PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTHINESS AND THE CONCEPT OF GOD AMONG MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS

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*T*he purpose of this study is twofold. First, the author tries to draw out the concept of psychological healthiness according to object relations theories illustrating the important concepts of main object relations theorists. Secondly, some comparisons about concepts of God between Muslims and Christians are from the Qur'an and the Bible, and with the results, the author tries to explain how the different concepts of God between Muslims and Christians contribute to their psychological well-being.

The basic distinction between Islam and Christianity lies in their respective conceptions of God's relational nature (2003, Gorder). According to Gorder, at the heart of this difference, there exists a very crucial and fundamental distinction between Islam and Christianity. In Islam, God is the giver of guidance (*huda*) and inspiration (*wahy*), whereas in Christianity, God gives Himself in incarnational revelation. He also insists that the relationship Christians have with God is based on the concept of God as "our Father"(Personal), an appellation rarely heard in non-mystical Islam. In other words, God's "separateness" is the magnificent distinction of Islamic theology.

Maria Rizzuto, who is a psychoanalyst, presents evidence demonstrating that our early childhood experience, both of father and mother but also of grandparents and other significant adults, may be psychically elaborated into conscious, preconscious and unconscious representations linked to the word-symbol "God"(Finn, Mark & Gartner, John, 1992). This implies that religious peoples' concepts of God affect their object representations and vice versa. This paper aims to illustrate the basic difference in the concepts of God between the Qur'an and the Bible and how these differences affect the believers' psychological healthiness according to object relations theories.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTHINESS
ACCORDING TO OBJECT-RELATIONS THEORY

In order to figure out the state of psychological healthiness, the author will first list the main works of object relations theorists and concentrate on the meaning of psychological healthiness according to the psychological well-being of each scholar.

Object-relations can be defined as an emotional state which makes connection between self-representation and object representation (Kim, 2002). An object representation means a certain sort of emotional image about a self and an object and it can be positive or negative based on the nature of an object or an experience with an object. So, when object relations are discussed, two parts, the self and the object, should be in balance. The main feature of object-relations theory is the exploration into the relations in the dynamics between a self and an object carefully and demonstrate the state of psychological illness, the state of psychological healthiness, and the development of the process.

Ronald Fairbairn

Fairbairn outlines his concept of the process of splitting of the go in normal development and pathology, and proposes that this constitutes an earlier phenomenon than "the depressive position" which Klein describes (2003, Gorder). Fairbairn also suggests that Klein's concept of "unconscious phantasy" which postulates as the fundamental link between the drives and reality, should be replaced by his more useful concept of the "internal object". In other words, to him, fantasy is an activity of the ego that invests an experience with the quality of its need inside the self and then exerts its influence over a future experience, determining perceptions of and creating unconscious phantasy about subsequent version of the external object. Gorder (2003) illustrates this phenomenon in his book.

In his theory, the first defense against the inevitable disappointments in a relationship with the mother is to incorporate the experience with her as an internal object in an attempt to control the disappointment over real or imagined rejection by her, but with the result that the infant is then saddled with an internalized somewhat rejecting object. To deal with that object and the associated painful affects, the infant's second defense is to split off the painfully exciting

and rejecting parts and repress them in the unconscious, leaving a relatively unencumbered central ego to relate to the outside world in a reasonable way.

For Gorder, the basic instinctual motivation of humans is to form relationships and dependence on the caretaker is inevitable (Kim, 2002). Therefore, in the process of development, humans can be heading for a mature dependence from an immature dependence. When people are immature, they usually split a good image and a bad image of the self and others. In the transition stage, people (infants) use transitional object in order to externalize an unacceptable bad image of mothers. Finally, people can be aware of the reciprocal relations between an image of the self and an object and make an integration among the split images. So, the goal of psychotherapy is to strengthen the central ego and object relationship system, which is responsible for learning, thinking, managing feelings, relating to others, and repressing the less functional object relationship systems (Gorder, 2003).

Melanie Klein

Klein took Freud's formulation of the life and death instincts seriously, and put them at the center of her orientation. Moreover, she also differs from Freud, who thought that drives fortuitously happen on the objects of their gratification. Instead, Klein assumes that drives are immediately directed toward, attracted by, and attached to objects that they color according to the quality of the operative instinct (Gorder, 2003). Klein describes an infant at the earliest stage of psychological life, struggling toward the terror of annihilation and dealing with persecutory objects that result from the projection of aggression called "paranoid-schizoid position." In her thinking, the term paranoid position, means the process of reflecting on the pairing of splitting and projection. Klein sees projective processes as dominant whereas Fairbairn sees repression (Gorder, 2003). By the term, depressive position, she makes it clear that it refers to the capacity for bearing responsibility and feeling guilt and concern. It leads to a desire to make reparation with the mother. So, The child in the paranoid-schizoid position envies the mother for having what the child needs and wants, while the child in the depressive position is capable of gratitude for what the mother gives (Gorder, 2003). Her well known concept is that of projective identification paired with its counterpart, introjective

identification. Gorder (2003) describes this in detail:

> In conditions of painful, bad internal object relations, the infant projectively identifies with the painful aspects of itself it locates in the mother in order to get them outside the self (in phantasy) to avoid their spoiling its internal world, but also in the hope that after their sojourn in the mother, they will come back detoxified. Alternatively, the infant projects out good aspects of its self for safekeeping in the mother, or uses aspects of the personality to control her and deep her nearby when separation threatens.

In Klein's logic, the concept of "splitting (good and bad)" plays a main role in producing psychopathology. When an infant perceives itself as "good" and the mother as "bad," it becomes a sacrifice and projects its aggression towards the mother (paranoid-schizoid position). When an infant perceives itself as "bad" and the mother as "good," it becomes a persecutor and feels guilty (depressive position). In order to avoid these positions and find out the right position, again, an infant needs to know the realistic position where it can stay and the realistic feelings that it can experience. So, Klein emphasizes that life is a struggling process between 'integration of love and compensation' and "splitting by hatred and jealousy." Also she demonstrates that humans should confront their depressive anxiety and guilty feelings even though the integrating process between the good and bad part of self and others is very painful and difficult. Furthermore, she says humans can experience the psychological healthiness through forgiving the self and others thereby restoring the self and a good relationship with others.

Donald Winnicott

For Winnicott, the adequacy of the maternal caretaking activity has a pervasive influence on the child's psychological development (Gorder, 2003). In response to frustration, Klein puts projection and Fairbairn the child's splitting and repression, whereas Winnicott sees developmental failure and the growth of the false self as a response to maternal failures. According to him, just as the good-enough mother's functioning facilitated development, so a mother's failure can be expected to handicap the child's maturation processes. The mother also takes care of the tasks through her holding and handling of the infant, conveying her environmental care so that the infant can become a

growing concern and get the capacity for growing through being held in the security of the arms and through her abiding, responsive attention. This also related with his other concepts, "The True and False Self". Winnicott stresses that the false self is not a bad or fake attribute, but rather the part of the self that is tuned to the outer reality, which protects the true self and relations with others. So, the false self is a quality or state of the personality that reacts to the mother's needs and can take precedence over those of the child itself. The more interesting concept from Winnicott is his idea as "object use" compared to "object relation" (http://blog.compas.com/klein5/15643751). In his later works, Winnicott explains the difference between the two concepts. Significant others exist under the control of a child's fantasy in "object relations," while significant others interact with a child independently and realistically without the control of a child's fantasy in "object use". This can imply that if a child receives "good enough mother's" care and mirroring, a child could develop an independent and realistic interaction with a mother as a 'true self' rather than develop a fantasy to make him or her fit into a mother as a 'false self'.

W. R. Bion

Bion develops his theory of the container and the contained, a model of the mental processes of the mother as she relates to her anxiously projecting baby (Gorder, 2003). In the mother's mind, she bears her infant's distress and tries to figure out what could account for it. She is able to think through the problem and in so doing detoxifies the unthinkable anxieties and gives them back to the infant in a thinkable, manageable form. She does not only hold her child's mental contents, but contains them in her active processing of experience. The infant is not only relieved of the painful mental contents but also is identified with their containing function and becomes more able to use thought to handle anxiety in future.

Gorder (2003) compares Bion's concept of container/contained to the concept of transference and countertransference. The counselor's unconscious is the container. The client's unconscious transference is the contained. The containing function is the therapist's countertransference. He emphasizes that counselors and clients may both be aware or unaware of transference and countertransference simultaneously or separately, and either of them may evacuate their

feelings into the space between them.

Bion's concept of container/contained reminds the author of Winnicott's conceptualization of a "holding environment." When the main caretaker provides a good container or "good holding environment" to a child regardless of its painful mental contents or anxiety, the child is not only relieved of painful mental contents but also identifies with their containing function or "holding ability" and becomes more able to use thought to handle anxiety in future. This can relate to Fairbairn's ideal state of psychological healthiness such as strengthening the central ego and object relationship system which are responsible for learning, thinking, managing feelings, relating to others, and for repressing the less functional object relationship systems (Gorder, 2003). In other words, when a mother provides a safe environment to a child regardless of aggression or anger, and contains or holds a child firmly responding to the anxiety with a realistic and reasonable way, a child could develop a healthy ego in the future. Another concept which is drawn out from 'container and contained' is "mirroring". Bion's concept of container and contained is not just to hold the contents but also to respond properly to the contents and teach the contained how to use the contents in the future.

Margaret Mahler

Mahler, an analytic theorist, is well-known for her theory of "Separation Individuation." In this paper, the author conceptualizes the important ideas from her works in order to explore the meaning of psychological healthiness in her writings. Firstly, "symbiosis" is used as a metaphor (Mahler, 1986). It is chosen to describe that state of undifferentiation, of fusion with the mother, in which the "I" is not yet differentiated from the "not-I". This period can be characterized by the concept of "primary narcissism," which illustrates the state that is marked by the infant's lack of awareness of a mothering agent. The hatching process for her is a gradual ontogenetic evolution of the sensorium-of the perceptual-concious system-which leads to the infant-toddler are having a permanently alert sensorium, whenever he is awake (Mahler, 1986). Mahler argues that the more optimal the symbiosis--the mother's "holding behavior"-- has been, the more the symbiotic partner has helped the infant become ready to "hatch" from the symbiotic orbit smoothly and gradually without undue strain upon

his own resources. As a result the infant becomes better equipped to become separate out and to differentiate his self representation from the fused symbiotic self-plus object representations. Mahler also imposes the concept of "selective response and the infant's becoming the child of his particular mother" (Mahler, 1986). She writes,

> During early infancy, in a complex manner, the mother responds selectively to only certain of cues, and the infant gradually alters his behavior in relation to this selective response; he does so in a characteristic way. From this circular interaction emerge patterns of behavior that already show certain overall qualities of the child's personality. What we seem to see here is the birth of the child as an individual. . . . Mutual cuing during the symbiotic phase creates that indelibly imprinted configuration-that complex pattern-that becomes the leitmotif for "the infant's becoming the child of his particular mother." In other words, the mother conveys-in innumerable ways-a kind of "mirroring frame of reference" to which the primitive self of the infant automatically adjusts. . . . Her mirroring function during earlier infancy is unpredictable, unstable, anxiety-ridden or hostile; if her confidence in herself as a mother is shaky, then the individuating child has to do without a reliable frame of reference for checking back, perceptually and emotionally, to the symbiotic partner. The result will then be a disturbance in the primitive "self feeling" which would derive or originate from a pleasurable and safe state of symbiosis, from which he did not have to hatch prematurely and abruptly.

From her writings about the concepts of symbiosis and the hatching process, one can predict what would be the best condition for the healthy development of a self. This process is reciprocal between an infant and a mother, so the role of the particular mother is crucial for an infant's individuation. As Mahler describes, "Indelibly imprinted configuration-that complex pattern," the infant is becoming the child of his particular mother, and the power of "mirroring functioning" is affected by the mother's self confidence and safety feeling. A safe and confident mother can successful in making a healthy symbiosis and hatching, while an unsafe and shaky mother can fail.

In summary, the previous part of this examines the psychological pathologies of humans as well as the recovering process from illness through the writings of main proponents of object-relations theory. First of all, the theory illustrates that the human psychological

development is different based on their theoretical frameworks. The commonality among the scholars' works is that they all assume that humans are relational and dependent beings and their psychological difficulties come from the process of separation or differentiation. Mahler describes this phenomenon as "symbiosis" while Fairbairn directly describes the humans basic instinctual motivation as a need for relationship. For Fairbairn, the psychopathology such splitting or repression, is an effort to avoid inevitable disappointments in the relationship to the mother. For Klein, humans inevitably take a pathological position like "paranoid-schizoid" or "depressive" and develop bad feelings like guilt, depression and anxiety. In order to overcome these feelings and take a proper position in the development process, humans should face the agonies and sufferings, which are produced in the process of integration between a good and bad part of the self and others. Forgiveness for the self and others can be a good way to achieve this integrating process. Concepts like "holding" (Winnicott), "containing" (Bion), and "mirroring" (Fairbairn and Winnicott) explain how to help humans restore their broken and damaged relationships with others.

A COMPARISON OF THE CONCEPT OF GOD BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS

As expressed in the introductory section of this paper, the relation between people's object relation experience can be affected by conscious, pre-conscious and unconscious representations linked to the word symbol "God" (Finn & Gartner, 1992). Therefore, by making a comparison of the concepts of God between Muslims and Christians, the author hopes to illustrate the degree of psychological well-being in two different religious traditions.

God as a Perfect Law vs. God as Unconditional Love: Is God One or Triune?

In Islamic teaching, God's attributes (*sifat*) describe His will and not His nature (Gorder, 2003). This distinction is important for Christians who claim that Jesus in an expression of the nature of God. The monotheism of Islam underscores that there is no greater evil than the blasphemy of "associating" (*shirk*) anything with the divine nature

(Surah 4:116). God's attributes are fundamentally that He is infinite, impersonal and eternal: "neither is He a body or a spirit and neither does He exist in anything or does anything exist in Him"(cited in Gorder, 2003). The Muslim concept of God declares that He cannot be known personally because His essential quality is beyond comprehension. The descriptions of God in the Qur'an announce what God does and what His will is for humanity, but these do not describe the nature of the divine essence. The creed, "There is no God but God and Muhammand is the Messenger of God" (*la ilaha illah Allah, wa Muhammad rasul Allah*") is recited more than any other words in the world. The doctrine of divine unity (*tauhid*) is the theological eye of needle through which every other Islamic statement of faith (*iman*) must pass. In Islam, the greatness of God flows from the oneness of God (Gorder, 2003). The *shahadah*, the incessant affirmation of God's unity, confirms that this unity is the basis for divine sovereignty (Surah 2;16, 6:19;16:22;23:91-92;37:1-5;112:104). Because God is one, the message and messengers are also unified and provide a singular revelation of guidance-namely, Islam. The unity of God defines the transcendence of God. God is beyond knowledge. If God can be known, orthodoxy contends, then God also becomes, to some degree, accessible and thus subordinate to humanity. The Islamic doctrine of God converges on the attributes that are essential to God's being and His characteristics that prove His being. God is free from personality, which is perceived to be a limiting quality.

In contrast, Christians view God from the perspective of "Trinity." Christianity teaches that nature of one God is Triune: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is One and reveals Himself in three ways: Creator, Savior and Spirit. According to Christian orthodoxy, God is the source of this doctrine as He gives Himself in His Son and then sanctifies humankind by the Holy Spirit. The revelation of God is a self-revelation in which God's "Word" is identical to God Himself. As Jungel explicates, "God is the Revealer, the Revealed, and the Revelation" (cited in Gorder, 2003).

The main distinction in this comparison regarding the concept of God between Islam and Christianity can be explained as follows: The Islamic God is far more distant from people and is thus unknown and impersonal because His essential quality is beyond comprehension, whereas Christians view God as personal through the lens of "Trinity." In Christianity, God reveals Himself to People with words and lives

among His people through the Holy Spirit.

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God as a Creator and Law Executor vs. God as Savior-Criminal:
Is Jesus a Prophet or Savior?

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This doctrine of the Trinity surfaced in continuity with the awareness that Jesus is the Son of God and that the Holy Spirit brings salvation to human hearts. But according to understanding of Islamic God, God has called humanity to perform righteous deeds and, in so doing, earn merits for salvation. Life is a battle to be righteous in opposition to the spirits of seduction and death (such as Harut, Marut and Azrail). The most conspicuous of these of pillars salvation is the "bearing witness to" (as opposed to simply believing) the creed of Islam (*shahadah*). All of one's deeds are put on a heavenly scale. One's good deeds are weighed against the evil, but if the *shahadah* has been recited once, God will pardon all transgressions. The ready recital of the creed makes one a Muslim and places one within the community of faith. Its repetition helps Muslims gain a vision of reality which recognizes that God is everywhere and active in everything.

In Christianity, Christ is the Savior who believers encounter by faith; in Islam it is God who graciously redeems individuals as they appropriate the *shahadah*, the supreme expression of truth. The gaining of salvation in Islam is primarily a process of acquiring knowledge. God has asked humanity to accept nothing that is beyond the realm of logic. The purity of heart one has to cultivate is an individual's rational pursuit before God. Humanity is not capable of knowing God, but God has made humanity capable of knowing themselves and has given reason to bring humankind to truth. Salvation (*tasdiq*) is the recognition, appropriation, and outward implementation of truth. Education brings regeneration and protection from evil. Revelation is the process whereby God educates humanity to become righteous. What does punishment mean to Muslims? To them, punishment is not the unavoidable consequence of sin, because God is not obligated to either penalize or forgive the sinful. No one can dictate on God to force Him to bring anyone into Paradise; there is no need for any sacrifice to "satisfy" His holiness. In other words, there is no injustice if God were to withheld salvation (Surah 49:17, cited from Gorder, 2003).

In Christianity, however, salvation is a divine work beyond the ability of an individual to obtain. In the Book of Romans, Paul writes,

"So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace (Ro 11: 5-6). Paul adds, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God (Eph 2:8). According to Gorder (2003), the basic disparity between Islam and Christianity is how salvation is accomplished. Islam claims that God decrees some to be saved and leads them to salvation. God will reveal on the final day the verdict for each life. Humanity is not free to determine its own future any more than it is able to go against God's perfect will.

To Christians the meaning of salvation by faith implies that a person can sin but could gain God's forgiveness. In Islam, the incentive of obedience is fear of the consequences of disobedience (Gorder, 2003). Christianity acknowledges humanity's fallen nature, and the solution is not the reformation of the heart through terror but the granting of righteousness by the power of God's Spirit which results in a new nature. Muslims summarize their hope of salvation in the affirmation of the truth of a conviction ("I bear witness..."). On the other hand, Christians trust in the nature and work of Christ (the Savior, the Son of God) for their salvation. In contrast, the theme of atonement (*kaffarah*, literally to "hide" or to "cover") is far less predominant in Islam. For orthodox Muslims, there is no requirement for another deliverer because Allah's revelation is sufficient and was given to be obeyed.

Regarding sin, Muslims view it as something against a known law of Islam. Deeds that are performed in ignorance of the divine law are not considered "sinful." Numerous terms in Muslim theology are used to describe sin (Gorder, 2003), *ithm* and *dhanb*, which connote doing that which is forbidden or morally wrong. Moreover, in Islam, God does not judge sin harshly. "If God were to take humanity to test for their wrongdoing, He would not leave them a living creature" (Surah 16:61). God is lenient because He knows that humans are inherently weak and God will forgive. But the God in Christianity cannot tolerate anything in His presence that is unrighteous. Sin not only hinders prayer (Psa 66:18), as it does in Islam but it also binds people to become slaves to its power (Proverbs 5:22; John 8:34).

In Christianity, sin is putting one's self before God. Because individuals are incapable of dealing with the problem of sin adequately, God has come in Christ to bring deliverance from the moral and

spiritual consequences of sin, which are evil and suffering. For this reason, Apostle Paul says, "The wages of Sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro 6: 23). Even though Muslims and Christians both claim to be entirely dependent on God's mercy for salvation, in Islam, sin is viewed in strictly legal and social terms, while in Christianity, it is an offense against God personally.

From this different understanding of sin between Muslims and Christians, these two religious traditions have developed different messianic ideas. Christians understand the role of Christ as the mediator of the covenant, which God desires to establish with each individual and with each community. The Islamic concept of God makes it unthinkable that Jesus could be a mediator between God and humankind. Islam predicates that the only available mediator is the "mediation" of the Qur'an between humanity and truth (and not between humanity and God) (Gorder, 2003). According to Christianity, God's promised deliverer was to be known as the "Messiah." He would be more than a prophet; He would be a divine king whose rule would be eternal (Micah 5:2). For the Christian, the Messiah's role is central to the revelation of God as a participant in the covenant with humanity (Gorder, 2003). Christians hold that salvation is not only a conceptual doctrine but also a person. Jesus alone needs no mediator between Himself and the Father. He alone is able to provide a relational pathway for others.

This view of the "Messiah" comes from different understanding about the cross of Jesus. For Muslims, whether or not Jesus actually died on the cross is the most disputable issue. Some verses in the Qur'an seem to support the conviction that He was crucified (Surah 3:55; 19:33), but other passages appear to show that Jesus did not die on the cross but was rescued by a substitute (Surah 4:157). Muslims emphasize that the prophecies of the Bible are further proof that it only "appeared" to be Christ and the cross is a symbol of defeat rather than a proclamation of divine love. They seek to exalt God and not to denigrate Him to such ignominy as suffering and death. This refection of the cross is a logical consequence of Islamic theology, which claims that there is no need for a mediator to deal with sin (Gorder, 2003).

God as a Commander vs. God as a Father

The third main difference between Islamic and Christian theology comes from a diverging perception of Allah and God. Allah represents an all-powerful commander and all Muslims should follow what Allah commands. The appropriate response of the individual before the Commander or the Creator is to lie prostrate in submission to the power of His divine authority. This God's greatness means that He cannot be known and that individuals cannot have a "personal relationship" with Him. One is called to adhere to the divine law that He has established and which serves as a barrier between divine greatness and human imperfection. However, Christian soteriology also begins with the concept of divine law but it is presented as that which is given as a result of God's love. Individuals can only fulfill this law through Christ, who enables men and women to participate in the moral excellence of holiness. Moreover, Christianity sees God's will in terms of His desire to establish a covenant with His children just as a Father seeks ongoing communion with His family (2 Tim 1; 15; Lk 19:10). God, to Christians, is powerful, but His power is expressed in the person of Christ who suffers redemptively in order to bring an alienated humanity back into an intimate *koinonia* relationship (Gorder, 2003). The Bible even states that whoever does the will of God the Father is Christ's brother and sister (Matt 2:50). Gorder (2003) also points out that the biblical theme of covenant is represented as a mutual relationship whereby an individual is called to both know and love God. The biblical emphasis on God's compassionate nature as a Father who forgives (Psa 103:8-13) is also the primary revelation that Christ brought concerning God in the inauguration of the new covenant.

Based on the above discussions, the major differences in the concept of God between Muslims (Allah) and Christians can be noted. First, a different understanding about God's attributes results in fundamentally different perception between Allah and God. Muslims believe in One God and Christians believe in the Triune God. The biblical vision of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit makes a major differences in terms of experiencing Allah and God respectively. The Islamic God is beyond knowledge; in other words, the unity of God defines the transcendence of God. But the Christian vision of God as a Father or a Holy Spirit who reveals Himself to people with words dwells among them. As a result Christians can experience God much more intimately than Muslims. Second, there is a difference in the concepts of sin and salvation between Islamic and Christian traditions.

For Muslims, sin is that which is against a known law of Islam. Every single deed performed in ignorance of the divine law is not considered "sinful." Thus, sin is viewed in strictly legal terms which requires education to protect people from sinning. Sin can be understood from an objective and judgmental perspective. In contrast, Christians view sin as putting oneself before God. And, because of human incapability to deal with the problem of sin adequately, God Himself has come in Christ to bring deliverance from the moral and spiritual consequences of sin. In Christianity, then, sin can be understood from a more personal and relational viewpoint. Third, the belief that God is like a great commander versus the conviction that God is a loving father also affects the adherents' image of God. For Muslims, the appropriate response by an individual before the Commander is to lie prostrate in submission to the power of His divine authority. Christians, however, see God's will in terms of His love and sincere desire to establish a covenant with His children as a Father seeks for a deeper relationship with members of His family.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The first section of this paper explored some commonalities on how people can develop healthy relationship abilities. The most crucial thing, which is needed for people to develop a good quality of object relation, is the ability to integrate. Fairbain declares that people can first develop defenses in order to control disappointment in relationship by repressing it. If they failed, they would experience "splitting off" the object into good and bad, i.e., exciting object and rejecting object. Klein explains the same concept by using a different terminology, i.e., "position." When infants experience disappointment in a relationship with a mother, they can develop aggression and project it onto their mothers. As a consequence, put themselves in a "paranoid-schizoid" position. Later, infants in the depressive position become capable of gratitude for what the mothers give although it could result in guilt-feelings. There is a need to integrate both good and bad parts. The author concludes, after comparing the Islamic and Christian concept of God, that Christianity can open up to the possibility of integrating these good and bad parts, the "split object." According to Muslims' understanding of God, Allah, is a powerful commander and executor of law in that people should obey Him. There will certainly be judgment

by God, which can lead them to an eternal unavoidable punishment. This idea reinforces the concept of splitting good and bad.

According to the Christian understanding of God, He is all-powerful. However, because salvation is a divine work beyond the ability of an individual and the Bible affirms humanity's fallen nature, the concept of "splitting" is blurred even though the distinction between good and bad is very clear. Also, the understanding of how to obtain salvation between Muslims and Christians affects the degree of development of "splitting." For Muslims, God has called humanity to perform righteous deeds and, in so doing, gain merit for salvation. One's good deeds are weighed against the evil performed, but if the *shahadah* has been recited once, God will pardon all transgression. In contrast, for Christians, as mentioned before, because sin is defined in a context of relationship, and according to the Bible, Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Father, directly atoned for sin by His sacrificial deed on the cross, Christians are more prone to feel free from judgment of "good and evil."

The second important factor affecting the quality of object relation possibility is the closeness between an infant and a mother. In the previous part, the author clarified that the commonality among the object relations theorists' works is that they all basically assume that humans are relational and dependent beings and their psychological difficulties come from the process of separation or differentiation. For Muslims, God is an almighty power who is beyond understanding, so He is unapproachable. For Christians, the Triune God provides them access to Him as their Father and Friend, and so they can experience intimate relationship with Him. God indwells the believers through the Holy Spirit. The difference in relationship difference between the two religious traditions comes from different understanding about God's being: an extremely transcendent Unity and a loving personal Trinity.

The third factor affecting the quality of object relation is illustrated by the models of "holding (Winnicott), "containing" (Bion), and "mirroring" (Kohut). According to the definition of object relations as an emotional state which makes a connection between self-representation and an object, the quality of the object that holds, contains or reflects the self is crucial in forming an emotional images about the self and the object. The idea of a "psychological position" by Klein also emphasizes the importance of being together with infants not making them feel angry, abandoned, and guilty. Another crucial point

on building a good quality relationship relates to the ability to integrate the good and the bad. Such good or bad feelings can be formed through the infants' interpretation about how a mother feels or responds to the infant's action. When a mother endures agony produced by an infant–sucking or biting the breast--and respond sensitively to the infant's action either by holding or containing the infant with her arms, an infant is capable to feel good and safe and can build up a healthy relationship with the mother. Considering this notion of holding or containing, the Christian God experiences the agony and suffering of humanity through His Incarnation, which are mirrored as well as resolved by His work on the cross. Furthermore, God opens a gate to resolve such bad feelings for His people through repentance and forgiveness; He continually shows His sincere will to make a deeper relationship with His people. While the Islamic God can be understood by Muslims as unreachable and punishing because of His extreme transcendence as a Unity, the Christian God can be perceived as intimate, forgiving, and "holding" as evidenced in the biblical concept of the Trinity.

This paper therefore attempts to discover some common concepts that explain psychological healthiness through the lens of the object-relations perspective. It also draws out how different views of God between Muslims and Christians affect their psychological well-being. Some obvious limitations and suggestions for further studies are in order. First, because of the author's lack of knowledge of Islamic and Christian theologies, a thorough comparison between these religions through primary sources was not made. An interdisciplinary study by theologians and psychologists is recommended to making up this limitation. The first part of this study did not include some well-known and important concepts like Separation-Individuation Process by Mahler and the Differentiation Process by Kernberg. It is thus recommended to review the object-relation theories from a wider perspective and scope in order to discover more common factors behind healing for wounded people.

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