

The Role of Image Schemas in the Conceptualization of ‘Satan’ in the Holy Quran

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ABSTRACT

Cognitive research shows that humans use embodied and experiential notions to comprehend abstract concepts. The Holy Quran, as a linguistic text, employs concrete and bodily-based concepts to express abstract ideas beyond sensory perception. This study investigates the conceptualization model of Satan in the Quran and examines its impact on the human tendency to follow him. To achieve this aim, the research adopts an analytical method grounded in cognitive semantics and particularly in Mark Johnson's (1987) theory of embodied meaning and image schemas. Verses containing the keywords ‘Satan,’ ‘Demons,’ and ‘Iblis’ were extracted, together with related verses, forming a corpus of 129 Quranic verses for metaphor and schema analysis. Findings reveal four schema categories: (1) force, balance, and motion schemas conceptualizing Satan's actions; (2) link, contact, and support schemas depicting Satan's interaction and behavior with humans; (3) spatial schemas (near–far, center–periphery, and container) describing Satan's position in creation; and (4) process schema illustrating Satan's practical strategy. These schema categories constitute a cognitive model based on embodied experience that enhances understanding of the abstract concept of Satan and his actions, providing deeper conceptual insight into the Quranic worldview.

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Introduction

Religious texts—especially the Quran, Islam’s foundational text—give special attention to Satan as a deceiver, enemy of humanity, and emblem of evil; the Quran portrays him as a tempter who misleads. Fully grasping this abstract notion and how it is communicated requires modern analytic methods; cognitive linguistics, as a new approach to language study, offers an effective framework for analyzing such concepts. From a cognitive-linguistic view, image schemas—dynamic, recurring patterns shaped by human sensorimotor experience—structure complex abstract concepts, providing meaning and a foundation for understanding and argumentation about their abstract forms (Johnson 1987). Within this framework, the Holy Quran was revealed to humankind as a text using image schemas to conceptualize abstract concepts such as ‘Satan.’

Given the long tradition of theological, lexical, and exegetical work on ‘Satan,’ this study adopts image schema analysis to conceptualize Satan. It extracts recurrent schemas from the Quranic text and, where relevant, consults classical Arabic lexica, interpretations, and etymological sources to build a model grounded in human physical experience. This study identifies the image schemas structuring the Quran’s conceptualization of Satan and assesses their impact on perceptions of his role and status.

By offering a new analysis of Satan’s conceptualization in the Quran, the study advances understanding of religious concepts and their communication through cognitive linguistic tools. This approach enriches Quranic scholarship and enables interdisciplinary work between religious studies and cognitive science.

This research seeks to identify Quranic image schemas conceptualizing Satan and examine how they facilitate audience understanding.

Literature Review

Extensive studies have explored Satan's identity, his position in the creation system, his characteristics, his methods of misleading humans, and strategies to counter him. In his study entitled "Satan's Role in Adam's Story (In the Holy Quran and the Torah)," Badran (2020) examines the role of Iblis in Adam's story in the Quranic verses and compares it with Jewish and Christian teachings.

In his article "Satan in Milton's Paradise Lost, the Bible and the Quran" (2022), Solaiman has compared Abrahamic teachings on Satan with Milton's writings in 'Paradise Lost.'

Sakat, Masruri, Dakir, and Abdullah (2015), in an article entitled "The Jinn, Devil and Satan: A Review on Qur'anic Concept," have discussed the distinctions between Iblis, Satan, and Jinn in the Quran.

In his article, "The Tragic Story of Iblis (Satan) in the Qur'an" (2009), Öztürk argues that Satan was introduced as a significant element in the destiny of the world and was asked to play a misleading role in earthly trials.

In his article, "God's good plan and evil forces in this world: The place of the devil in traditional Islam," Spronk (2007) discusses the status of Satan in creation and his influence on humans.

No prior work has examined the functional role of image schemas in conceptualizing Satan in the Quran. This study's results can inform reassessments of Qur'anic exegesis and translation and enable cross-scriptural comparisons of Satan's conceptualization.

Theoretical framework

Cognitive semantics is a branch of cognitive linguistics that seeks to discover the association between experience, the conceptual system of the mind, and the semantic structure represented in language. In other words, researchers of cognitive semantics strive to find how meaning takes shape in the mind and the conceptual structure representing it in

language. In this context, physical experiences are considered an important factor in the conceptual formations of the mind (Evans 2007, 26). As an experiential tool, image schemas serve as the main mechanism of many abstract conceptualizations in the cognitive approach.

1. Image schemas

In 1987, Mark Johnson coined the term image schema in his book *The Body in the Mind*. He argues that the term emphasizes the embodied and sensorimotor nature of different structures of conceptualization and reasoning (Johnson 2005, 18).

Johnson defines image schemas as a dynamic, recurring model of our perception and sensorimotor interaction in a setting that provides coherence and structure to experience. Experiential recurrence refers to experiences that form the schemas, such as motion, shifting objects, pushing, and pulling. Dynamic schemas refer to schema models that expand with new experiences. Providing coherence and structure to experience means that schemas categorize our experiences (Johnson 1987, XIV).

Johnson believes that schemas are tools to structure specific experiences. Schemas directly associated with physical experiences include part-whole, center-periphery, contact, proximity, support, balance, and container (Johnson 1987, 126).

All the image schemas share the positive-negative trait, meaning that all schemas have a valuation parameter. As an example, in the part-whole schema, the whole is positive and the part is negative. In the up-down schema, up is positive and down is negative (forceville 2016, 6).

The motion parameter, and schemas of force and balance are more frequently used in conceptualizing Satan in the Holy Quran. These will be briefly discussed next.

1.1. Motion parameter

Motion is a basic experience in life. The shared feature of experiencing motion is the changing position of the mover, following the schema structure of 'origin-path-destination'. This contains the common parameters of 1) origin, 2) final destination, and 3) a sequence of consecutive locations connecting the origin to the destination. This is a very basic schema containing simple parameters, but it is used in a broad range of motion states and reasoning (Dodge & Lakoff 2005, 59).

1.2. Force schema

The schema of force is a significant image schema that was initially introduced by Johnson in *The Body in the Mind* (1987). By pointing out that interaction with the environment is the survival factor of a living creature and that all causal interactions require the application of force, he explained the pivotal role of force in human physical experiences (Johnson 1987,102). Johnson cites seven types of force, including compulsion, blockage, counterforce, diversion, removal of restraint, enablement, and attraction (Johnson 1987,43-45).

1.3. Balance schema

Balance is a key model that makes our physical experience coherent and meaningful as a whole, an activity that people perceive with their bodies (Johnson 1987, 74). Humans also conceive the concept of balance through experiences close to physical balance. For instance, hunger, dry mouth due to thirst, or frozen hands in cold weather are sensed when the healthy balance is disrupted through too much or too little force. This imbalance is rebalanced by eliminating thirst and hunger, and warming the hands (Johnson 1987, 75). This sensory perception arising from physical experiences helps to understand abstract concepts.

2. Types of image schemas in conceptualizing Satan

To attain the image schemas of conceptualizing Satan in the Holy Quran, a corpus of 123 verses containing the words Satan (88), Iblis

(11), and Jinn (24) were examined. It must be noted that the concept of 'Jinn' was included in the study because Iblis is considered a Jinn. In examining the image schemas of motion, force, balance, direction, contact, support, etc., were found. These play an effective role in conceptualizing Satan and his actions. To attain the schemas of the study, the Arabic text of the Quran and lexical resources were used to explain their semantic nuances.

2.1. Force schema

Johnson believes that the schema of force is one of the most important image schemas. He explains the central role of force in the physical experiences of humankind by pointing out that all causal interactions require the application of force (Johnson 1987, 42). Langaker posits that schemas can be presented through grammatical categories so that the imperative verb can contain the force schema (Langacker 2008, 37). Johnson introduces seven types of force schemas. These seven types, seen alongside another type of force in conceptualizing Satan, are examined below:

A. Compulsion: This type of force schema is observed in two ways in conceptualizing Satan: 1) Satan under the influence of the force, and 2) Satan as the source of the force.

For instance, the force applied by God on Satan is represented in "*He said, Begone hence*"¹ (Quran 15:34), "*Get down from it!*"² (Quran 7:13), and "*whom Allah has cursed*"³ (Quran 4:118). In these cases, the force schema is used to conceptualize Satan through the metaphor of his fall [from the higher position

¹. ﴿قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا...﴾ (الحجر/٣٤)

². ﴿...قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا...﴾ (الأعراف/١٣)

³. ﴿لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ﴾ (النساء/١١٨)

close to God]. In this image-making, Satan is visualized as a creature who is distanced from God under the force of God. This force is sent down upon disbelievers who are ultimately led to Hell (Quran 27:68). In none of these cases does a restraint stand in the way of God's force or a counterforce applied by Satan. Thus, by relying on the human understanding of physical force, Satan is conceptualized as a creature lacking force under the influence of God.

On the other hand, Satan is conceptualized as a force affecting the individual-community, mostly disrupting the balance, stability, and permanence of the individual-community. Satan is conceptualized as the driving force behind a series of unruly actions that upset the balance in various aspects associated with the relationship between humans and God: "*O Children of Adam! Do not let Satan tempt you*"⁴ (Quran 7:27), family relationships: "*Satan had incited ill feeling between me and my brothers*"⁵ (Quran 12:100), social relations: "*Indeed Satan incites ill feeling between them*"⁶ (Quran 17:53), and economic ties: "*Indeed wine, gambling, idols and the divining arrows are abominations of Satan's doing*"⁷ (Quran 5:90). These force schemas are often observed alongside balance and direction schemas, and the motion parameter.

- B. Blockage:** The conceptualization of humans accepting Divine guidance in the Holy Quran is based on the metaphor of [servitude to God is remaining on the same path], and the role of Satan, apart from being a misleading force for humans, has

4. ﴿يَا بَنِي آدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ...﴾ (الأعراف/ ٢٧)

5. ﴿... نَزَعَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِي...﴾ (يوسف/ ١٠٠)

6. ﴿... إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزِعُ بَيْنَهُمْ...﴾ (الاسراء/ ٥٣)

7. ﴿... إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رَجُسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ...﴾ (المائدة/ ٩٠)

been expressed as an obstacle on the path of human motion, “Do not let Satan bar you”⁸ (Quran 43:62). In contrast, concepts such as devotion: “I will surely pervert them, all, except Your exclusive servants among them”⁹ (Quran 15:39-40), faith and resignation to God: “Indeed he does not have any authority over those who have faith and put their trust in their Lord”¹⁰ (Quran 16:99), abstinence and warning: “When those who are God wary are touched by a visitation of Satan, they remember [Allah] and, behold, they perceive”¹¹ (Quran 7:201), Divine grace: “... And were it not for Allah’s grace upon you and His mercy, you would have surely followed Satan, [all] except a few”¹² (Quran 4:83), God’s servitude: “As for My servants, you shall have no authority over them. And your Lord suffices as trustee”¹³ (Quran 17:65), and seeking refuge in God: “Should a temptation from Satan disturb you, invoke the protection of Allah; indeed He is all-hearing, all-knowing”¹⁴ (Quran 7:200) have been conceptualized as restraints neutralizing the force of Satan affecting humans. “Indeed they are kept at bay [even] from hearing it”¹⁵ (Quran 26:212), Satan counters the force of blockage by God.

- C. Diversion:** Based on this schema, Satan is conceptualized as a force that deviates humans from the right path of Divine

⁸. ﴿...وَلَا يَصُدُّنَكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ...﴾ (الزخرف/٦٢)

⁹. ﴿...وَلَا تُغْوِيَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ * إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمْ الْمُخْلِصِينَ﴾ (الحجر/٣٩-٤٠)

¹⁰. ﴿لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ﴾ (النحل/٩٩)

¹¹. ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ﴾ (الأعراف/٢٠١)

¹². ﴿... لَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ (النساء/٨٣)

¹³. ﴿إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ وَكَفَى بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا﴾ (الإسراء/٦٥)

¹⁴. ﴿وَإِنَّمَا يَنْزِعَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ (الأعراف/٢٠٠)

¹⁵. ﴿إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّمْعِ لَمَغْرُولُونَ﴾ (الشعراء/٢١٢)

guidance. The schema is expressed with terms such as ‘leading astray,’ ‘temptation,’ and ‘leading to calamity’: “*he will lead him astray, and conduct him toward the punishment of the Blaze*”¹⁶ (Quran 22:4), “*I will surely pervert them, all*”¹⁷ (Quran 15:39). These cases will be discussed further under the motion parameter.

D. Removal of restraint: This schema is seen in instances such as “*Said He, Begone! ... Instigate whomever of them you can with your voice; and rally against them your cavalry and your infantry, and share with them in wealth and children, and make promises to them!*”¹⁸ (Quran 17:63-64). The said conceptualization model which is based on our physical experiences of removal of restraint against the application of physical force is accompanied by the denigration of Satan’s power, meaning that its efforts to stress the misleading of humans, expressed by verbs such as “*I will surely lie in wait*”¹⁹ (Quran 7:16), “*and I will lead them astray and give them [false] hopes, and prompt them*”²⁰ (Quran 4:119), “*I will surely destroy*”²¹ (Quran 17:62), will not be significantly effective. In the Arabic version of these verbs, the emphatic ‘lam’ and the emphatic ‘nun’ indicate the strong force of the speech act in the words of Satan (Johnson 1987, 48-61). In return, however, God

¹⁶. ﴿...تَوَلَّاهُ فَأَنَّهُ يُضِلُّهُ وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَى عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ﴾ (الحج/٤)

¹⁷. ﴿...لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾ (الحجر/٣٩)

¹⁸. ﴿قَالَ اذْهَبْ... وَاسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ اسْتِطَعْتَ مِنْهُمْ بِصَوْتِكَ وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِم بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ وَعَدَّهُمْ﴾ (الاسراء: ٦٣-٦٤)

¹⁹. ﴿...لَأَقْعُدَنَّ...﴾ (الأعراف/١٦)

²⁰. ﴿وَلَأُضِلَّنَّهُمْ وَلَأُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ وَلَأَمُرَّنَّهُمْ...﴾ (النساء/١١٩)

²¹. ﴿...لَأَخْتَبِكَنَّ...﴾ (الاسراء/٦٢)

removes the restraint of this force that Satan considers to be powerful and renders it insignificant and ineffective.

- E. Enablement:** These schemas in conceptualizing Satan in the Quran are seen as inability due to insufficient forces, such as “indeed the stratagems of Satan are always flimsy”²² (Quran 4:76), and inability due to restraints, “but he cannot harm them in any way except by Allah’s leave”²³ (Quran 58:10), so that God will not allow the force of Satan to affect believers.
- F. Attraction:** The schema of attraction in conceptualizing Satan is reflected in three Quranic verses, i.e. The inclination of disbelievers’ hearts towards Satan’s discourse “so that toward it may incline the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter”²⁴ (Quran 6:113), and their being drawn towards deviation by demons “But their brethren, they draw them into error”²⁵ (Quran 7:202), is observed in the Quran.
- G. Counterforce:** Satan has been introduced 13 times as the enemy of Adam, humanity, and the prophets of God in “We appointed as enemy the devils from among humans and jinn” Quran²⁶ (6:112) whispering to one another with elegant words of deception. According to this, Satan is conceptualized as a counterforce against the prophets of God, the individual, and the religious community.

Overall, the Holy Quran creates a negative image of the consequences of following Satan by using adverse human physical experiences such as deviating from the path and getting lost or not reaching the

²². ﴿... إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا﴾ (النساء/٧٦)

²³. ﴿وَلَيْسَ بِضَارِّهِمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ...﴾ (المجادله/١٠)

²⁴. ﴿وَلِتَصْغَى إِلَيْهِ أَفْئِدَةُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ...﴾ (الانعام/١١٣)

²⁵. ﴿وَإِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّوْنَهُمْ فِي الْغَيِّ...﴾ (الاعرف/٢٠٢)

²⁶. ﴿... جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ...﴾ (الانعام/١١٢)

destination, restraints on the path that make the journey longer and more cumbersome for the wayfarer, imbalance in seismic conditions and staggering that creates fear and anxiety, adverse human experiences of crashes and head-on collisions, etc.

2.2. Balance schema

Humans perceive the meaning of balance through direct experiences associated with physical balance or the loss thereof (Johnson 1987, 75). This sensory perception arising from physical experiences helps to understand abstract concepts. It begins in the body and progresses to the domains of the mind, cognition, and reason. Experiencing physical balance leads to perceiving balanced characters, balanced systems, power balance, and more (Johnson 1987, 87). Schemas consist of an axiological parameter. In terms of the balance schema, positive states and actions are perceived through maintaining or restoring balance, and negative states and actions are perceived through imbalance or the loss thereof (Forceville 2016, 6; Oakley 2010, 230)

This is an effective schema for conceptualizing Satan in the Holy Quran. Satan tries to portray a positive image of itself as the agent of creating balance, while God introduces Satan as the disrupter of equilibrium, creating a negative image in the mind; Satan enters the various domains of human life as a disruptive force of social and familial relationships, and economic ties of the individual-community.

The initial encounter between Satan and humans offers a comprehensive image for conceptualizing Satan via the balance schema. In the narration of Adam's creation, it is said, "*O Adam, dwell with your mate in paradise*"²⁷ (Quran 7:19). The word "*sakana* سَكَنَ" has been interpreted as material stability, immobility, or spiritual stability, meaning peace and the removal of anxiety and worry

²⁷. «وَيَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ» (الاعراف/ ١٩)

(Muṣṭafawī 2009, 5:197-198). It seems that the term “*uskun* اسْكُنْ” (dwell) in this verse mainly refers to the spiritual aspect of dwelling, which is the same as peace and the removal of anxiety and worry. Describing the intended location as, “*Indeed you will neither be hungry in it nor naked. Indeed you will neither be thirsty in it, nor suffer from the sun*”²⁸ (Quran 20:118-119) also emphasizes this claim. Thus, Adam’s dwelling is free of hunger, thirst, and bareness, which are all elements that disrupt the balance and have negative axiological parameters.

In continuation, the role of Satan in leading Adam astray is discussed: “*Then Satan caused them to stumble from it...*”²⁹ (Quran 2:36). The word “*zalal* زَلَّ” means to slip, shake, fluctuate, and be disturbed (see Zammit 2002, 209; Muṣṭafawī 2009, 4:358). Based on the nomenclature [Satan’s temptation is slippery], the temptation of Satan is conceptualized as one of disrupting balance, leading to a fall: “*He said, ‘Get down, being enemies of one another! ...’*”³⁰ (Quran 7:24). Upon their disobedience, Adam and Eve are ousted from their dwelling, but ‘God created another stability on earth for humans: “*...On the earth shall be your abode and sustenance for a time*”³¹ (Quran 2:36).

The state of balance is optimal with a positive value in the human physical experience. Satan succeeded in leading humans towards disobedience with promises of immortality and an unfadable rule “*Shall I show you the tree of immortality, and an imperishable kingdom*”³² (Quran 20:120), meaning more permanent stability than God bestowed upon Adam (a).

²⁸ ﴿إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَى * وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَأُ فِيهَا وَلَا تَصْحَى﴾ (طه/١١٨-١١٩)

²⁹ ﴿فَازَلَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا...﴾ (البقرة/٣٦)

³⁰ ﴿قَالَ اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ...﴾ (الأعراف/٢٤)

³¹ ﴿... وَ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ﴾ (البقرة/٣٦)

³² ﴿... هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَا يَبْلَى﴾ (طه/١٢٠)

Despite Satan's efforts to introduce himself as an agent of stability and balance, the Holy Quran introduces Satan as the disrupter of balance in various domains of human life. In terms of the relationship between human beings and God, *"That He may make what Satan has thrown in a trial for those in whose hearts is a sickness..."*³³ (Quran 22:53). In contrast to Satan's seditious temptations, *"...and so they may have faith in it, and their hearts may be humbled before Him..."*³⁴ (Quran 22:54), Satan has been conceptualized as the disrupter of the stable heart in accepting the Divine faith.

From another perspective, *"rijz"* and *"rijs,"* meaning abomination, anxiety, confusion, temptation, slipping, ignominy, excitement, and continuous motion (see Farāhīdī 2013, 6:52; Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1991, 341; Zabīdī 1900, 8:67; Ibn Durayd 1988, 1:457) have been attributed to Satan in the verse: *"and to repel from you the defilement of Satan"*³⁵ (Quran 8:11) and *"...Indeed wine, gambling, idols and the divining arrows are abominations of Satan's doing, so avoid them, so that you may be felicitous"*³⁶ (Quran 5:90). Avoid them, that you may have eternal salvation. By spreading wine and gambling, Satan destroys mental and economic balance at the individual and community levels. That demons and hypocrites promote indecency and prevent virtue, inviting to behave against the natural flow of Islamic society: *"O you who have faith! Do not follow in Satan's steps. Whoever follows in*

³³. ﴿لِيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ ...﴾ (الحج/٥٣)

³⁴. ﴿... فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ ...﴾ (الحج/٥٤)

³⁵. ﴿... بِهِ وَ يُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمْ رَجْزَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الْأَقْدَامَ﴾ (المائدة/١١)

³⁶. ﴿... إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَ الْأَنْصَابُ وَ الْأَزْلَامُ رَجِسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾ (المائدة/٩٠)

*Satan's steps [should know that] he indeed prompts [you to commit] indecent acts and wrong...*³⁷ (Quran 24:21).

From the perspective of social and familial relationships, Satan has also spread discord among individuals in society: *"Tell My servants to speak in a manner which is the best. Indeed Satan incites ill feeling between them, and Satan is indeed man's manifest enemy"*³⁸ (Quran 17:53), moving them towards disobeying God. By doing so, it disrupts the optimal situation in society. The concept has also been cited in Quran: *"Indeed Satan seeks to cast enmity and hatred among you through wine and gambling..."*³⁹ (Quran 5:91) and *"...Indeed the satans inspire their friends to dispute with you..."*⁴⁰ (Quran 6:121). That is surely disobedience, and demons secretly tempt their friends to dispute with you.

The two adjectives of *"marīd مَرِيد"* (Quran 4:117) and *"mārid مَارِد"* (Quran 37:7), meaning rebellion, wickedness, causing chaos, inciting rebellion, struggle, and disobedience (Farāhīdī 2013, 8:37; Zammit 2002, 381) attributed to Satan are understood in the context of the schema of balance. Describing Satan as *"marīd"* and *"mārid"* in Quran: *"...and invoke none but a forward Satan..."*⁴¹ (Quran 4:117), for instance, alludes to the rebellion of demons against Divine commands and efforts to incite the individual-community to rebel and disobey.

2.3. Motion parameter

³⁷ ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطَوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ خُطَوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ...﴾ (النور/٢١)

³⁸ ﴿وَقُلْ لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزِعُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا﴾ (الإسراء/٥٣)

³⁹ ﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ...﴾ (المائدة/٩١)

⁴⁰ ﴿... إِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَى أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ...﴾ (الأنعام/١٢١)

⁴¹ ﴿...إِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا...﴾ (النساء/١١٧)

The motion parameter is a very basic schema, but it is used in a broad range of motion states and reasoning (Johnson 1987, 114; Dodge & Lakoff 2005, 59). Motion is not a schema but recruits others—path, up–down, forward–backward, container—and may also involve force, balance, near–far, and center–periphery.

According to the motion parameter, Iblis's transition from angelic status to its current position is portrayed as expulsion from a stable, specific location to an unknown destination; "...so he transgressed against his Lord's command..."⁴² (Quran 18:50). Here, the origin of motion has been highlighted, and God's command has been conceptualized as the location. However, the express destination is missing. Thus, transgressing from God's command is conceptualized as being ousted from a place of established stability. This is the only case without a force schema in which Satan is not moved but moves. Initial misguidance is conceptualized through human motion and force experience as stemming from individual abuse of authority, not of divine origin.

In the next stage, Satan is degraded under the force of God. This is expressed as motion under the influence of God's force from up-down, towards an unknown destination: "...Get down from it!"⁴³ (Quran 7:13). The result of disobeying God is conceptualized as falling into an indeterminate location. In these motion events, the origin of motion is highlighted with the Arabic word "*min* من" (from), primarily referring to the origin of motion, but the word "*ilā* إلى" (to), referring to the destination of the motion, is missing.

Ultimately, demons have been conceptualized as creatures who have disobeyed God and tried to lead humans astray as their enemies; they are always kept in a location away from God and cast out through

⁴². ﴿...فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ...﴾ (الكهف/٥٠)

⁴³. ﴿...قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا...﴾ (الأعراف/١٣)

reproach and cursing: “*He said, ‘Begone hence, for you are indeed an outcast’*”⁴⁴ (Quran 15:34). Here, the origin, path, and destination of the motion are indeterminate; only Satan is influenced by the force of God and is moved from a location close to God to a location farther away. Thus, the two schemas of center-periphery and force elucidate this motion event.

Satan is conceptualized as a misleading agent who creates restraints on the path: “...*thus he has barred them from the way [of Allah] ...*”⁴⁵ (Quran 27:24), shakes humans: “*We unleash the devils upon the faithless to urge them impetuously?*”⁴⁶ (Quran 27:83), deviates them from the path: “*Certainly he has led astray many of your generations...*”⁴⁷ (Quran 36:62), throws them down from higher-up: “... *like someone seduced by the devils...*”⁴⁸ (Quran 6:71), moves them towards an unspecified destination: “*But their brethren, they draw them into error...*”⁴⁹ (Quran 7:202), and dictates to them to turn their backs: “*Indeed those who turned their backs after the guidance had become clear to them, it was Satan who had seduced them, and he had given them [far-flung] hopes*”⁵⁰ (Quran 47:25).

Human sensorimotor experience shows that obstacles on a path entail greater effort, time loss, and failure to arrive; leaving the path amounts to being lost. Trembling, slipping, and violent shaking evoke earthquakes and anxiety, while downward motion evokes a frightening fall and a shift from desirable to undesirable. Collectively, these

⁴⁴. ﴿قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ﴾ (الحجر/ ٣٤)

⁴⁵. ﴿... فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ ...﴾ (النمل/ ٢٤)

⁴⁶. ﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَا أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ تَوْرُثُهُمْ أَرْثًا﴾ (مريم/ ٧١)

⁴⁷. ﴿وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا ...﴾ (يس/ ٦٢)

⁴⁸. ﴿... كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ ...﴾ (الانعام/ ٧١)

⁴⁹. ﴿إِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّوْنَهُمْ فِي الْغَيِّ ...﴾ (الاعرف/ ٢٠٢)

⁵⁰. ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ارْتَدُّوا عَلَى أَدْبَارِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ وَأَمْلَى لَهُمْ﴾ (محمد/ ٢٥)

motion-based patterns frame Satan's influence as experientially aversive.

2.4. Link schema

Johnson believes that the experience of objects linking physically leads to understanding abstract connections and links (Johnson 1987, 117). Lakoff elucidates the basic logic of the schema by stating that if A is linked to B, then B is linked to A. He believes that individual and social ties are often understood with this schema (Lakoff 1987, 274).

This schema is observed in the concept of "guardianship" in the conceptualization of Satan. In other words, Satan is the guardian of its followers and they are the guardians of Satan: "...*We have indeed made the devils friends of those who have no faith*"⁵¹ (Quran 7:27). This two-sidedness also applies to the guardianship of God: "Allah is the guardian of the faithful"⁵² (Quran 3:68). The root 'w-l-y' has different meanings in different nominal and verbal structures: 'mawlā' (liberated, ally, partner, all tribal kith and kin, companion, the one who obeys commands, possessor, and servant of Allah); "walā" (seeking and two things being together so that nothing else comes between them); "waly" (closeness); "walī" (follower and friend, guardian, and companion) (see Farāhīdī 2013, 8:365; Zamakhsharī 1979, 689; Ibn Manẓūr 1994, 15:407; Ibn Sīdah 1992, 10:457). Choosing someone as a guardian or becoming a guardian to someone else is on par with being close to or connecting to someone based on the human physical understanding. Connection is a two-sided link. Therefore, the bilateral meaning in the concept of guardianship is derived from the meaning of link in this term. In connections between strong and weak creatures, motion depends on the stronger. Guardianship encompasses subjection,

⁵¹ «...إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ» (الأعراف/٢٧)

⁵² «...اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (آل عمران/٦٨)

domination, and authority. Human perception views guardianship as linked to God and acting under His domination. Conversely, those linked to Satan align their activities and orientations with Satan's.

God negates the concept of guardianship by anyone except Himself: "...And besides Allah you do not have any guardian or helper"⁵³ (Quran 9:116). In other words, the one who has chosen Satan as his guardian should, in essence, not be without a guardian. But God has introduced this person as being without a guardian because Satan has been conceptualized as a treacherous one who breaks covenants and is disloyal to the rules of society. Even Satan admits to this: "When the matter is all over, Satan will say, 'Indeed Allah made you a promise that was true and I [too] made you a promise, but I failed you...'"⁵⁴ (Quran 14:22). Thus, Satan does not support its own allies. This is why God states that the one who chooses Satan as his guardian has, in fact, no guardian or companion.

2.5. Contact schema

The contact schema is understood as the physical contact of two objects. Physical contact can lead to influencing or being influenced by the other (Johnson 1987, 126). The schema is observed as contact with Satan in the concept of "mass" (مسّ) (touch) in the Quran: "Those who exact usury will not stand but like one deranged by the Devil's touch..."⁵⁵ (Quran 2:275) and "When those who are God wary are touched by a visitation of Satan, they remember [Allah] and, behold, they perceive"⁵⁶ (Quran 7:201).

⁵³ . «... مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ» (التوبة/ ١١٦)

⁵⁴ . «وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ ...» (ابراهيم/ ٢٢)

⁵⁵ . «الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ...» (البقرة/ ٢٧٥)

⁵⁶ . «إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ» (الأعراف/ ٢٠١)

Original classical philologists define the meaning of the Arabic word “*massa*” in these *sūras* as touch. In the Quran, it is often used with negative concepts such as “*ḍarrā*” (distress) and “*khabaṭ*” (hitting) (see Quran 2:214, 275; Quran 10:21). In the (Quran 2:275), “*khabaṭ*” (hitting), has been expressed as the outcome of Satan’s touch, meaning hitting to fall, hitting to destroy, hitting to mix, hitting hard, and stamping hard (see Farāhīdī 2013, 7:208; Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1992, 766; Muṣṭafawī 2009, 11:114). Jawād ‘Alī mentions “*khabaṭ*” as a mental illness when naming the recognized diseases of the pre-Islamic Era (‘Alī 1976, 8:405). As mentioned about “*mass*,” it seems that the definition of lunacy for “*khabaṭ*” is figurative and derives from the Arab image of Satan’s influence to human lunacy. Thus, Satan is conceptualized as a creature with whom contact has undesirable effects, delivers a harsh blow on humans, and creates a state of lunacy, anxiety, and imbalance in them.

2.6. Support schema

The support schema is perceived in the human physical experience by placing one thing on another, leaning one thing against another, and preventing a fall. It is linked to the contact schema (Oakley 2010, 231). In conceptualizing Satan, the schema is observed in the verse: “*Indeed some persons from the humans would seek the protection of some persons from the jinn, thus only adding to their rebellion*”⁵⁷ (Quran 72:6). The word “*awḍ* عوض” means taking refuge and clinging to something (Farāhīdī 2013, 2:229; Ibn Fāris 1984, 4:183).

The tradition, akin to law, was strictly followed by the community. In the disunited tribal structure of the Days of Ignorance, marked by thievery and violence against the weak, entering an unknown tribe’s territory risked theft or murder. Safety was possible only by staying

⁵⁷. «وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِنَ الْإِنسِ يُعَوِّذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا» (الجن/٦)

close to a tribe member (Brockelmann 1968, 17). To do this, they approached the large tent of the tribe and asked for protection. The person who was asked was then obliged to protect them (‘Alī 1976, 4:361). The Arab nature to honor guests and consider the breach of trust as an unforgivable sin, alongside the tradition of proximity and neighborliness, meant that they did their utmost to support the one who had taken refuge and consider them as a member of the tribe. Otherwise, they would be breaching their trust, bringing great shame upon themselves and their tribe (see ‘Alī 1976, 4:361)

Based on this schema, which held a special place in the Arab culture at the time of the revelation, the Holy Quran has conceptualized Satan as someone who claims to provide support, but abandons the person who has asked and dissociates from them when support is needed: *“When Satan made their deeds seem decorous to them, and said, ‘No one shall overcome you today from among all mankind, and I will stand by you.’ But when the two hosts sighted each other, he took to his heels, saying, ‘Indeed I am quit of you...’*⁵⁸ (Quran 8:48). Thus, it draws an unfavorable image of Satan and presents him as an unreliable support and a liar who cannot be trusted.

2.7. Near-far schema

The near-far is another schema used in Quran to conceptualize Satan. It must be noted that by assuming a center and a periphery, we experience the near and far (Johnson 1987, 125). It is important to know that the center, near, up, front ... are considered positive in evaluations, and the opposite poles are considered negative (Kovecses 2010, 66).

The word “*rajm*” means stoning, cursing, and driving away (Ibn Manzūr 1994, 12: 227; Zammit 2002, 381; Jastrow 1903, 2:1449;

⁵⁸ «وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَكُمْ فَلَمَّا تَرَأَتِ الْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقَبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكُمْ ...» (الأنفال/ ٤٨)

Gesenius 1939, 919). “*la’ana*” has a similar meaning, except that stoning does not exist in “*la’ana*” and cursing and insulting are more prominent (Jastrow 1903, 2:714; Farāhīdī 2013, 2:141). “*rajm*” and “*la’ana*” express their position in front of God. It is conceptualized according to the far schema. The Quranic instances of “*rajm*” and “*la’n*” include: “*When you recite the Quran, seek the protection of Allah against the outcast Satan*”⁵⁹ (Quran 16:98); “*He said, ‘Begone hence, for you are indeed an outcast’*”⁶⁰ (Quran 15:34); “*whom Allah has cursed...*”⁶¹ (Quran 4:118).

Satan, after being removed from Divine mercy, attempts to access hidden information. In verses 8-10 of *Sūrah Ṣāffāt*, when God states: “*They do not eavesdrop on the Supernal Elite but are shot at from every side, to drive them away, and for them there is a constant mortification, except him who snatches a snatch, whereat there pursues him a piercing flame*”⁶² (Quran 37:8-10). The word “*qadhafa*” means to be repelled and is synonymous to “*la’ana*,” except that being repelled by being pelted with arrows is more prominent in “*qadhafa*” (see Farāhīdī 2013, 5:135; Jawharī 1956, 4:1414; Ibn Durayd 1988, 2:699). In the aforementioned verse, we also observe the far schema in the Divine confrontation with Satan’s actions.

2.8. Center-periphery schema

In the section on motion, it was mentioned that Iblis was degraded from his status after disobeying God’s command and was ousted from the circle of divine angels to the periphery. Also, as mentioned in the

⁵⁹. ﴿فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ﴾ (النحل/٩٨)

⁶⁰. ﴿قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ﴾ (الحجر/٣٤)

⁶¹. ﴿لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ...﴾ (النساء/١١٨)

⁶². ﴿لَا يَسْمَعُونَ إِلَى الْمَلَأِ الْأَعْلَى وَيُقَذَّفُونَ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ * دُحُورًا * لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ وَاصِبٌ * إِلَّا مَنْ خِطَفَ الْخَطْفَةَ فَاتَّبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ ثَاقِبٌ﴾ (الصافات/٨-١٠)

section on the near-far schema, the combination of the words “*rajm*” and “*la ‘ana*” –implying to drive away– encompasses the periphery schema and expresses the status of Satan in connection with God. It is negative in terms of valuation.

2.9. Container schema

Humans conceptualize their bodies as contents within abstract containers, like rooms or houses, based on experiences of being enclosed. This mental imagery of volume allows them to attribute container schemas to certain linguistic concepts.

Before disobeying God, Iblis was with angels (Quran 2:34, Quran 7:11, Quran 18:50). The Quran has conceptualized this similar to being in a location. After refusing to prostrate before Adam (a), Satan fell from his status. This is represented in the language of the Quran as being ousted from his location based on the container schema: “*He said, ‘Begone hence...’*”⁶³ (Quran 15:34).

In the verse, “*But their brethren, they draw them into error, and then they do not spare [any harm]*”⁶⁴ (Quran 7:202), which describes Satan’s efforts to mislead the servants of God and drive them toward deviation and marginalization, the preposition “*fī* في” denotes location. Based on the container schema, the word “*ghay* غَيَّ” is expressed as an indeterminate location into which Satan pulls his followers.

2.9. Process schema

The process schema, independent of perceptual experience, underlies daily activities like seeing, hearing, and knowing, involving continuity and repetition. It comprises activities and events leading to a specific outcome (Johnson 1987, 126).

⁶³. «قَالَ فَأَخْرِجْ مِنْهَا...» (الحجر/٣٤)

⁶⁴. «وَإِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِي الْغَيِّ ثُمَّ لَا يُقْصِرُونَ» (الأعراف/٢٠٢)

In the Quran, there are verses on the actions of Satan that are conceptualized based on the process schema, such as “*Said He, ‘Begone! ... Instigate whomever of them you can with your voice; and rally against them your cavalry and your infantry, and share with them in wealth and children, and make promises to them!...’*”⁶⁵ (Quran 17:63-64). When Satan was ousted from his position, he threatened to lead astray all of Adam’s progeny. About Satan, the Quran says: “... *said, ‘I will surely take of Your servants a settled share, and I will lead them astray and give them [false] hopes, and prompt them to slit the ears of cattle, and I will prompt them to alter Allah’s creation.’ ... He makes them promises and gives them [false] hopes, yet Satan does not promise them anything but delusion*”⁶⁶ (Quran 4:118-120). After being driven from his position, Satan swears to mislead God’s servants: “...*I will surely glamorize [evil] for them on the earth, and I will surely pervert them, all*”⁶⁷ (Quran 15:39).

Conclusion

The nine image schemas attained for the conceptualization of Satan in the Holy Quran present a cognitive model that can be classified into four general categories:

- The first category includes the schemas of force, balance, and motion, which express Satan’s actions in confronting humans.
- a. Satan conceptualized as a creature both under the influence of Divine force, and a source of force. God descends Satan from

⁶⁵. ﴿قَالَ اذْهَبْ... وَاسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُمْ بِصَوْتِكَ وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِم بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ وَعِدْهُمْ...﴾ (الاسراء/ ٦٣-٦٤)

⁶⁶. ﴿... قَالَ لَا تَأْخُذْ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيباً مَفْرُوضاً. وَلَأُضِلَّنَّهُمْ وَلَأُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ وَلَأَمْرُنَّاهُمْ فَلْيَتَّبِعُنَّ أَذَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَأَمْرُنَّاهُمْ فَلْيَتَّبِعِرْنَ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ... يَعْدهُمْ وَيُمنِّيهمْ وَمَا يَعدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا عُرُوراً﴾ (النساء: ١١٨-١٢٠)

⁶⁷. ﴿...لَأَزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأَغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾ (الحجر/ ٣٩)

his status and drives him into the periphery. After being ousted, Satan acts as a restraint on the path of guiding humans, but faith, piety, and resignation to God are introduced as removals of restraints against Satanic actions. God removes the restraints against Satan's power and depicts his efforts as lowly and ineffective.

- b.** Satan conceptualized as a creature who tries to deprive humans of balance in life, including in social, familial, economic, and spiritual relationships.
 - c.** The Quran portrays Satan as a creature who is initially ousted from a position of established stability (status of companionship with angels) and moves towards an indeterminate destination. This motion shows the start of misguidance. Then, by the influence of Divine power, Satan falls downwards and is driven to the periphery. He also acts as a restraint on the path of human guidance, leads them astray, turns them backwards, and even leads them towards downfall. These motions and effects are depicted as frightening, undesirable events based on the human sensorimotor experience.
- The second category includes link, contact, and support, which express the interaction of Satan with humans.
 - a.** The Holy Quran has used this category of schemas to conceptualize the 'guardianship' link between Satan and his followers. This schema emphasizes the two-sided link. Divine guardianship is also depicted as a two-sided relationship, with the difference that God as the guardian of believers is supportive and steadfast, while Satan is introduced as an untrustworthy creature who makes false promises.

- b. The schema of contact conceptualized Satan as a creature with whom contact has undesirable effects, such as anxiety, imbalance, and even lunacy.
 - c. The support schema conceptualizes Satan as an unreliable support who lies and breaks his promises.
- The third category of schemas includes near-far, center-periphery, and container, which express the position of Satan in creation.
 - a. According to the near-far schema, the status and position of Satan is conceptualized as a creature driven from Divine mercy, indicating the negative valuation of Satan in this schema.
 - b. The center-periphery schema depicts Satan's position. Terms such as "*la 'n*" and "*rajm*," show his negative marginal position in connection with God.
 - c. Satan's fall from grace after disobeying God has been represented as being ousted from a location (container). Meanwhile, deviation has been depicted as an indeterminate location where demons pull their followers.
 - The fourth category includes process, which expresses Satan's strategy.
 - a. After being ousted, Satan begins a continuous and targeted process to lead humans astray, using tools such as temptation and false promises. This conceptualization shows Satan as an active agent attempting to deviate humanity.

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