

Cite this article: Maftouni, Nadia. Nuri, Mahmoud. (2026) Sacred Narratives: The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest. *Journal of Interreligious Studies on the Qur'an and the Bible*. Vol-3, Issue-1,

Sacred Narratives: The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest

Nadia Maftouni¹ , Mahmoud Nuri² 

(Received: 7 May 2026 - Accepted: 27 August 2026)

Abstract

Are altruism and self-interest truly opposites, or can they align within a redefined self? The present paper contends that the dichotomy dissolves when we move beyond the atomistic self of neoclassical economics and adopt a fluid, relational model of identity. Drawing on sacred narratives, the Judeo-Christian command to "Love your neighbor" and the Qur'anic concept of referring others over oneself, and a randomized experiment with 252 Iranians, we demonstrate that self-interest is shaped by how the self is defined. Biblical parables expand the self to include strangers, while Islamic narratives redefine it within a transcendent communal identity. Our experiment supports this: priming parental identity increased support for Afghan refugees by 12.5 percentage points when refugees were framed as parents.

By comparison, national priming increased support by 31.2 percentage points when refugees were framed as compatriots. These findings show that self-interest is not fixed but reflects salient group identity. We conclude that altruism and self-interest are not opposing ethical stances, but two aspects of the extended self, with important implications for behavioral economics, political psychology, and migration ethics.

¹. Professor of Philosophy, Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies, University of Tehran, Tehran, IRAN (**Corresponding Author**). nadia.maftouni@ut.ac.ir

². Assistant Professor, Khatam University, Tehran, IRAN. m.nuri@khatam.ac.ir

Keywords: Altruism, Self-interest, Fluid Self, Identity Salience, Immigration Preferences, Self-sacrifice, Good Samaritan, Behavioral Economics, Narrative Ethics.

Introduction

In a modest home in Medina, a lamp was quietly extinguished. A hungry guest had arrived, and Abū Ṭalḥa, a companion of the Prophet, volunteered to host him. Abū Ṭalḥa's family had only a small amount of food, barely enough for their own children. Instead of turning the guest away, Abū Ṭalḥa and his wife put their children to bed without supper, extinguished the lamp so the guest could not see, and pretended to eat with him. The guest ate his fill, unaware that his hosts had sacrificed their own meal (Bukhārī, 9th century/1997; Muslim, 9th century/2007). This story reflected in the Qur'anic verse "They give them preference over themselves, even though they themselves are in need," (Q. 59:9) exemplifies self-sacrifice, preferring others over oneself.

Consider a second story, set on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. A Jewish traveler is attacked and left half-dead by robbers; a priest and then a Levite, both religious leaders, pass by without helping; a Samaritan, from a group despised by Jews, stops to help. He bandages the man's wounds, takes him to an inn, pays for his care, and promises to cover further expenses (Luke 10:25-37). Jesus's audience, who viewed Samaritans as enemies, is surprised by this choice of hero. This parable, following the command to "Love your neighbor as yourself," (Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:31) offers a radical vision: the Samaritan expands his sense of self to include a stranger, even an enemy.

These two stories, one from Islamic tradition, one from the Christian Gospels, embody a profound philosophical puzzle that has occupied ethicists

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

and social scientists for centuries: 'Can an act be both self-interested and altruistic at the same time? Or are these two categories mutually exclusive'?

In Western moral philosophy, the dichotomy between egoism and altruism has been a persistent fault line. Thomas Hobbes (1651/1996) argued that all human action is ultimately self-interested, driven by the desire for self-preservation and pleasure. At the other extreme, Auguste Comte (1875), who coined the term "Altruism," insisted that genuine moral action must be entirely selfless, directed solely toward others with no regard for the self. Between these poles, Immanuel Kant's (1785/1998) deontology and David Hume's sentimentalism have offered various compromises, but the underlying binary, self or other, has rarely been questioned.

Yet the biblical and Qur'anic narratives suggest a more nuanced possibility. In the story of Abū Ṭalḥa, the host's action appears purely altruistic: he and his family go hungry so a stranger can eat; but from another angle, the act is profoundly self-interested, not in the material sense, but in a deeper, existential sense. Abū Ṭalḥa's identity as a generous host, a faithful Muslim, and a man of honor is constituted by this act. To refuse the guest would have been not merely ungenerous, but a betrayal of who he understood himself to be. The sacrifice was not a negation of self but its fulfillment. Similarly, the Good Samaritan does not act out of abstract duty or detached pity. He acts because his identity, as a compassionate human being, as someone who embodies the mercy he has perhaps received from others, demands it. His self is not diminished by the cost of the oil, the wine, the donkey, and the two denarii; it is enlarged. The wounded man becomes part of his extended self.

This paper argues that the binary between altruism and self-interest dissolves when we consider how individuals and the sacred traditions that

shape them, define the boundaries of the self. Drawing on Judeo-Christian and Islamic narratives and a randomized behavioral experiment on immigration preferences in Iran, we propose that both scripture and contemporary behavior support a key insight: what people see as their interest depends on how they define themselves.

The paper proceeds in four integrated layers:

Layer 1: The Critique of the Unitary Self: We examine the philosophical assumption of the rational, self-interested individual that underlies neoclassical economics and rational choice theory. We trace the emergence of this "Economic Self" and review critiques from philosophy, psychology, and behavioral economics that have challenged its empirical and conceptual validity.

Layer 2: Sacred Narratives as Models of the Fluid Self: We turn to the biblical tradition, analyzing the command to love one's neighbor as oneself and the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and the Qur'anic tradition, examining the concept of self-sacrifice through the narrative of the Anṣārī host. We argue that these texts present two complementary models: horizontal expansion (biblical) and vertical redefinition (Qur'anic). Both reject the altruism/self-interest binary.

Layer 3: Experimental Evidence: We present a randomized experiment conducted with 252 Iranian respondents. Using a priming technique that makes either parental or national identity salient, we test whether respondents' support for admitting Afghan refugees, framed either as parents or as compatriots, shifts in ways consistent with the fluid-self hypothesis. The results confirm that self-interest is identity-dependent and context-sensitive.

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

Layer 4: Synthesis and Implications: We draw the narrative and experimental evidence together, arguing that despite their differences in emphasis, expansion versus redefinition, both traditions and the empirical findings converge on a single insight: "Altruism and self-interest are not competing ethical stances but two facets of a single phenomenon. We discuss implications for behavioral economics, political psychology, migration policy, and interfaith ethics".

1. Part I: The Critique of the Unitary Self**1.1. The Economic Self and Its Philosophical Roots**

Modern economics, particularly in its neoclassical and rational-choice variants, rests on a deceptively simple assumption: "That individuals are rational, self-interested, and unitary actors who consistently pursue their material well-being. This economic self is the foundational unit of microeconomics, the building block upon which macro-level theories of trade, immigration, and public policy are constructed. The assumption is elegant, mathematically tractable, and powerfully predictive in certain domains; but it is also, as a growing chorus of philosophers, psychologists, and even economists has argued, profoundly impoverished as a description of actual human motivation".

The philosophical roots of this model stretch back to Thomas Hobbes (1651/1996), who famously described human life as "Solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" in the state of nature, driven by a restless desire for power and self-preservation. In Hobbes's framework, altruism is either a disguised form of self-interest or a dangerous illusion that must be subordinated to the sovereign's authority. A century later, Adam Smith, often misread as a simple

apologist for greed, offered a more nuanced picture: he recognized that self-interest in the marketplace coexists with moral sentiment and sympathy in private life (Smith, 1759/1976). But the Smith who wrote "The Theory of Moral Sentiments" was gradually eclipsed by the Smith (Smith, 1776/1976), and the "Economic Man" (*homo economicus*) was born, a figure driven solely by utility maximization, impervious to social context, and indifferent to the well-being of others except insofar as it affects his own.

This model has been extraordinarily influential. In international political economy, the "Open economy politics" (OEP) framework assumes that individuals form policy preferences based on their material self-interest, a worker in an import-competing industry opposes free trade, a skilled worker in an export-oriented industry supports it, and so on. Individuals' preferences are aggregated, and policy outcomes reflect the balance of these material interests (Lake, 2009 (a), 2009 (b); Oatley, 2011). The model is elegant, parsimonious, and, for many purposes, useful.

But it is also, as a growing body of empirical and philosophical criticism has shown, deeply flawed, not merely empirically, but conceptually. Even within economics, figures such as John Maynard Keynes (1936), Amartya Sen (1977), and more recently, behavioral economists like Daniel Kahneman and Richard Thaler (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008), have challenged the notion that human beings are unitary, rational utility-maximizers. Sen (1977), in particular, has argued that the "Rational Fool," the person who pursues only self-interest, is not only empirically rare but conceptually incoherent, because human identity is irreducibly plural and socially constituted.

1.2. Empirical Challenges from Behavioral Economics and IPE

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

Recent waves of research, notably in behavioral economics, have presented mounting evidence that people's choices often deviate significantly from material self-interest. Individuals' preferences frequently diverge sharply from theoretical predictions. Much of this research compares the predictions of IPE models with actual preferences regarding trade. Observed attitudes toward the international movement of capital appear to depend largely on symbolic and social factors rather than on material calculations (Chwioroth & Sinclair, 2013; Drezner & McNamara, 2013; Katzenstein & Nelson, 2013).

The application of the Stolper-Samuelson theorem to human capital provides a clear example. The theorem states that free trade benefits owners of the factor of production that is abundant in a country relative to international markets. At the same time, it harms owners of the relatively scarce factor. In advanced economies, educated labor is relatively abundant, so the educated are expected to support free trade, while the less educated are expected to oppose it. In developing countries, the opposite pattern is anticipated. Initial studies found a robust and significant correlation between individuals' level of education and their support for trade (O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2001; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001; Mayda & Rodrik, 2005). Further research, however, has cast doubt on this correlation. Once other predictors of preferences are controlled for, material self-interest explains little of the variation (Mansfield & Mutz, 2009; Wolfe & Mendelsohn, 2005; Kuo & Naoi, 2015).

Furthermore, even studies that confirm this correlation deny that it reflects material self-interest because individuals outside the labor force also exhibit similar correlations to comparable degrees (Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2006).

Thus, while education does have a positive effect on trade preferences, this effect is not driven by distributional concerns related to job skills. Moreover, attitudes toward trade have been shown to vary across industries (Rho & Tomz, 2015). A meta-analysis concludes that there is little evidence that voters understand their interests in such rational and materialistic terms (Hafner-Burton et al., 2017).

Three explanations have been offered for these deviations. The first points to non-material factors: "Ideological and cultural predispositions, such as racism, ethnocentrism, or social trust, strongly influence trade preferences (Edwards, 2006; Guisinger, 2009; Herrmann et al., 2001; Kaltenthaler et al., 2004; Kaltenthaler & Miller, 2013; Lindsey & Lake, 2014; Mansfield & Mutz, 2009; Mayda & Rodrik, 2005; O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2001; Rankin, 2001; Sabet, 2014; Rathbun, 2016). The second suggests that material self-interest does have an effect. Still, individuals place greater value on the interests of society as a whole, they care more about the overall health of the economy than personal gains (Mansfield & Mutz, 2009), or they are motivated by concerns about inequality (Lü, Scheve, & Slaughter, 2012). The third points to ignorance: "The average person relies on information shortcuts that often hold no more than symbolic value, such as national identity (Rankin, 2001; Rho & Tomz, 2017).

We argue, however, that while ignorance may explain some observed deviations from self-interest, it fails to account for many others. The opposition of many Iranians to admitting more Afghan immigrants is a case in point. Iranians have long been familiar with Afghans, as the country has hosted Afghan refugees for decades. More importantly, Iran is a downwardly mobile economy. Immigration does not bring the textbook economic benefits

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

associated with increasing the growth rate; rather, it merely accelerates the loss of jobs that would occur anyway in a shrinking economy. If neither economic calculation nor information shortcuts can account for these preference patterns, we must turn to how individuals cognitively and socially define their boundaries of concern.

1.3. The Plural, Fluid, and Narrative Self

The philosophical critique of the unitary self goes deeper than empirical anomalies. It strikes at the very heart of the assumption that there is a single, stable "Self" that can be said to have interests. As the philosopher Derek Parfit (1984) argued in his seminal work "Reasons and Persons," the self is not a persistent entity but a bundle of experiences, memories, and relationships whose boundaries are inherently porous. Parfit's reductionism has profound implications for ethics. If the self is not a fixed atom but a fluid constellation, then the distinction between self-interest and other-regard becomes less a matter of ontology than of perspective.

This insight has been explored from multiple philosophical traditions. In existentialist thought, Jean-Paul Sartre (1946/2007) argued that "Existence precedes essence," that we are not born with a fixed self but constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves through our choices. In the pragmatist tradition, George Herbert Mead (1934) showed that the self emerges through social interaction, internalizing others' perspectives in a continuous process of adjustment. In feminist philosophy, thinkers like Carol Gilligan (1982) and Nel Noddings (1984) have argued that the autonomous, atomistic self of Western philosophy is a masculine ideal that obscures the relational and care-based dimensions of moral life.

More recently, the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio (2010) has shown that the self is not a disembodied rational calculator but an embodied, emotional, and deeply social phenomenon. Our sense of self is shaped by our bodies, our environments, our relationships, and even our microbiomes (Rees et al., 2018). The boundaries of the self are not fixed but constantly shifting, expanding and contracting in response to context, emotion, and social connection.

As the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre (1984) has argued, human beings are fundamentally narrative creatures: we understand ourselves and our lives as stories, with beginnings, middles, and ends, with characters, conflicts, and resolutions. Our identities are constituted by the stories we tell about ourselves, and those stories are shaped by the traditions, communities, and relationships in which we are embedded. To ask "What is in my self-interest?" is to ask a question whose answer depends entirely on which story we are telling, and that story is always a choice, always a construction, always a narrative act.

This narrative, relational, and fluid conception of the self is not a modern invention. As the following sections will show, it is deeply embedded in the sacred traditions of the Judeo-Christian and Islamic worlds. The biblical and Qur'anic narratives are not merely collections of moral maxims; they are stories that shape the very structure of moral identity, expanding and redefining the boundaries of the self and the other in ways that challenge the narrow dichotomy between altruism and self-interest.

2. Part II: Sacred Narratives as Models of the Fluid Self

2.1. The Biblical Tradition: Horizontal Expansion

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest****2.1.1. The Command to Love**

The Hebrew Bible and the Christian New Testament share a foundational ethical command that has shaped Western moral philosophy for millennia: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Leviticus 19:18) Jesus of Nazareth identified this as the second great commandment, after love of God, and insisted that "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:40) Paul the Apostle, in his letter to the Galatians, declared that "The whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Galatians 5:14)

This command is deceptively simple, but its implications are profound. It presupposes a legitimate love of self; indeed, it makes self-love the measure and model of love for others. The command does not say "Sacrifice yourself for your neighbor" or "Neglect yourself in favor of your neighbor." It says "Love your neighbor as you already love yourself." Self-love is not condemned; it is assumed, affirmed, and then extended outward. The self is the starting point, but it is not the destination.

This structure has significant philosophical implications. It rejects the Augustinian (Augustine, 426/1998) and Comtean (Comte, 1875) ideal of pure selflessness, in which the self must be negated or suppressed. It also rejects the Hobbesian egoism (Hobbes, 1651/1996) in which the self is the only object of ultimate concern. Instead, it presents a model of moral action in which self-regard and other-regard are integrated within a single, expanding circle. The self is neither abandoned nor absolutized; it is enlarged.

2.1.2. The Parable of the Good Samaritan

The most powerful narrative embodiment of this command is the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). The parable is told in response to a

question from a legal expert who, seeking to justify himself, asks Jesus: "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus responds not with a definition but with a story, and in doing so, he subverts the very assumption underlying the question.

In the story, a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho is attacked by robbers, stripped, beaten, and left for dead. A priest passes by, sees him, and crosses to the other side. A Levite does the same. Both are religious officials who should, by their own law, be paragons of compassion and piety. Both fail. A Samaritan, a member of a despised and heretical sect, comes upon the wounded man. He is moved with compassion, bandages his wounds, pours oil and wine on them, takes him to an inn, pays for his care, and promises to return to cover any additional expenses.

The shock of the story would have been staggering to Jesus's original audience. Samaritans and Jews were bitter enemies, with centuries of ethnic, theological, and political hostility separating them. For a Jew, a Samaritan was not just a stranger but a heretic, a foreigner, an enemy. Yet in the parable, the Samaritan is the one who acts neighborly. The priest and the Levite, the religious insiders, are the failures.

Jesus concludes by asking: "Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" The legal expert, unable to say "The Samaritan" directly, replies: "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus tells him: "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:36-37)

The parable is not merely a lesson in helping others. It is a profound meditation on the nature of identity and the boundaries of the self. The Samaritan's action is not a simple act of charity; it is an act of identity reconfiguration. In the moment he stops, bandages the wounds, and pays the innkeeper, the Samaritan ceases to be "A Samaritan" in the narrow ethnic

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

sense and becomes "A neighbor" in the expansive ethical sense. He does not merely help the wounded man; he includes him within the circle of his concern, his identity, and his self.

The parable thus challenges the audience to rethink who counts as "Us" and who counts as "Them." The question "Who is my neighbor?" is turned on its head. The point is not to identify the neighbor as a pre-existing category but to become a neighbor through action. The neighbor is not a fixed identity but a relational achievement. The self is not a static unit but a dynamic, expanding entity whose boundaries are redrawn by acts of compassion.

This narrative structure is mirrored in the New Testament's broader vision of the Christian community. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, declares that "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28) This is not a denial of particular identities but their subsumption within a higher, more comprehensive identity. The boundaries of the self are expanded to include those who were previously excluded, and in this expansion, the self is not diminished but enriched.

The biblical tradition, then, offers a model of the self that is inherently relational and expandable. It does not reject self-love; it assumes it and extends it. It does not demand pure altruism; it demands a love that is continuous with self-love but reaches beyond it. The self is the starting point, but the circle must be drawn ever wider.

2.2. The Qur'anic Tradition: Vertical Redefinition**2.2.1. The Concept of Self-sacrifice**

The Qur'an introduces a term that captures a related but distinct vision of self-other relations: "Self-sacrifice," which translates as "Preferring others

over oneself" or "Giving preference to others." The term appears in a crucial verse that describes the character of the early Muslim community in Medina:

"And those who were settled in the home and in faith before them, love those who emigrated to them, and find no unease in their hearts about what they are given, and give them preference over themselves, even though they themselves are in need. And those who are saved from the covetousness of their own souls, it is they who are the successful ones." (Q. 59:9)

This verse was revealed in the context of the early Islamic community in Medina, which had received Muslim refugees from Mecca (the emigrants) fleeing persecution. The Medinan hosts (the Anṣār) welcomed the refugees and shared their homes, their resources, and their lives with them. The verse praises the Anṣār for their generosity, but it adds a crucial qualification: they prefer others over themselves even though they themselves are in need. This is not the generosity of the wealthy giving to the poor; it is the generosity of the poor sharing with the poorer.

2.2.2. The Narrative of the Anṣārī Host

The theological meaning of this verse is brought to life in a narrative preserved in the canonical hadith literature. The story, which has been transmitted through multiple chains of narration, describes a specific event that is believed to have occasioned the revelation of the verse (Bukhārī, 9th century/1997; Muslim, 9th century/2007):

A man came to the Prophet Muhammad and said, "I am hungry." The Prophet sent word to his wives to find something to feed him, but they had nothing. He then called out: "Who will host this man?" A man from the Anṣār identified in some versions as Abū Ṭalḥa, stood up and said, "I will, O

Sacred Narratives:

The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest

Messenger of God." He took the guest to his home and said to his wife: "Honor the guest of the Messenger of God".

His wife replied: "We have nothing but a small portion of food for the children." He said: "Put the children to bed, and when we sit to eat, extinguish the lamp. We will pretend to eat while the guest eats." So she put the children to bed without supper, extinguished the lamp, and they sat with the guest, pretending to eat while he ate alone in the darkness. The guest ate his fill, and the family went hungry.

The next morning, the man went to the Prophet, who said to him: "God was well-pleased with what you and your wife did last night." And the verse was revealed: "They give them preference over themselves, even though they themselves are in need." (Q. 59:9)

The details of the story are crucial. The family does not simply share their food; they have nothing to share. Their children are hungry. Yet they devise a plan to preserve the guest's dignity while sacrificing their own meal. They extinguish the lamp so the guest cannot see what they are doing. They pretend to eat. The act is not ostentatious or self-congratulatory; it is hidden, silent, and humble.

2.2.3. Redefinition, Not Mere Expansion

How should we understand this act? In the biblical tradition, as we saw, the Samaritan expands the circle of his self to include the wounded man. The Samaritan's self is stretched but remains essentially intact. In the Qur'anic narrative, however, something different occurs. Abū Ṭalḥa does not merely expand his self to include the guest; he redefines his self entirely. In that

moment, his identity as "Hungry Father" is subordinated to his identity as "Host" and "Member of the Ummah." The self is not stretched; it is relocated.

This is a crucial distinction. The biblical model is horizontal: the circle of concern is widened to include more and more others. The Qur'anic model is vertical: the self is lifted out of its everyday, material identity and relocated into a spiritual and communal identity that transcends the body's immediate needs. Abū Ṭalḥa's action is not merely generous; it is transformative. His self, as a hungry individual, is replaced by a self that is defined by its relationship to God, the Prophet, and the community.

The Qur'anic concept of self-sacrifice is therefore more radical than the biblical concept of neighbor-love. It does not require merely that we love others as we love ourselves; it requires that we prefer others to ourselves, even when we ourselves are in need. This is not a rejection of self-interest but a redefinition of what the self is and where its true interests lie. The self that prefers others over itself is not a self that has been negated; it is a self that has been saved from the covetousness of its own soul. The verse concludes: "And those who are saved from the covetousness of their own souls, it is they who are the successful ones." (Q. 59:9) Success, in this framework, is not the fulfillment of material desire but the liberation of the self from its own narrowness.

This vision of the self is consistent with the broader Qur'anic anthropology. The Qur'an repeatedly warns against the "Capricious Soul," (Q 12:53) the self that commands evil and follows base desires. But it also speaks of the "Reproaching soul" (Q 75:2) and the "Tranquil Soul," (Q 89:27) souls that are capable of self-criticism, growth, and ultimately, peace. The self is not a fixed essence but a dynamic entity that can be trained, disciplined, and transformed.

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

The practice of self-sacrifice is one of the means by which this transformation occurs.

The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." (Bukhārī, 9th century/1997, Book 2, Hadith 13) This hadith, which echoes the biblical command to love one's neighbor as oneself, expresses the same insight: the boundaries of love, and of self, must be extended to include the other. But in the Qur'anic framework, this extension is not merely a matter of broadening the circle; it is a matter of transforming the self so thoroughly that the other's well-being becomes indistinguishable from one's own.

2.2.4. Convergence and Divergence

The biblical and Qur'anic traditions, as we have seen, offer two distinct but complementary models of the self-other relation. The biblical tradition, embodied in the command to love one's neighbor as oneself and the Parable of the Good Samaritan, presents a model of horizontal expansion: "The self is the starting point, but its circle of concern must be progressively widened to include strangers, foreigners, and even enemies. The self is not negated but stretched, not abandoned but enlarged".

The Qur'anic tradition, embodied in the concept of self-sacrifice and the narrative of the Anṣārī host, presents a model of vertical redefinition: "The self is not merely stretched but relocated within a spiritual and communal identity that transcends material need. The self is not expanded but transformed, not stretched but saved. Material interest is not the measure of self-interest; spiritual and communal identity is".

Despite these differences, the two traditions share a profound convergence: "Both reject the dichotomy between altruism and self-interest. In both traditions, an act that appears to be pure self-sacrifice can be understood as an expression of a deeper, more comprehensive self-interest, an interest in the well-being of a self that has been expanded or redefined to include the other. The self is not the enemy of altruism; it is its very condition".

3. Part III: Experimental Evidence, Testing the Fluid Self in Contemporary Iran

3.1. Research Question and Hypotheses

The narrative traditions examined above suggest that the boundaries of the self are porous and malleable, and that what individuals perceive as their interest depends on which identity is salient; but do these insights hold up to empirical scrutiny? Can we observe the fluidity of self-interest in real-world policy preferences? To answer these questions, we designed a randomized experiment to test whether priming specific identities, parental and national, shifts Iranian respondents' support for admitting Afghan refugees, and whether this effect depends on the congruence between the primed identity and the question's framing.

Immigration has been one of the most contentious issues in international political economy. Iran hosts a sizable population of Afghan refugees, the vast majority of whom are low-skilled workers. This makes them an ideal subject for an experiment that can address some common objections raised against other studies. It is well known that high-skilled and low-skilled workers have different preferences regarding the free movement of human capital across borders (O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2001; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001; Mayda &

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

Rodrik, 2005). In a group of immigrants consisting of both low-skilled and high-skilled workers, it can be difficult to determine how much of respondents' preferences stem from perceived threats to their own factor of production. By focusing on low-skilled Iranian workers as respondents, we ensure that the only variable being manipulated is their conception of self.

We test two hypotheses:

H1: Priming a parental identity before presenting a parental frame will increase the likelihood that participants view the interests of refugees as aligned with their own self-interest, compared to cross-priming conditions.

H2: Priming a national identity before presenting a national frame will increase the likelihood that participants view refugees' interests as aligned with their own self-interest, compared with cross-priming conditions.

Experimental Design

A total of 252 subjects participated in the study, of whom 108 were male and 144 were female. Depending on their group assignment, participants were asked one of two core questions:

- Do you think it is in our interest to allow Afghan refugees with children into the country?
- Do you think it is in our interest to allow Afghan refugees who identify as Iranian into the country?

Conventional methods of hypothesis testing, such as using a treatment group and a control group without treatment, are insufficient to defend the proposed theory fully. Suppose, for example, we use a parental prime, highlighting that some refugees have children, and then subject the treatment group to a parental prime before asking a question framed in parental terms. One might object that this approach does not provide evidence of self-interest,

since any prime highlighting the plight of refugees could elicit support. To address this concern, we tested two primes and frames, one of which does not involve appeals to suffering or hardship. The national prime and frame may also be criticized; critics might argue that emphasizing a refugee's affinity for the host country reduces perceived risks, thereby increasing support for refugees on those grounds.

Even testing these hypotheses may not suffice to prove the theory. Therefore, we introduced two additional conditions involving cross-priming. Under these conditions, respondents received either the parental or the national prime, as in the initial conditions, and then responded to a question framed in opposition to their prime.

To be specific, subjects were randomly assigned to one of four conditions:

1. Parental Prime + Parental Frame: Participants were first primed to think about their identity as parents (using parental-identity priming questions adapted from Klar, 2013) before reading a frame describing refugees as parents.

2. National Prime + National Frame: Participants were primed to think about their national identity (using national-identity questions adapted from Levendusky, 2018) before reading a frame portraying refugees as compatriots.

3. Parental Prime + National Frame: Participants were primed to consider their parental identity before reading a frame about refugees as compatriots.

4. National Prime + Parental Frame: Participants were primed to think about their national identity before reading a frame about refugees as parents.

Conditions 3 and 4 served as cross-prime controls.

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest****3.2. National Framing: Historical and Cultural Validity**

Referring to "Afghan refugees who consider themselves Iranian" as a form of national framing may seem unconvincing or unjustified to many people worldwide, and rightly so. However, Afghanistan's history sets its relationship with Iran apart from that of typical immigrant experiences elsewhere.

The territory known today as Afghanistan was carved out of Iran around the turn of the 20th century, primarily as a buffer zone between the British and Russian Empires, without any basis in racial, linguistic, religious, or ethnic differences. Most Afghans are Persian or Persian-speaking, and many identify as Iranian, with some even hoping for reunification. Additionally, Afghans who migrate to Iran are almost exclusively from these Persian-speaking communities, a fact widely recognized within Iran.

It is within this historical context that the national prime is presented. Afghans identifying as Iranian is not simply an expression of intent to immigrate or a matter of individual self-identification. Rather, it reflects a particular interpretation of history and a collective sense of identity that extends beyond the individual, encompassing all Afghans and Afghanistan as a whole. Accordingly, Iranian respondents understand the framing "Afghan refugees who consider themselves Iranian" in this broader historical and collective sense.

Results

Responses were recorded as binary variables, with participants either agreeing or disagreeing with the question. Public opinion in Iran on this issue is sufficiently strong and polarized to make more nuanced measures, such as a Likert scale, unnecessary.

Respondents in the cross-priming conditions (conditions 3 and 4), which served as the control, generally disagreed that allowing refugees in was in their interest. In contrast, those who received the congruent priming treatment (conditions 1 and 2) showed a noticeably higher level of agreement with the statement, not overwhelmingly high, but statistically significant.

Condition	Cross-Primed (Control)	Primed (Treatment)	ATE
Parental	0.31	0.43	0.125
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.043)
National	0.25	0.56	0.312
	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.042)

Note: Cell entries are the mean proportions of respondents who agree that refugee admission is in their interest. Standard errors are in parentheses. ATE = Average Treatment Effect.

The results confirm that respondents' perception of what is in their interest aligns with their sense of self. Specifically, the findings indicate that if someone is primed to think of themselves as a parent or as an Iranian, they are significantly more likely to perceive it as being in their interest to welcome refugees who are parents or identify as Iranians, respectively.

It is worth noting that participants were explicitly asked about self-interest, rather than more ambiguous concepts such as approval or disapproval, which are common in experimental literature. Approval can have a variety of meanings, ranging from altruistic moral responsibility to self-interest.

The parental prime is less effective than the national prime. This may be because patriotic sentiments are particularly strong in Iran for historical

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

reasons, or because having children is not a sufficiently distinctive feature. A larger proportion of people in Iran are parents than in the United States or Canada, which may make it harder for Iranians to view parenthood as a distinctive identity that marks a subgroup rather than a common characteristic shared by most people. However, the sample size is unfortunately too small, and the standard errors are too large to support firm conclusions.

3.3. Discussion of Experimental Findings

These results confirm that priming specific identities significantly alters how individuals frame their economic interests. The findings are robust across two distinct identity primes (parental and national) and two corresponding frames. The congruence affects the increase in support when prime and frame match, is consistent with the fluid-self hypothesis: respondents are not simply expressing general altruism or xenophobia; they are expressing self-interest as defined by their salient identity.

Several limitations should be noted. First, we had originally planned to experiment with a larger sample size and made meticulous preparations. From the outset, however, several challenges arose. Chief among them was that Iran remained in the grip of the pandemic. Part of the study also coincided with a wave of feminist activism that swept across the country. This movement had multiple consequences, including heightened emotional responses, which may call into question the applicability of the findings under normal circumstances. However, both the priming and cross-priming conditions were conducted under similar circumstances, so prevailing social sentiments should have affected both equally.

Second, to what extent do the findings on human capital apply to other forms of capital? One possible objection is that people's sympathy may extend to

other humans, but not to oil, manufactured goods, or other inanimate commodities that cross borders. Two considerations can help alleviate this concern. First, the experiment focuses on self-interest rather than altruism. Second, other forms of capital also affect people and their well-being. If respondents' sympathy for individuals influences their reasoning, it could likewise extend to other trade-related issues. Indeed, it may even be easier to appeal to people's sympathies in the case of other forms of capital, precisely because there are fewer countervailing factors than in the case of immigration. Immigration involves helping people by admitting them to one's country, thereby accepting potential risks. In contrast, the movement of other forms of capital can benefit other nations without raising the same security or cultural concerns that often accompany immigration.

Third, how can we be sure that people interpreted the hypothesis question as intended? This is a genuine limitation, not only of this study, but of nearly all research that relies on verbal cues. That said, the question was designed to be clearer than those typically used in similar studies. Rather than asking about approval or disapproval, or agreement or disagreement, it explicitly refers to self-interest, the counterpart of altruism, and vice versa.

4. Part IV: Synthesis, Two Models, One Insight, and Its Implications

4.1. Convergence of Narrative and Experimental Evidence

The two sources of evidence examined in this paper, sacred narratives and behavioral experimentation, are methodologically distinct. One is hermeneutical and interpretive; the other is empirical and quantitative. Yet they converge on a single, powerful conclusion: the sharp binary between

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

altruism and self-interest collapses once we recognize that the self is not a fixed, atomistic, unitary entity but a fluid, relational, and context-dependent construct.

The biblical and Qur'anic narratives anticipate this insight in profound ways. The Good Samaritan does not act against his self-interest; he expands his self to include the wounded stranger. The Anṣārī host does not negate his self; he redefines it, relocating his identity from hungry parent to faithful host and member of the Ummah. In both cases, what appears from the outside as pure altruism is, from the inside, an expression of a reconfigured self-interest.

The experimental evidence corroborates this narrative logic. Iranian respondents who were primed to think of themselves as parents were significantly more likely to view the admission of refugee parents as aligned with their own interests. Those primed with national identity were even more likely to view the admission of compatriot refugees as self-interested. The congruence affects the dramatic increase in support when prime and frame match, demonstrates that self-interest is not a fixed preference but a malleable judgment that shifts with the boundaries of the salient self.

This convergence is not accidental. Both the narratives and the experiment point to the same underlying mechanism: identity salience structures perception of interest; when a particular identity is activated, whether through a story that reconfigures moral imagination or through a prime that makes a social category cognitively accessible, the boundaries of the self-shift and with them, and the calculus of what benefits or harms "me."

4.2. What the Two Traditions Teach Us About the Fluid Self

The biblical and Qur'anic traditions, despite their theological differences, offer complementary models of how the self can be reconfigured:

- Horizontal Expansion (Biblical): The self is stretched to include others. The circle of concern widens progressively, from family to tribe to nation to stranger to enemy. Self-love is not rejected but extended. The command "Love your neighbor as yourself" presupposes that self-love is the measure, but it demands that the measure be applied ever more broadly.

- Vertical Redefinition (Qur'anic): The self is not merely stretched but relocated. Material identity is subordinated to spiritual and communal identity. The self that prefers others over itself is not a self that has been negated but a self that has been saved from its own narrowness. The practice of self-sacrifice transforms the self from within, reorienting it toward its true end.

These two models are not mutually exclusive; they are mutually reinforcing. A self can be both expanded (by including more others) and redefined (by relocating its center of gravity). Together, they offer a richer, more nuanced account of moral motivation than the impoverished dichotomy of altruism versus self-interest.

4.3. Implications for Behavioral Economics and Political Psychology

The findings of this paper have significant implications for our understanding of economic behavior and political preferences.

First, they challenge the foundational assumption of neoclassical economics that individuals are rational, self-interested utility-maximizers with stable preferences. The experiment demonstrates that preferences are not stable but shift with identity salience. This does not mean that individuals are irrational; it means that their rationality is embedded in a social and narrative context. As Sen (1977) argued, the "Rational Fool" is a conceptual mistake because

Sacred Narratives:**The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest**

human identity is irreducibly plural. This paper provides empirical support for Sen's philosophical critique.

Second, they suggest that the open economy politics (OEP) framework, which aggregates individual material interests to explain policy outcomes, is incomplete. Observed deviations from material self-interest are not anomalies to be explained away by ignorance or non-material factors; they are expressions of a different kind of self-interest, one that is defined by identity rather than material endowments. The challenge for IPE is not to abandon self-interest but to theorize it more adequately, recognizing that the "Self" in self-interest is itself a variable.

Third, they have implications for the study of political behavior more broadly. The finding that identity primes can shift policy preferences by over 30 percentage points (in the national condition) suggests that political attitudes are highly malleable and context-dependent. This has implications for how we understand voting behavior, public opinion, and the effectiveness of political messaging. Frames that resonate with salient identities are likely to be more persuasive than those that do not

4.4. Implications for Migration Policy and Intergroup Relations

The findings also have practical implications for migration policy and intergroup relations. In Iran, as in many other countries, immigration is a contentious issue. The experiment shows that support for admitting refugees can be significantly increased by activating identities that overlap with refugees' characteristics, such as parenthood or shared national origins. This suggests that policymakers and advocates who wish to build support for refugee admission may benefit from framing the issue in terms of shared identities rather than abstract humanitarianism.

However, this insight cuts both ways. Just as identity can be activated to expand the circle of concern, it can also be activated to contract it. The same mechanism that makes Iranians more welcoming to Afghan refugees who "Identify as Iranian" could, in other contexts, make them more hostile to refugees who are framed as outsiders. Identity is a double-edged sword. The ethical challenge is not to eliminate identity but to shape it, through narratives, education, and policy, in ways that expand rather than contract the boundaries of the self.

The biblical and Qur'anic traditions offer resources for this ethical project. The Good Samaritan and the Anṣārī host are not abstract ideals but concrete narratives that shape moral imagination. They invite us to see the other not as a threat but as an extension of ourselves, not as a rival but as a neighbor. In a world of migration, climate displacement, and polarizing identity politics, these narratives are more urgent than ever.

5. Philosophical Conclusion: The Self as a Door

In the end, the altruism/self-interest dichotomy collapses not because altruism is disguised self-interest, nor because self-interest is impossible, but because the self itself is not the fixed, atomistic, unitary entity that the dichotomy presupposes. The self is fluid, relational, and narrative, and in that fluidity, altruism and self-interest meet.

The two stories with which this paper began, the darkness of a Medina home and a blood-stained road to Jericho, have shaped the moral imagination of billions of people over centuries. They challenge us to ask: Who counts as our neighbor? How far does the circle of our concern extend? Can we prefer

Sacred Narratives:

The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest

others over ourselves, even when we ourselves are in need? And in that preference, do we lose ourselves or find ourselves?

The answer this paper has proposed is that we do neither, or rather, both. In preferring others over ourselves, in expanding the circle of our concern, in redefining our identity to include the other, we do not lose ourselves but find them. We discover that the self is not a fortress to be defended but a gift to be offered, not a possession to be guarded but a relation to be cultivated. The boundary between self and other is not a wall but a door, and it swings both ways.

The biblical and Qur'anic traditions, read in dialogue with contemporary behavioral science, remind us that the self is not given but made, made through narratives that expand the imagination, through practices that reshape desire, and through communities that sustain transformation. They invite us to become neighbors, hosts, and companions to those we have been taught to fear. In doing so, they offer not only a critique of the impoverished self of modern economics but a vision of what it means to be fully human: a self that grows not by accumulating but by giving, that expands not by excluding but by including, that finds itself not by clinging to itself but by losing itself in love of the other.

References

- Augustine of Hippo. (1998 AD). *The City of God against the Pagans*. (Dyson, R. W. Trans). N.p.: Cambridge University Press.
- Bukhārī, M. (1997 AD). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. (Khan, M. Trans). N.p.: Darussalam.

- Campbell, T. H; Kay, A. C. (2014 AD). "Solution Aversion: On the Relation between Ideology and Motivated Disbelief." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 107(5), 809-824.
- Chwieroth, J. M; Sinclair, T. J. (2013 AD). "How You Stand Depends on How We See: International Capital Mobility as a Social Fact." *Review of International Political Economy*. 20(3), 457-485.
- Comte, A. (1875 AD). *System of Positive Polity*. (Vol. 1). N.P.: Longmans, Green, and Co.
- Damasio, A. (2010 AD). *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain*. N.p.: Pantheon Books.
- Drezner, D. W; McNamara, K. R. (2013 AD). "International Political Economy, Global Financial Orders and the 2008 Financial Crisis." *Perspectives on Politics*. 11(1), 155-166.
- Edwards, M. S. (2006 AD). "Public Opinion Regarding Economic and Cultural Globalization: Evidence from a Cross-national Survey." *Review of International Political Economy*. 13(4), 587-608.
- Egan, P. J; Mullin, M. (2017 AD). "Climate Change: U.S. Public Opinion." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 20, 209-227.
- Ellemers, N; Haslam, S. A. (2012 AD). "Social Identity Theory." In P. A. M. Van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of theories of social psychology* (pp. 379-398). Sage Publications.
- Fordham, B. O; Kleinberg, K. B. (2012 AD). "How Can Economic Interests Affect Support for Free Trade?" *International Organization*. 66(2), 311-328.
- Gilligan, C. (1982 AD). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. N.p.: Harvard University Press.

Sacred Narratives:

The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest

- Green, D. P; Palmquist, B; Schickler, E. (2002 AD). *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters*. N.p.: Yale University Press.
- Greenlee, J. S. (2014 AD). *The Political Consequences of Motherhood*. N.p.: University of Michigan Press.
- Guisinger, A. (2009 AD). "Determining Trade Policy: Do Voters Hold Politicians Accountable?" *International Organization*, 63(3), 533–557.
- Hafner Burton, E. M; Haggard, S; Lake, D. A; Victor, D. G. (2017 AD). "The Behavioral Revolution in the Study of International Relations." *International Organization*. 71(S1), S1-S31.
- Hainmueller, J; Hiscox, M. J. (2006 AD). "Learning to Love Globalization: Education and Individual Attitudes toward International Trade." *International Organization*. 60(2), 469-498.
- Herrmann, R. K; Tetlock, P. E; Diascro, M. N. (2001 AD). "How Americans Think about Trade: Reconciling Conflicts among Money, Power, and Principles." *International Studies Quarterly*. 45(2), 191-218.
- Hobbes, T. (1996 AD). *Leviathan*. (R. Tuck, Ed.). Cambridge University Press .
- Huddy, L. (2001 AD). "From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory." *Political Psychology*. 22(1), 127-156.
- Kahan, D. M; Jenkins-Smith, H; Braman, D. (2011 AD). "Cultural Cognition of Scientific Consensus." *Journal of Risk Research*. 14(2), 147-174.
- Kaltenthaler, K; Gelleny, R. D; Ceccoli, S. J. (2004 AD). "Explaining Citizen Support for Trade Liberalization." *International Studies Quarterly*. 48(4), 829-851.

- Kaltenthaler, K; Miller, W. J. (2013 AD). "Social Psychology and Public Support for Trade Liberalization." *International Studies Quarterly*. 57(4), 784-790.
- Kant, I. (1998 AD). *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. (M. Gregor, Trans). Cambridge University Press .
- Katzenstein, P. J; Nelson, S. C. (2013 AD). "Reading the Right Signals and Reading the Signals Right: IPE and the Financial Crisis of 2008." *Review of International Political Economy*. 20(5), 1101-1131.
- Keynes, J. M. (1936 AD). *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. Macmillan.
- Klar, S. (2013 AD). "The Influence of Competing Identity Primes on Political Preferences." *The Journal of Politics*. 75(4), 1108-1124.
- Kuo, J; Naoi, M. (2015 AD). "Individual Preferences." In L. L. Martin (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of the political economy of international trade* (pp. 99-118). Oxford University Press.
- Lake, D. A. (2009 AD (a)). "Open Economy Politics: A Critical Review." *Review of International Organizations*. 4, 219-244.
- Lake, D. A. (2009 AD (b)). "Trips Across the Atlantic: Theory and Epistemology in IPE." *Review of International Political Economy*. 16(1), 47-57.
- Levendusky, M. S. (2018 AD). "When Efforts to Depolarize the Electorate Fail." *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 82(3), 583-592.
- Lindsey, D; Lake, D. A. (2014 AD). *The Moral Foundations of Individual-level Foreign Policy Preferences*. Working paper, University of California, San Diego.

Sacred Narratives:

The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest

- Lü, X; Scheve, K; Slaughter, M. J. (2012 AD). "Inequity Aversion and the International Distribution of Trade Protection." *American Journal of Political Science*. 56(3), 638-654.
- MacIntyre, A. (1984 AD). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. 2nd Ed. University of Notre Dame Press.
- Mansfield, E. D; Mutz, D. C. (2009 AD). "Support for Free Trade: Self-interest, Sociotropic Politics, and Out-group Anxiety." *International Organization*. 63(3), 425-457.
- Mayda, A. M; Rodrik, D. (2005 AD). "Why Are Some People (and countries) More Protectionist than Others?" *European Economic Review*. 49(6), 1393-1430.
- McNamara, K. R. (2009 AD). "Of Intellectual Monocultures and the Study of IPE." *Review of International Political Economy*. 16(1), 72-84.
- Mead, G. H. (1934 AD). *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*. University of Chicago Press.
- Melitz, M. J. (2003 AD). "The Impact of Trade on Intra-industry Reallocations and Aggregate Industry Productivity." *Econometrica*. 71(6), 1695-1725.
- Muslim, I. (2007 AD). *Şahîh Muslim*. (KhatTab, N. A. Trans). Darussalam.
- Noddings, N. (1984 AD). *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. University of California Press.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (1990 AD). *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. Oxford University Press.
- Oatley, T. (2011 AD). "The Reductionist Gamble: Open Economy Politics in the Global Economy." *International Organization*. 65(2), 311-341.

- O'Rourke, K. H; Sinnott, R. (2001 AD). "The Determinants of Individual Trade Policy Preferences: International Survey Evidence." In S. M. Collins & D. Rodrik (Eds.), *Brookings Trade Forum* (pp. 157-206). Brookings Institution.
- Parfit, D. (1984 AD). *Reasons and Persons*. Oxford University Press.
- Rankin, D. M. (2001 AD). "Identities, Interests, and Imports." *Political Behavior*. 23(4), 351-376.
- Rathbun, B. (2016 AD). "Wedges and Widgets: Liberalism, Libertarianism, and the Trade Attitudes of the American Mass Public and Elites." *Foreign Policy Analysis*. 12(1), 85-108.
- Rees, T; Bosch, T; Douglas, A. E. (2018 AD). "How the Micro Biome Challenges Our Concept of Self." *PLOS Biology*. 16(2), e2005358.
- Rho, S; Tomz, M. (2015 AD). *Industry, Self-interest, and Individual Preferences over Trade Policy*. Working paper, Stanford University.
- Rho, S; Tomz, M. (2017 AD). "Why Don't Trade Preferences Reflect Economic Self-interest?" *International Organization*. 71(S1), S85-S108.
- Ricoeur, P. (1992 AD). *Oneself as Another*. (Blamey, K. Trans). University of Chicago Press.
- Sabet, S. (2014 AD). *Feelings First: Non-material Factors as Moderators of Self-Interest Effects on Trade Preferences*. Working paper, Princeton University.
- Sartre, J.-P. (2007 AD). *Existentialism Is a Humanism*. (Macomber, C. Trans). Yale University Press .
- Scheve, K. F; Slaughter, M. J. (2001 AD). "What Determines Individual Trade-policy Preferences?" *Journal of International Economics*. 54(2), 267-292.

Sacred Narratives:

The Boundary of Altruism and Self-Interest

- Sen, A. (1977 AD). "Rational Fools: A Critique of the Behavioral Foundations of Economic Theory." *Philosophy & Public Affairs*. 6(4), 317-344.
- Smith, A. (1976 AD). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. (Campbell, R. H; Skinner, A. S. Eds). Oxford University Press .
- Smith, A. (1976 AD). *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. (D. D. Raphael & A. L. Macfie, Eds). Oxford University Press .
- Stets, J. E; Burke, P. J. (2000 AD). "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory." *Social Psychology Quarterly*. 63(3), 224-237.
- Tajfel, H; Turner, J. C. (1979 AD). "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict." In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations*. Brooks/Cole.
- Tajfel, H; Turner, J. C. (1986 AD). "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior." In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 2–24). Hall Publishers.
- Thaler, R. H; Sunstein, C. R. (2008 AD). *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness*. Yale University Press.
- The Qur'an: A New Translation. (2011 AD). ('Abd al-Ḥalīm, M. Trans). N.p.: Oxford University Press.
- Turner, J. C; Hogg, M. A; Oakes, P. J; Reicher, S. D; Wetherell, M. S. (1987 AD). *Rediscovering the Social Group: A self-categorization Theory*. Basil Blackwell.
- Tversky, A; Kahneman, D. (1973 AD). "Availability: A Heuristic for Judging Frequency and Probability." *Cognitive Psychology*, 5(2), 207-232.
- Whitmarsh, L; O'Neill, S. (2010 AD). "Green Identity, Green Living? The Role of Pro-environmental Self-identity in Determining Consistency

Across Diverse Pro-Environmental Behaviors." *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 30(3), 305-314.

Wolfe, R; Mendelsohn, M. (2005 AD). "Values and Interests in Attitudes toward Trade and Globalization: The Continuing Compromise of Embedded Liberalism." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. 38(1), 45-68.

Zaller, J. (1992 AD). *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press.

Zondervan NIV Study Bible. (2011 AD). Zondervan.