ought to be appreciated at the local, national, and global levels (III).

5.1 An Apiary, a Village, an Islamic Commons

Taddaret Inzerki, constructed in 1520, is said to be the oldest and largest traditional apiary (place where honey beehives are kept/honey production takes place) in the world (Afriyad 2013). Almost emblematic of the need for decolonizing research, this apiary is virtually absent from the academic literature; apart from a handful of publications in French that mention it in passing. Located in the village of Inzerki, which itself is part of Morocco's 2.5M hectare Argan biosphere reserve, one of the first essential qualities of the apiary that became immediately apparent over the course of the research is that it was founded upon and maintains an Islamic worldview – in fact through the direct involvement of a *zāwiya* (I) – which regards the status of bees, and consequently their craft of beekeeping, as sacred.

The cooperative, which is highly autonomous due to a municipal devolution policy by the central state, does not charge fees for laying hives nor take commissions on honey produced, but is instead run as a community-led natural resource commons – following the general principles empirically observed in similar traditional institutions elsewhere (Cox et al. 2010; Ostrom 1990). The rules of the commons are not written down, however are preserved orally and in practice, and are related to three high-level imperatives: 1) the wellbeing of the bees, 2) the rights of apiary colleagues, and/or 3) the Islamically-sound status of beekeepers. Because all three are consciously and scrupulously rooted in Islam, *Taddaret Inzerki* forms a real-world conception of an Islamic indigenous cooperative.

But what does that entail exactly? To answer, one can take the illustrative example of harvesting honey at the apiary. Work begins only when sunset draws near, since that is when the beekeepers find the bees to be most tranquil, and honey is delicately extracted from a single hive at a time up to a maximum of only 5-7 hives per day. This slow and almost meditative process is deliberate so as to minimize disturbance to the bees from the hive at hand as well as the nearby hives of others. When first approaching a hive, beekeepers use a small amount of smoke produced from burning a mix of dried cow manure and the leaves of olive trees to calm the bees and make sure the beekeeper does not startle them. Throughout, a mix of crushed onions and water is immediately sprayed on the bits of honey that inevitably fall during the process of honey extraction, so that the nearby bees do not violently swarm on the honey, which would otherwise occur and potentially agitate and attract thousands of bees. After extraction but before the traditional hive is used again, it is sterilized and purified by burning incense. The above practices are indicative of the profound respect the beekeepers of Inzerki have for both the bees and their traditional craft of beekeeping.

The apiary is not strictly a vocational association, however, but rather more akin to the concept of a *collegium* put forth in the early 17th century by German jurist and philosopher Johannes Althusius (1995), as it envelopes and manages social life itself, i.e. colleagues live and are ruled by it. Indeed, *Taddaret Inzerki* is a source of active character development and refinement, as well as a setter of social norms and customs, regularly through its senior members and occasionally, although principally, through the regional Nasiri *Shuyūkh* and their prayers and guidance during annual festivals or impromptu visits. The villagers are driven by the belief that upholding proper etiquette means one is being considerate to others and is respecting divine guidelines for human behavior – both of which are considered fundamental parts of being a good Muslim (even outside of the context of the apiary).

5.2 The Triple-Benefit

Overall, this particular arrangement results in what I call a “triple-benefit” (III). First, the Moroccan state’s devolution policy to an indigenous bee cooperative not only legitimizes its rule but garners it support and popularity. The case of *Taddaret Inzerki* demonstrates that this is due to the by-now familiar dynamic of sacred soft power of the Monarchy as a principle of faith (I, IV), but also administratively, because of the mechanics of a successful devolution policy. Namely, the villagers, in their autonomous capacity, consciously turned to the state for support in a particular area that it has higher competency in, i.e. the principle of subsidiarity. Notably, this dynamic is reminiscent of our earlier findings on local populations who fruitfully navigate community-level decisions and provide input into local governance: such groups exhibit higher levels of community trust and social harmony and lower levels of temporal discounting in decision-making, i.e. less myopic (V).

Second, the villagers benefit first and foremost because of the ability to shape, administer, and preserve their over 500-year-old Islamic apiary as they see fit. In a very real way, the story of Inzerki shows how Islamic Economics can and does unfold at a local-level. Consequently, the villagers generate a reliable livelihood from, cultivate social harmony and identity in, and enhance the biodiversity of a place they consider (and cherish as) home. Third, the world is better because of the mere existence of such a model today. The apiary showcases how sacred beekeeping can all at once generate

high-quality honey, economically empower local populations, tread lightly (and even enhance) the environment, and compassionately sustain biodiversity.

Although only a starting point, the preliminary findings on *Taddaret Inzerki* also raise a diverse set of future research themes and questions in public administration, economics and beyond. Moreover, I would posit that for most, appreciating the Islamic apiary and its successes will not be as challenging as retaining a decolonizing spirit when doing so, i.e. respecting the self-determination of such peoples “to decide what they wish to share or not, why, and how” (Althaus 2020, 187). Dealing with this latter issue, however, is surely a better place to be – as one must already appreciate the inherent value and worth of “the other” (IV).

6 Concluding Remarks

This thesis attempted, through contemporary case studies from the Moroccan context (I, III) and broader theory-focused contributions (II, IV), to uncover and engage with an otherwise underrepresented and underexplored paradigm of governance, PA, and economics – the Islamic. The central argument of the thesis does not call for a blanket rejection of the Western paradigm as a whole – NWPA generally does not – nor does it offer a critique of its specific elements, but rather, by exploring the legitimacy and value of the Islamic paradigm, it emphasizes the need for *decentering* the former as the one and only approach to all things good or modern. In doing so, this thesis hopefully contributes, not in an abstract or rhetorical sense, but in real and substantive way to the importance of context in public administration, management, and policy in the sense of the late Christopher Pollitt (2013).

At the same time, one may generalize and say that still in 2022, all (or at least most) things Islamic face a level of *prima facie* skepticism or even suspicion relative to the other great non-Western traditions, such as the Confucian and especially Buddhist ones. Simply put, the intellectual study or moral practice of Islamic PA, the core focus of the thesis, remains an uphill battle. As such, the thesis took on a specific approach in response to what were identified as three key challenges.

First, the challenge of documentation means affirming the existence of good Islamic PA at all. It was therefore necessary to identify and empirically contribute real, functional examples – which was done from a context (North/West Africa) that had been previously neglected in the nascent Islamic PA literature (I). Second, the challenge of recognition means acknowledging the achievements and therefore legitimacy of Islamic PA (and the larger tradition). It was argued that the recognition of the Islamic tradition in particular is not the acknowledgement of accomplishments in isolation, but how those accomplishments directly and significantly contributed to the (especially original) Western tradition (II). Third, the challenge of appreciation means seeing the inherent worth or value in “the other”, which, it was argued, is difficult not to in the case of a traditional apiary whose successes range from the administrative, socioeconomic, and environmental (III).

The biggest limitation of the thesis is that its contributions are truly preliminary, that is, a significant amount of further work must be done to arrive at a thorough understanding of and to decolonize Islamic PA in Morocco, let alone in the *maghreb*, Africa, or beyond. However, one must begin somewhere, and these preliminary contributions can hopefully encourage others to pursue scholarship and policy that will in time create and prepare the field of Islamic PA as a legitimate and appreciated alternative.

In turn, an important caveat for doing this is that one has to (at least attempt to) retain a sense of authenticity for Islamic PA and, therefore, to acknowledge the paramount and inseparable role of Islam as such. Otherwise, one risks losing the essence of a paradigm. The general trajectory of Islamic Finance is telling in this regard, as initially the exclusive focus was on being “Islamically-compliant”, which in effect is an attempt to retrofit the conventional practices of global Western finance into Islam, but subsequently shifted to being ‘Islamically-based’, where the departure point is remaining authentic to Islam itself – especially its commonweal or public interest (*maqāsid*) objectives (Calder 2020; IV). In this spirit, an important anchor for further research is the rich classical tradition of Islamic scholarship on governance and statecraft dating as far back as the first generation of Islam, in genres ranging from social ethics (*futuwwa*) and practical philosophy (*hikma*

al-'amaliyya), to political jurisprudence (*siyāsa al-shar'iyya*), public value (*maslaha*), and bureaucratically-informed and/or Sufi-inspired Mirrors for Princes (*siyasatname, nasihatname*).

Altogether, the cases of Non-Western PA explored in the thesis featured institutions that craft, coordinate, and deliver public services for and with their constituents for a better life based on their localized Islamic tradition. The success of these institutions is akin to a gentle nudge: to reflect deeply on an alleged global Western monopoly on “best-practice” governance and administration. Perhaps even more importantly, these institutions show and showcase working Islamic models of cooperation and “virtuous rulership” that could in the best case serve as models to learn from, but at the very least contribute positively (even in the West) to the timeless pursuit of living and doing good. One might even say that carrying forth the wisdom and insight on human flourishing from not only the likes of Al-Farābī and the Nizam al-Mulk, but also the likes of Botero and Althusius, is the truly Islamic thing to do.

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Abstract

Non-Western Public Administration in Context: Contemporary Islamic Cases from Morocco

This thesis is an attempt to chime in, from an Islamic perspective, on the age-old question and challenge of structured human living together: living and doing good. To do so, the thesis aims to empirically ground and theoretically contribute to the framework of Non-Western Public Administration, based on various Moroccan case studies. Although a largely underexplored area of public administration (PA), and more broadly governance, these contributions are likely timely and generally valuable, considering the increasing importance of decolonization in both academia and policy.

The core argument of the thesis is that Islamic PA is modern, legitimate, and valuable and thereby calls for decentering, not dismantling, the global-Western paradigm. However, one must recognize the current uphill battle that is the Islamic paradigm; certainly relative to the other great non-Western ones, i.e. Buddhist and Confucian. The thesis therefore identifies and addresses three distinct challenges to the Islamic paradigm, and as such, the research is focused on uncovering and analyzing the functionality, workability, and even existence of Islamic models of administration, governance, and economics – so as to simultaneously 1) showcase contemporary non-Western examples of, and 2) question the global-Western monopoly over, human flourishing.

The case studies (I; III; and partially IV) focus on the service delivery, organization, objectives, and values of Moroccan institutions that were previously neglected in the PA literature and therefore required both desk research and *in situ* ethnographic fieldwork guided by culturally appropriate methods, whereas the theory contribution (II) required only the former. Methodologically, the thesis is based on classical hermeneutics so as to focus on Islamic PA in practice, and influenced by decolonizing methodologies and the Islamic injunction for beneficial knowledge so as to bring forward non-Western insights and lessons that are both positive and helpful to the human condition.

The thesis concludes with a broader reflection on how Islamic PA can move forward, in both research and practice, and why the field would hopefully be better for it.

Lühikokkuvõte

Avalik haldus väljaspool läänemaailma: nüüdisaegsed islami juhtumiuuringud Marokost

Käesoleva doktoritöö eesmärk on kaasa rääkida inimeste struktureeritud kooselamise igivana küsimuse ja väljakutse – kuidas elada ja teha head – teemal, lähtudes islami vaatenurgast. Selleks püüab autor empiirilisel põhjendata ja teoreetiliselt panustada läänevälise avaliku halduse raamistikku, tuginedes erinevatele Maroko juhtumiuuringutele. Kuigi tegemist on avaliku halduse ja laiemalt valitsemise valdkonnas väheuuritud teemaga, on käesoleva töö panus tõenäoliselt õigeaegne ja üldist väärtust omav, arvestades dekoloniseerimise kasvavat tähtsust nii akadeemilistes ringkondades kui ka poliitikas.

Doktoritöö põhiargumendiks on, et islami avalik haldus on tänapäevane, legitiimne ja väärtuslik ning seega oleks vajalik globaalse/lääne paradigma detsentreerimine (mitte lammutamine). Siiski tuleb arvesse võtta praegusi islami paradigmadega seotud suuri väljakutseid; iseäranis seoses teiste suurte lääneväliste paradigmadega, nt budism ja konfutsianism. Doktoritöös tuuakse välja kolm erinevat islami paradigmadega seotud väljakutset ning käsitletakse neid, keskendudes islami haldus-, valitsemis- ja majandusmudelite funktsionaalsuse, toimivuse ja isegi olemasolu tuvastamisele ja analüüsimisele, et samaaegselt 1) esitleda nüüdisaegseid näiteid rahva õitsengust väljaspool lääneriiki ja 2) seada kahtluse alla globalistlik-läänelik monopol inimeste heaolu määratlemisel.

Juhtumiuuringud (I, III ja osaliselt IV) keskenduvad teenuste osutamisele, korraldusele, eesmärkidele ja väärtustele Maroko institutsioonides. Sellele teemale ei ole varasemas avaliku halduse alases kirjanduses kuigivõrd tähelepanu pööratud, mistõttu olid vajalikud nii olemasoleva materjali läbitöötamine kui ka *in situ* etnograafilised väliuuringud, milles lähtuti kultuuriliselt sobivatest meetoditest, samas kui teoreetilise panuse (II) puhul oli vajalik vaid esimesena nimetatu. Metodoloogiliselt tugineb doktoritöö klassikalistele hermeneutilistele põhimõtetele, et keskenduda islami avalikule haldusele praktikas, ning on mõjutatud dekoloniseerimise meetodikast ja kasulike teadmiste tähtsusest islami kontekstis, et esitleda lääneväliseid arusaamu ja kogemusi, mis on inimeseks olemise seisukohast positiivsed ja kasulikud.

Doktoritöö lõpetab laiem mõtisklus selle üle, kuidas islami avalik haldus saaks edasi areneda, seda nii seoses teadustööga kui ka praktikas, ning kuidas see valdkonda loodetavasti paremaks muudab.

Publications

Publication I

Chafik, S., & Drechsler, W. (2022). In the Semi-Shadow of the Global West: Moroccan *zawāyā* as Good Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 82 (4), 747–755.
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Appendix

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