Notes:
- The following includes many points we have already discussed, with expansions in some places, as well as new points and new responses.
- My understanding is that there is a singular, primary dialectical method which the project aims to develop, promote, and apply, and that this will be called the **Munazara Engagement Model (MEM)**. Assuming this is correct, I have used "MEM" as a shorthand reference in below discussions, wherever I mean something like "the dialectical method which the ADAB project aims to develop and apply."

[ADAB Team Preamble to Preliminary Questions]

[A] Munazara scholars assumed a wide acceptance of the Quran, Sunna, and Ijmāʿ as sources of knowledge and validity. [B] Such an assumption, however, cannot be relied upon in contemporary pluralistic contexts. [C] Focusing primarily on practical-political debates that deal with "what we should *do*?" rather than "what we should *believe*?" [D] we are particularly interested in the key considerations that need to be accounted for when designing a Munazara-inspired argumentation procedure for an international audience in diverse societies.

[Addressing A&B]
- "Sources of knowledge and validity" might be expanded to include additional factors beyond Quran, Sunna, and Ijmāʿ, each with important bearing on / implications for the translation or adaptation of premodern Islamicate dialectical theory to "contemporary pluralistic contexts" in any proposed MEM.
  - First, I would note the hermeneutical and rational-inferential tools continually developed, debated, and refined by jurists—especially what Abū Isḥāq al-Shīrāzī called the *maʿqūl al-aṣl*, including *qiyās*, a fortiori arguments, etc.—which, though technically not "sources" (and differently construed or rejected by Ithnā ʿAsharī Shīʿī uṣūlists), nevertheless constituted an authoritative, defined corpus of acceptable tools for discovering law (for which reason, *qiyās* is often included in a four-*uṣūl* theory). And, therefore, these also engendered a detailed complex of objections, responses, counter-objections, etc. (as may be seen, e.g., in the *qiyās* sections of many *uṣūl* texts, and, of course, in juristic *jadal* works), the nature and adaptability of which I believe ought to be considered in projects like this.
  - Second, I would point to the very real factor of "epistemic authority" observed and discussed most notably by Wael Hallaq in his *Authority, Continuity and Change in Islamic Law* (see, for example, p. ix and n. 1, and pp. 236 ff.) This notion, tied to a rigorous culture of expertise-building (producing mujtahids and muftīs) and an active—not passive, or "blind"—spectrum of *taqlīd*, is extremely important not only in premodern Islamicate contexts, but in all ages, in all argumentative contexts, wherein complex sciences require frequent referral to / founding arguments upon expert opinions. (I am not very familiar with it, but I know there is a modern and ongoing academic discourse on authority, and epistemic authority, in argument.)
  - Third, and related to the above, I think we must take into account Aristotle's dialectical / endoxa premises (as discussed, e.g., in Young, *Dialectical Forge*, pp. 200-202). Ultimately, what the project aims to develop and promote is a species of dialectic, and the universality of Aristotle's formulations in the *Topics* is self evident. The point here being that the project's assumptions re: "Sources of knowledge and validity" would benefit from a confrontation with such formulations as we find in *Top.* I.10, 104a9ff. (Smith's translation):

- ▪ "A *dialectical premiss* is the asking of something acceptable to everyone, most people, or the wise (that is, either all of them, most of them, or the most famous), provided it is not contrary to opinion (for anyone would concede what the wise think, so long as it is not contrary to the opinions of the many). Dialectical premisses also include: things which are similar to what is acceptable; the contraries of things which appear to be acceptable, put forward by negation; and such opinions as are derived from any established arts."
  - o And in *Top*. I.10, 104a34f. (Smith's translation):
    - ▪ "It is also clear that such opinions as are derived from arts are dialectical premisses. For anyone would concede what those who have examined these subjects think, e.g. what a doctor thinks about medical questions, or what a geometer thinks about geometrical questions, and likewise in other cases."

[Addressing B]
- ● I certainly agree that we cannot simply assume a universality of specifically Islamic "sources of knowledge and validity" for "contemporary pluralistic contexts." However, we should bear in mind the following:
  - o First, a large portion of the project's intended audience (and, eventually, practitioners) will in fact be Muslims with a spectrum of commitment to / epistemic trust in Islamic sources, and so these sources can't be abandoned entirely, either. The obvious way forward seems to me that we must abstract upwards, to a more general set of "sources of knowledge and validity"—e.g., foundational / authoritative norm-text, forebear precedent, and epistemic-community consensus—which would allow for the desired pluralism without excluding or marginalizing Qurʾān, Sunna, Ijmāʿ, etc., as sources.
  - o Second, although the premodern grounding of *jadal* and *ādāb al-baḥth* theories in Qurʾān, Sunna, Ijmāʿ, etc. must certainly be considered and negotiated, I don't think it constitutes a barrier to adaptation in "contemporary pluralistic contexts," simply because, as just suggested, these *uṣūl* may be so easily abstracted upwards into more general source-categories that are not Islam-specific. So, for example, if a proponent's argument hinges ultimately on the authority of a state's constitution, and the disputants pre-agree to that document's authority, in its current wording, and a defined range of hermeneutical / rational-inferential engagement with that wording, then many—perhaps most—of the tools forged by uṣūlists to argue from (and object to arguments from) the Qurʾān may be brought to bear on that constitution (in fact, in most Civil Law contexts). Likewise, tools forged by uṣūlists to argue from or object to arguments from the Sunna can be brought to bear in Common Law / precedent law contexts; and tools for Ijmāʿ can be applied in arguments hinging on, e.g., scientific consensus.
  - o Third, and particularly with the *ādāb al-baḥth* method, the logical substance of the method—being its primary substance—is very easily applied both within and outside of uniquely Islamic epistemic contexts, regardless of the "sources of knowledge and validity" relevant to the argument at hand. In fact, the proto- / early *ādāb al-baḥth* (e.g., the *jadal/khilāf* of Burhān al-Dīn al-Nasafī), despite its juristic focus, already seems to have achieved a level of remove from Qurʾān, Sunna, Ijmāʿ. I mean it seems that disputants were assumed to have already mastered the *adilla* of *fiqh*, i.e., the textual-hermeneutical and rational-inferential justifications behind previously argued substantive rulings. These seem to have been argumentative "givens" (e.g., that there is no *zakāt* on a young girl's jewelry by *ijmāʿ murakkab*); the hermeneutics was in the past, and the scriptural premises were (within schools / confessions) mutually accepted. In consequence, the real action happened almost entirely at the rational-inferential level: hence the primacy of the logical relations

of entailment (*talāzum / mulāzama*), mutual negation (*tanāfin / munāfā*), and concomitance (*dawarān*), and the mere handful of what I call "master-category objections," namely: denying a premise (*manʿ / munāqaḍa / naqḍ tafṣīlī*) with or without corroboration (*sanad*), charging inconsistency (*naqḍ ijmālī*) whether by way of detachment (*takhalluf*) of *dalīl* from *madlūl*, or by reductio (*khulf*), and counter-indication (*muʿāraḍa*).

[Addressing C] "Focusing primarily on practical-political debates that deal with 'what we should *do*?' rather than 'what we should *believe*?'"

- First, as previously discussed, it might be better to frame things in terms of normative domains vs. positive / speculative domains. That is, rather than saying "political debates that deal with 'what we should *do*?' rather than 'what we should *believe*?'" we might consider saying "debates in the normative domain (normative / applied ethics, law, politics, etc.) of 'what we should do' rather than in the positive / speculative domains (theology, natural sciences, etc.) of 'what is' and 'what we should believe.'

- Second, why should the focus be only on the normative domain? There are at least two things to consider here.
  - First is that Islamic intellectual history shows us that Islamicate dialectics were indeed a potent tool for developing, debating, and refining the positive / speculative domains of theology, philosophy, and natural sciences, as well as the normative domains of law and grammar. So we need have no doubt as to their capacity in / adaptability to contemporary theological, philosophical, and scientific issues, nor do we need to doubt their ability to contribute to modern argumentation theory relevant to these domains (as already proven in the work of Shahid Rahman and co-authors, students).
  - Second is that real arguments are not necessarily divisible between the normative and the positive / speculative; a single disputation might require (or will inevitably require?) statements and principles from both realms, and these may in turn need to be debated themselves—thus requiring argument suitable to both realms. Consider, for example, the (positive / speculative) theological foundations underpinning the argumentative methods, techniques, genres of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, and the normative project of discovering God's Law. If Q does not concede P's notion of *nāsikh* and *mansūkh*, for example, they may need to shift focus to a theological debate about revelation and abrogation. The problem-question, in short, is this: If a dialectical method's focus / capability remains only on the realm of "what we should *do*" and ignores "what we should *believe*," how will it cope with the (possibly inevitable) need to probe and test the positive / speculative statements and principles which emerge in the course of justifying / critiquing normative theses?

[Addressing D] "…we are particularly interested in the key considerations that need to be accounted for when designing a Munazara-inspired argumentation procedure for an international audience in diverse societies."

- This search for key considerations itself engenders numerous additional questions which should be addressed at an initial stage. These include the following.
- First, How significant a concern is accessibility: i.e., generating user-friendly methods, accessible to the layperson without a burden of new technical jargon, or too many difficult abstractions, or boggling symbols of symbolic logic, or difficult mathematical presentations?
  - Connected to this is the question of translation vs. transliteration in the presentation of technical terms in the new "Munazara-inspired argumentation procedure." For example, if the designed procedure incorporates the objection-move of *naqḍ*, will some new English term, which attempts

to capture the nature of the move, be used (e.g., "charge of intra-doctrinal inconsistency"), or a new English term which stands as a literal translation (e.g., "destruction"), or some less precise but more common near-equivalent (e.g., "self-contradiction"), or will it simply be transliterated and the learner, perforce, made to acquire the Arabic term *naqḍ*?

- Second, How to pursue the question of universal first principles (in terms of rational thought), e.g., Aristotle's laws of thought (identity, non-contradiction, excluded middle)? Are these truly universal, observed across all societies, or only some?
  - Connected to this is the question of whether a singular "Munazara-inspired argumentation procedure" is desirable, or whether there should be several variant procedures or methods, each on its variant foundation. For example, it might be preferable in some instances to have a method based on one from the spectrum of paraconsistent logics, in addition to a more intuitive method based on Aristotle's laws of thought or a "classical logic."
    - Similarly, how will the project address the possibility of irresolvable clashes over first principles / axioms of logic? How can it allow a shift to a deeper register of, e.g., non-contradiction, without both disputants already being pre-committed to the same axiomatic bases? Or will pre-commitment to accepted first principles be considered a prerequisite to initiating debate?
  - Also connected to this is the question of whether the project's MEM would be free of potential, built-in biases or other kinds of oppressive structures (such as are the target of feminist and post-colonial critique; see, e.g., the work of Val Plumwood). Will these kinds of considerations be taken into account in the development of a universal MEM?
  - This question of whether or not logical-epistemic axioms like identity, non-contradiction, and excluded middle are truly universal, and whether or not the munazara model will commit to them, is important. Consider the fact that, as tests for justificatory soundness, the *ādāb al-baḥth*, like its *jadal* and *khilāf* predecessors, depends very heavily on freedom from inter- and intra-doctrinal contradiction (*naqḍ*, *tanāquḍ*) as well as freedom from counter-indication (*muʿāraḍa*)—it is pre-committed to Aristotle's laws of thought. And so, unless differently founded variants are constructed, any method derived from the *ādāb al-baḥth* will require a pre-commitment to the notions of contradiction, contrariety, counter-indication, etc.
- Third, is the project's objective a single-application, universal-to-all-disciplines model? Or variant models based on application to variant domains or disciplines (e.g., a normative vs. positive / speculative model; or custom-designed models for ethics, civil law, common law, metaphysics, natural philosophy, etc.)? Or, as mentioned before, variant models based on variant logical-epistemological axioms / first principles?

[ADAB Team Preliminary Question #1]

> 1. Do you think Munazara's goal of *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* and *ghalabat al-ẓann* should be preserved, abandoned, or reformulated? Why? And, how?

- If I understand correctly, question #1 asks whether or not *munāẓara* should maintain its commonly stated objective of "making clear what is true" (*iẓhār al-ḥaqq*)—or, with al-Samarqandī, "making clear what is correct" (*iẓhār al-ṣawāb*)—or, if the true/correct cannot be determined with certainty, distinguishing which of a pair of contrary opinions is most probable (*ghalabat al-ẓann*).
- First, I would problematize question #1 by asking: Is even the tradition of *ādāb al-baḥth* (never mind its predecessor and parallel *jadal* / *khilāf* traditions) unanimous that *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* or *ghalabat al-ẓann* constitute the goal of *munāẓara*? For example, as noted above, al-Samarqandī makes "making clear

what is correct" (*iẓhār al-ṣawāb*) the objective of munāẓara in his famous *Risāla* (al-Kīlānī explaining this as meaning "making clear what occurs in reality" [*iẓhār mā huwa wāqiʿ fī l-wāqiʿ*]). Neither he nor his early commentators with whom I am familiar make reference to *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* and *ghalabat al-ẓann* as objectives; and these commentators, analyzing his definition of *munāẓara* as incorporating all four Aristotelian causes, also clearly identify *iẓhār al-ṣawāb* as the final cause (*ʿilla ghāʾiyya*) of *munāẓara*. (NB: early commentators on al-Ījī's *ādāb al-baḥth* also reference *iẓhār al-ṣawāb*, so do [pseudo?] al-Jurjānī and Taşköprizâde, though of course it is true that later dialecticians like Saçaklızâde and others referenced *iẓhār al-ḥaqq*.)

  o So perhaps at this early stage of the project, it would be useful to survey the primary *ādāb al-baḥth* works and their commentaries in order to collect a list or table of their statements / discussions regarding the goal of *munāẓara*. Who said what? There may be a broader range than just *iẓhār al-ḥaqq /al-ṣawāb* and *ghalabat al-ẓann*, and this might prompt additional considerations for the MEM that would otherwise be missed.

● Second, at the start of his discussion of the *ādāb al-baḥth* in his *Qisṭās*, al-Samarqandī notes that the epistemic objectives / capacities of different disciplines vary, and that we can't hold the same epistemic expectations with regard to, e.g., conclusions in *fiqh*, that we might hold with regard to, e.g., conclusions in geometry. I believe this is something that should be considered when determining the goals of the MEM. Below is my translation of the relevant section into English (for the Arabic text and Turkish translation, see Necmettin Pehlivan's edition, pp. 500-503).

> Every science in which dialectical inquiry occurs is connected either to [1] words (*alfāẓ*), [2] meaning (*maʿnā*), or [3] both of them together. As for the first: [Arabic] linguistics, syntax, inflection, metrics, and the like. As for the second: the types of rational disciplines (*maʿqūlāt*) like metaphysics, physics, mathematics, medicine, ethics, and what resembles these. As for the third: Qurʾānic exegesis (*tafsīr*), Prophetic reports (*ḥadīth*), legal theory (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), and substantive law (*fiqh*).
>
> And in each one of these sciences, there are technical terms and conceded propositions which the inquirer into that science must concede in its regard, no matter whether they are objects of knowledge or of [mere] probability. That is because the indicants (*adillāʾ*) of every science have a final goal in terms of [epistemic] strength and rank, beyond which it is difficult to go; and that science's aimed-at objective is attained by it.
>
> Take substantive law (*fiqh*), for example. For the utmost limit of its indicants is overwhelming probability (*al-ẓann al-ghālib*), but from this is attained the sought-after object of substantive law; namely, knowledge of a deed's obligation.
> Such being the case, in each science nothing is demanded except what is possible in its regard. For in the sciences of Arabic syntax (*naḥw*) and substantive law, for example, demonstration (*burhān*) is not demanded. On the contrary, they are restricted to attaining probability (*ẓann*), and adopting what is more appropriate and better. Unless, that is, the causal-justifier (*muʿallil*) makes a rule of this and takes it upon himself; for in such a case, his interlocutor demands demonstration.
>
> The indicants (*dalāʾil*) of the sciences might be arranged in terms of [epistemic] weakness and strength. The lowest of them in rank are the indicants of syntax, inflection, and what is connected to linguistic [sciences], then the indicants of substantive law, then of legal theory (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) and juristic disagreement (*khilāf*), then of philosophy (*ḥikma*), then of logic (*manṭiq*), then of astronomy (*hayʾa*), then of geometry (*handasa*), which are the highest of indicants in strength and rank.

- Third, in answering question #1 directly, I believe that yes, we should definitely preserve *iẓhār al-ḥaqq / al-ṣawāb* and/or *ghalabat al-ẓann*, etc. as goals of the MEM—it is mostly this objective which determines the moral superiority of dialectic and distinguishes it from sophistry and other, less ethical (or even downright unethical) forms of dialogical argument. But at the same time, I think a great deal of refined definition and justification needs to underpin any final declaration as to the epistemic-ethical goals of the MEM. And special consideration must of course be paid to the philosophies of truth, and correctness, and probability.
  - I'm no expert in these areas, but I know, for example, that in modern epistemology there are several competing / complementary theories of truth (correspondence, coherence, etc.) Which of these will define the "truth," the *ḥaqq* of *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* ? And of course, modern epistemology also has competing probability theories. Which will define the *ẓann* of *ghalabat al-ẓann*? Or will the character of these goals be defined only by what pre-modern Muslim theorists had to say, whether in *ādāb al-baḥth* texts, or more broadly in the rational and transmitted sciences?
- I think, therefore, there are at least two concerns going forward on question #1:
  - [1] to research the *ādāb* discussions re: *iẓhār al-ḥaqq / al-ṣawāb* and/or *ghalabat al-ẓann*—some of which are bound to be quite detailed—and also to survey and attain summaries / analyses of truth / probability theories as found in works by Ibn Sīnā and later Muslim philosophers, as well as in the transmitted sciences (e.g., detailed epistemology sections of larger *uṣūl al-fiqh* texts).
  - [2] to summarize the state of the field for truth / probability theories, and either [a] establish a consensus as to which are best suited to the proposed MEM, or [b] formulate new / variant theories (e.g., incorporating what is learned from the relevant *ādāb al-baḥth* commentaries), or [c] consider variant MEMs with variant goals derived from the variant truth / probability theories, and propose a series / spectrum of MEMs.
    - Or, perhaps, we might consider an "interchangeable parts" conception of MEMs, whereby certain fundamentals can be packaged or bundled separately, but then plugged together in different, functional combinations. For example, there can be multiple truth-theory bundles, classical vs. paraconsistent logic bundles, critical theory bundles (feminist, post-colonial, etc.), and domain (normative vs. positive / speculative) or even discipline-specific (law, medicine, politics, ethics, etc.) bundles. These could first be developed and defined, and then tested in a variety of functional combinations, for example:
      - a MEM which, in terms of truth theory, is based on consistency; and in terms of logic is classical; and in terms of critical theory is post-colonial; and in terms of discipline is for civil law debates.
      - Or a MEM which, in terms of truth theory, is based on correspondence; and in terms of logic is paraconsistent; and in terms of critical theory is feminist; and in terms of discipline is for health and medicine.
    - Perhaps more realistic would be a single MEM which recognizes various strata / registers of debate, welcoming assumptions and inputs from all, but allowing all to be subject to debate, and for debate to shift course, or for its primary problem-question (*masʾala*) to be put on hold while disputation temporarily shifts to another register to resolve a more fundamental point of contention. For example, in debating a thesis on climate change, R might introduce a principle of consistency truth theory which Q does not immediately concede, so they "put a pin" in the climate thesis and shift to the more fundamental register of truth theory; then, if Q is eventually brought to concede, they return to the climate debate, but if R fails to justify the consistency principle, then they stop and R must formulate a new justification on a different foundation.

[ADAB Team Preliminary Question #2]

2. Have any Munazara scholars suggested procedural changes, adjustments, or alternative interpretations of notions such as *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* as a result of, or by way of accounting for, changes in the social-political-historical context? How could such changes, adjustments, or interpretations inform the contemporary efforts to transform Munazara into a debate protocol and software in use?

- First, to answer the first part of question #2 directly, I don't know of any instances whereby fundamental notions like *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* were altered in any significant way at all, much less in ways connected by author-dialecticians to social-political-historical contexts. As noted above, it is the goal of *iẓhār al-ḥaqq / al-ṣawāb* which determines the moral superiority of dialectic and distinguishes it from sophistry; to abandon or alter significantly the truth-seeking imperative of dialectic would leave one with something which is no longer dialectic (and, presumably, of less interest to the project).
  - o That being said, it is possible they exist—i.e., that there are discussions relevant to this question written by author-dialecticians I have not read yet (and these are many authors), or in parts of works which I have not yet read fully (and these are many works, too), or in ways that are not overt or at all obvious until re-examined with this context-driven-alteration consideration in mind.
    - ▪ I would warn here that we must make a distinction between context-driven-alterations to notions like *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* (be they social, political, historical, etc.) and attitudinal changes vis-à-vis a dialectical genre's capacity as a truth-seeking method. Scholars like Saçaklızâde, for example, famously distinguished *jadal* from *munāẓara* by claiming that the former was more concerned with winning than getting to the truth, while the latter was concerned only with truth-seeking. Whatever the reasons for his doing this were, I would make two points:

      - First, this reflects a change in attitude toward past modes of dialectic, not a change in their dialectical-theoretical content. Anyone familiar with juristic *jadal* / *khilāf* in the centuries preceding Saçaklızâde will know that its author-dialecticians understood and promoted their dialectical methods as truth-seeking enterprises (see, e.g., part of al-Bājī's [d. 474/1081] preamble to his *Minhāj fī Tartīb al-Ḥijāj*, where he says of *jadal*: "this science is of the most exalted in rank and greatest in importance, for it is the path to knowledge of evidentiary justification and discerning the truth from what is absurd; and were it not for the validation of theses in dialectic, no proof might be furnished, nor method made clear, nor the sound be known from the unsound, nor the crooked from the straight.")
      - Second, any dialectical method can be abused, despite its author's intent, and so be employed in a more sophistical / eristic / polemical practice (imparting yet further importance to the theory vs. practice distinction). The latter-day *munāẓara* of Saçaklızâde was just as prone to abuse as the *jadal* / *khilāf* theories which preceded it, even though the authors of all theories to be found in these sets (*jadal*, *khilāf*, *munāẓara*, *ādāb al-baḥth*) developed and promoted them with purely truth-seeking objectives. To my knowledge, no Muslim theorists developed intentionally sophistical / win-oriented disputation methods (regardless of what may have been practiced on the ground, in different contexts, disciplines, regions, and eras).
        - o The point here is that even if Saçaklızâde's distinction between *jadal* and *munāẓara* was based on what he observed of, e.g., juristic dialectical practice in his time (and I don't think it is, I think it is based more on a misunderstanding of Aristotelian definitions of dialectic), this doesn't mean that the actual theories of *jadal* practiced were non-truth-

seeking vis-à-vis a purportedly uniquely truth-seeking *munāẓara*. It would only mean that the truth-seeking *jadal* theory of his day had been abused for sophistical ends.

- o Possible candidates for less-obvious indications of context-driven-alteration (be it social, political, historical, etc.) might be found in pretty much any diachronic development in a stream of dialectical theory. For example, it is possible that we observe the effect of context-driven-alterations in the later "logical turn" in juristic dialectic—the one which eventually gave birth to the *ādāb al-baḥth*. Does this reflect, e.g., the decreasing need for hermeneutics in dialectic, since so much, in terms of accepted interpretive stances and counter-stances, had already been ironed out?
    - ▪ Granted, if this is the case, the context is far more intellectual-historical than social or political. And this leads to a problematizing of question #2, to some extent.
        - ● First, we might ask: Aren't purely intellectual-historical, ideas-driven dynamics (e.g., the logical constraints of epistemic-authority-based normative reasoning) more likely to be the primary shapers of a theory's development, as opposed to social or political dynamics? Which is not to say that social or political dynamics are not important, but that they are secondary to the primary force of theory-evolution: the very intellections and mental efforts of the author-dialecticians themselves, wholly or mostly unencumbered by socio-political motives, beholden instead to a higher and more inescapable force: the very requisites and constraints of dialogical logics of debate. Dialectical theories were shaped far less by social or political motives (conscious or otherwise) than by purely intellective ones.
        - ● Second: Shouldn't intellectual-historical varieties of context-driven-alteration in premodern dialectical theories have equal—or, more likely, greater—potential to usefully inform the project's efforts to develop a MEM for contemporary use? That is to say, if we identify and analyze the intellectual currents and constraints shaping past dialectical methods, won't this provide more useful data for developing a contemporary MEM than whatever past socio-political-driven alterations we might be able to discern (if any)?
- ● Returning to the first part of question #2, there is another possible course to pursue, should we link this question specifically to the systemic and epistemic ruptures of modernity (following Wael Hallaq in the use of these terms). That is to say, if Muslim dialecticians have ever overtly "suggested procedural changes, adjustments, or alternative interpretations… as a result of, or by way of accounting for, changes in the social-political-historical context," then I would imagine these are more likely to be found in works on our side of the modern divide—more particularly, works from the start of European colonialism onwards. Unfortunately, I am not familiar with these texts and would therefore require considerable time and effort to look into them for discussions overtly related to socially or politically driven alterations to dialectical theory. In the meantime, others more versed in modern Islamic argumentation theory (e.g., that of al-Shinqīṭī or Taha Abderrahmane) might also be asked.
- ● As for the second part of question #2 ("How could such changes [etc.] inform the contemporary efforts to transform Munazara into a debate protocol and software in use?"), I imagine there might be several useful ways in which observed changes and alterations in past dialectical theories—no matter whether driven by pure intellection or by socio-political factors—could contribute to developing the MEM. If we stick to our example of the "logical turn" in Islamic juristic dialectic, and the eventual prevalence of relatively simple, universal, and formal syllogistic justifications and critiques, and the hypothesis that this came about due to a decreased need for hermeneutical engagement directly with *uṣūl*, allowing a greater focus on purely rational-inferential argument from pre-determined, *uṣūl*-based premises, then we might derive a number of lessons from this, not the least of which is that:

- o Topical disciplines at different stages of development might have different demands for a hermeneutical apparatus pre-agreed to by disputants. For example, the relatively new positive and normative domains of climate-change debate might still be developing a sufficient hermeneutical apparatus to deal with the "*uṣūl*" of collections of scientific studies, the notion of scientific consensus, climate-change agreements and climate-action charters, etc., whereas the positive and normative domains of political theory might have a more established hermeneutical apparatus for navigating its "*uṣūl*" of historical observations and analyses, dominant definitions and models, causal paradigms, etc., which allows disputants (especially within a singular tradition or school of political thought) a more singular focus on the rational inferences they can make from already agreed-upon sets of premises.
- o Also, certain topical domains, especially in the natural sciences and arts (e.g., astronomy, or medicine), depend largely on premise sets (individual observations, experiment results, theories, and laws) which are developed primarily outside of dialogical venues, as strictly empirical and/or mathematical endeavors, and so have little need for hermeneutical tools (apart from those applied to statistical analyses, interpreting telescope / radioscope data, etc.), but require instead specific logical methods for debating possible hypotheses, explanations, and theories, and—perhaps most importantly—devising unambiguous and practical tests and further experiments aimed at disproving such hypotheses, explanations, and theories.
- o In the end this could mean that a more comprehensive MEM will require a general set of hermeneutical tools (for dealing with, e.g., foundational texts, or modes and objects of consensus, etc.) as well as a general rational-inferential toolbox—more, perhaps, than the more streamlined, "post-classical" *ādāb al-baḥth* methods might be able to provide (requiring that the MEM draw also on "classical" *jadal / khilāf* methods). Younger topical domains will draw more heavily on the (pre-*ādāb al-baḥth* inspired) hermeneutical apparatus, and older domains perhaps less so, but both may engage fully in the syllogistic rational-inferential justification and objection apparatus of the *ādāb al-baḥth* (not to mention the more informal justifications and objections of *jadal*, if the team chooses to consider them).

[ADAB Team Preliminary Question #3]

3. Keeping in mind our goals between the Munazara procedure and argumentative virtues, what would, for instance, be the relevance of *taqrīr/taḥrīr* (as stated in Samarqandī's *Qisṭās*) and *fahm/tafhīm* (as stated in his *Risāla*)?

- *taqrīr/taḥrīr* in the *Qisṭās* (Pehlivan ed., 501), my English translation

A custom of the ancients has been to append a section on dialectic (*jadal*) to the end of their logic books. But since, in our times, the Science of Juristic Disagreement (ʿ*ilm al-khilāf*) has made this superfluous, I have put in its place a canon for the protocols of dialectical inquiry (*ādāb al-baḥth*) and its proper ordering (*tartīb*), the proper formulation of argument (*tawjīh al-kalām*) and its refinement (*tahdhīb*). [These protocols] are, with respect to preserving the accurate explanation of meaning in verbal expression and writing (*al-taqrīr wa-l-taḥrīr*), like logic (*manṭiq*) is for reflection and thinking. By means of them the road to what is desired is shortened, and the rationality of argument is made pure….

- *fahm/tafhīm* in the *Risāla* (Young ed., §1)

This is a treatise on the protocols for dialectical inquiry (*ādāb al-baḥth*), which every student has need of, that it preserve him from going astray in dialectical inquiry, and make easier for him the path to understanding (*fahm*) and to making others understand (*tafhīm*).

- My current understanding of these terms is as follows:
  - *taqrīr* = proper / accurate rendering (of an argument / formula, verbally); or, as in the above translation, "accurate explanation of meaning in verbal expression"
  - *taḥrīr* = proper / accurate rendering (of an argument / formula, in writing); or, as in the above translation, "accurate explanation of meaning in writing"
  - *fahm* = understanding
  - *tafhīm* = making others understand.
- Equally important, and likewise highlighted by al-Samarqandī in the preface to his *Qisṭās* above, are:
  - *tawjīh* = proper formulation (of an argument / objection / rebuttal)
  - *tartīb* = proper ordering (of dialectical moves in a disputation)
  - XXXX
- To problematize question #3 a little, we could say that "what would… be the relevance" is rather vague, or asking the obvious, since we might assume that any desirable argumentation method would require accurate formulations (*taqrīr*/*taḥrīr*) and aim at mutual understanding (*fahm*/*tafhīm*). I will assume, therefore, that something more specific is intended by this question.
- If the question is asking whether or not the pairs *taqrīr*/*taḥrīr* and *fahm*/*tafhīm* should be preserved in the proposed MEM as principles and/or goals of *munāẓara* (like *iẓhār al-ḥaqq* / *al-ṣawāb*), then I would definitely say yes, and not only that, but I think they should be further elaborated through at least two approaches.
  - First, we should survey the commentary on *taqrīr*/*taḥrīr* and *fahm*/*tafhīm*, and summarize all that it can teach us with regard to how these general principles / goals were in fact elaborated into *set courses of practical action* (if they ever were), as opposed to merely desirable, but not regulated, aims.
  - Second, we should summarize both contemporary theories of proper argument formulation and the more practical philosophies of understanding. As for proper argument formulation, this would probably involve, among other inquiries, the question of formalizing accepted argument schemes (such as is reviewed at the end of Walton, et al., *Argumentation Schemes*), though I imagine an objective of the ADAB project is to assure that the accepted formulae of any proposed MEM should remain both practical and accessible. As for philosophies of understanding, summaries may be found, e.g., in the *SEP*, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/understanding/).
    - Once this work is done, the ADAB team should either form a consensus as to which principles / elements from contemporary discussions of proper argument formulation and mutual understanding should be incorporated into the MEM, or decide whether to adhere to principles / elements drawn only from the Islamic commentary on *taqrīr*/*taḥrīr* and *fahm*/*tafhīm*, or work towards some kind of synthesis.
- As noted above, I believe *tawjīh* and *tartīb* are equally important notions for the procedural aspects of any proposed MEM, and should therefore be subjected to the approaches outlined above for *taqrīr*/*taḥrīr* and *fahm*/*tafhīm*: first summarizing what the commentaries have to say, then what relevant contemporary theories have to say, then forming some kind of consensus as to how to make sure that these notions of *tawjīh* and *tartīb* are not only incorporated as principles / goals, but elaborated into set courses of practical action, along with *taqrīr*/*taḥrīr* and *fahm*/*tafhīm*.
  - The importance of *tawjīh* for ethical procedure should be self-evident. Among other things, it would assure a regularity of expression which would naturally support principles / goals of both *taqrīr*/*taḥrīr* and *fahm*/*tafhīm*; the respondent would recognize immediately the identity and nature of the questioner's question / objection by way of its formula, and thus lose no time to ambiguity in formulating a defense, if possible. For example (see *Risāla*, Young ed., §23):

- Were Q to say: "What you stated of an indicant (*dalīl*) is not valid, due to the judgement-assertion's (*ḥukm*'s) detachment from it in this [other] case (*ṣūra*)," then R would be able to recognize this, by its precise formula, as an objection of collective inconsistency (*naqḍ ijmālī*), and thus move straight to a counter-objection if possible (e.g., by pointing out a disqualifying difference [*farq*] in that other case which Q brought to show the inconsistency).
  - Were Q to say: "Even if what you stated indicates the affirmation of what is indicated [by your *dalīl*] (*madlūl*), still we have that which negates it," then R will be alert to the fact that what follows is Q's counter-indication (*muʿāraḍa*), and thus be prepared to take on the role of questioner himself, with Q now becoming R, and vice versa.
  - In effect, following a protocol of *tawjīh* facilitates a clear, mutually understandable flow of argumentative dialog between questioner and respondent, helping prevent the debate from going astray or reaching incongruent conclusions due to ambiguities introduced through irregular or confusing argument formulations.
- Likewise, the importance of *tartīb* for ethical procedure should be self-evident. Among other places, it is pointed out in the *qiyās*-oriented objections chapters of many *uṣūl al-fiqh* texts, and of course *jadal* manuals, that Q's adherence to a strict order of questions / objections is absolutely essential to a constructive disputation. *Muʿāraḍa*, for example, comes at the end of most order-systems, since launching it earlier will have disallowed R the full testing and expression of supporting indicants for his thesis, and the move will thus constitute not counter-indication (*muʿāraḍa*) but usurpation (*ghaṣb*) of R's role.
- Beyond this, of course, author-dialecticians were well aware that the nature of certain questions / objections further down the list is such that they will often embody unspoken concessions to premises which ought to first have been tested by questions / objections higher up on the list; asking questions out of order, among other problems, can lead Q to unknowingly or unintentionally commit to premises that had never been properly tested at an earlier stage, and this will introduce the real possibility of a less accurate conclusion to the disputation.
  - In effect, following a protocol of *tartīb* facilitates a fair, constructive, and truth-preserving flow of argument, in particular by restricting possible conduits for the fallacy of many questions / complex questions, or unspoken and unintended concessions to what had not been properly justified and tested. The *tartīb* of dialectical questions / objections is in fact not only discussed but in some places fiercely debated by author-dialecticians, and is an area which ought to be explored, summarized, and its findings incorporated into any proposed MEM, along with *taqrīr/taḥrīr*, *fahm/tafhīm*, and *tawjīh*.

[ADAB Team Preliminary Question #4]

4. Focusing specifically on the munazara procedure, what adjustments would be necessary, useful, or worthy of consideration? For instance, (a) should disagreement be the only criteria for marking the beginning of a munazara engagement? If not, then what could mark the beginning of Munazara?, and (b) Should reaching incontrovertible propositions be the only criteria that marks the conclusion of a munazara engagement? If not, then what marks the end of Munazara?

- First, we might attempt to clarify and problematize question #4 just a little.
  - By way of clarification, I would assume we are defining procedure as something like the proper, mutually conceded structure of debate, from start to finish, in terms of determined roles, proper order of turns, allowed dialectical moves and their *tartīb*, with protocols for determining and guiding opening, middle, and closing stages. In short, by procedure we mean the step-by-step

outline of proper actions and their order in a *munāẓara* session. For example, a *munāẓara* session might turn out like the following (though of course, a vast multiplicity of permutations is possible):

Opponent A	**Opponent B**
Q(A) begins by asking R(B)'s opinion	
	R(B) states his/her thesis
Q(A) asks for R(B)'s *dalīl*	
	R(B) states his/her primary *dalīl*
Q(A) denies a premise of R(B)'s *dalīl*	
	R(B) produces a secondary *dalīl* justifying that premise
Q(A) brings a *naqḍ*-case purportedly showing R(B)'s secondary *dalīl*'s inconsistency	
	R(B) points out a disqualifying difference (*farq*) between his/her secondary *dalīl* and Q(A)'s *naqḍ*-case, cancelling the inconsistency
Q(A) launches a *muʿāraḍa*, conceding that R(B)'s *dalīl* appears to indicate his/her thesis, but nevertheless bringing a counter-indication appearing to prove the opposite thesis	
[the roles switch, R becomes Q and vice versa]	
	Q(B) denies a premise of R(A)'s counter-*dalīl*
R(A) produces a secondary *dalīl* justifying that premise	
	Q(B) brings a *naqḍ*-case purportedly showing R(B)'s secondary *dalīl*'s inconsistency
R(A) is unable to repel the charge of inconsistency, thus abandoning the secondary *dalīl*, and the premise, and thus his/her counter-*dalīl*	
The *munāẓara* session ends; Opponent B's thesis is vindicated	

- By way of problematizing the example sub-questions:
  - Example sub-question (a): should disagreement be the only criterion for marking the beginning of a munazara… if not, then what…?
    - I believe the question may be problematized due to the wide variety of types of disagreement, which may be, for example:
      - spontaneous, variant-theory-produced disagreement between disputants coming from, e.g., different schools (or variant trends in the same school);
      - planned, devil's-advocate disagreement between "opponents" who actually share the same thesis, but seek to test it;
      - pedagogical disagreement, where teacher / student takes on the contrary / contradictory position for learning purposes.
    - Considering these variant contexts (and I'm sure there are many others), and that they all constitute types of disagreement—real or hypothetical, planned or spontaneous, intra-madhhab or inter-madhhab, competitive, cooperative, didactic, etc.—I'm finding it difficult to imagine how a *munāẓara* could begin with anything but a disagreement. Ultimately, whether the opposition of contrary or contradictory theses is spontaneous or artificially orchestrated, it constitutes a disagreement.
    - Perhaps I'm misunderstanding the question, and what is really being asked is: should spontaneous / adversarial disagreement be the only criterion for marking the beginning of a *munazara*. In this case I would of course say no, and include as acceptable criteria for *munāẓara* initiation the planned, devil's advocate and pedagogical contexts, along with any others which further reflection might reveal.
      - An important step here would be to consider whether or not these different beginning contexts require variant *munāẓara* procedural rules for opening, middle, and closing stages. Should a planned, devil's-advocate *munāẓara* or a pedagogical *munāẓara* proceed in precisely the same fashion as a spontaneous, variant-theory-produced *munāẓara*? If further deliberations reveal that this is not the case, then perhaps we might again consider MEM component bundles, with different procedural bundles for the different beginning contexts; or, alternatively, a single, multi-potential MEM whereby the parties to the *munāẓara* first determine together the nature of their context, and if it is X they will follow procedural rules X, and if it is Y they will follow procedural rules Y, etc.
  - Example sub-question (b): should reaching incontrovertible propositions be the only criterion that marks the conclusion of a munazara… if not, then what…?
    - If I understand correctly what is meant here, I don't believe that "reaching incontrovertible propositions" is, or ever was, "the only criterion that marks the conclusion of a munazara engagement." This corresponds only to *ilzām*, which is Q's inexorable concession to R's justification, and thus R's thesis, because after repeated attempts the premises of R's supporting indicants have held, and Q is eventually left with nothing to deny, and (if launched) Q's *muʿāraḍa* has failed.
      - But what about *ifḥām*, which is R's being silenced, unable to respond to Q's critique (in the form of, e.g., a reductio ad absurdum, or a *naqḍ ijmālī*)?
      - Moreover, in the rich traditions of juristic *jadal / khilāf*, we sometimes find lists of signs marking the end of a *munāẓara* session—the "termination" (*inqiṭāʿ*) of debate. These include, for example, inability to apply the cause, self-contradicting arguments, arguments which lead to an absurdity, shifting ground, ignoratio elenchi, and denying necessary or empirical truths (on these, see *Dialectical Forge*, 183-187; Miller, *Islamic Disputation*

> *Theory*, 74-5, and esp. 118-119 on al-Samarqandī's argument for the finitude of dialectical debate).

- ▪ That being said, I would recommend a full survey of the *munāẓara*-ending factors proposed by author-dialecticians (as, e.g., *aqsām al-inqiṭāʿ*) and its attendant commentary, in order to see what insights might be gained; and, believing on the whole that they will be as self-explanatory as they are sensible and ethical, I would recommend incorporating them into the MEM as they are, and only making ad hoc adjustments if necessary (once a preliminary version of the MEM is applied in various contexts).
    - ● An important sub-topic to pursue in this regard is that of "shifting" (*intiqāl*) of an argument's focus within a *munāẓara* session. There is a variety of opinions as to when, if ever, this is allowed. Molla Fenârî, for example, identifies four types: (1) Q denies R's legal cause A, so R shifts to another *dalīl* in order to rescue it; (2) Q asserts R's selfsame necessitating factor (*mūjib*), so R shifts to ruling B in order to rescue his ruling A; (3) Q asserts R's selfsame necessitating factor, so R shifts to ruling B and legal cause B in order to rescue his ruling A and legal cause A; and (4) Q makes an objection (e.g., invalid production [*fasād al-waḍʿ*]), so R abandons his legal cause A and shifts to legal cause B in order to rescue his ruling A. Interestingly, only the last (#4) is deemed an invalid move, and in fact one which brings about the session's termination (*inqiṭāʿ*).
- ● As noted, *munāẓara* "procedure" must consist in properly structured and formulated opening, middle, and closing stages. Here, in question #4's sub-questions (a) and (b), we've addressed only the opening and closing. But of course, the middle must be addressed as well, and just as urgently. Middle-stage procedure would concern, among other things, the proper formulae for questions / objections, their proper order (*tartīb*) in debate, as discussed above, as well as the proper formulae of response or counter-objection, and the proper management of temporary or terminal role-reversals such as occur after a valid objection of *naqḍ* (when R can object to Q's *naqḍ*-case) or of *muʿāraḍa* (when R can bring the entire toolbox of objections against Q's counter-*dalīl*, just as Q had the opportunity to do to R's *dalīl*). As suggested above for other *munāẓara* elements / principles / goals, the discourse of Muslim author-dialecticians on these middle-stage procedural concerns should be surveyed and analyzed, brought into comparison with parallels in modern argumentation theory, and some kind of consensus formed as to what procedural elements, or synthesis thereof, should be incorporated into the MEM.
- ● Overall, I think *ādāb* procedure in all its stages is amazingly well-conceived, and it has certainly been thoroughly tested over hundreds of years. It is my recommendation, therefore, once again, that we should mostly adhere to some version of it, and make only ad hoc adjustments should the subsequent testing of a preliminary version of the MEM in various contexts makes it necessary.

Further Questions Proposed for Exploration

- ● Overall question: These preliminary questions focus only on the ethical and procedural elements of Islamic dialectics, and only in the *ādāb al-baḥth*. Basically, the prefatory (ethics) and closing (signs of defeat) parts of a typical treatise. But what about the middle, the greater substance and theory of dialectic, namely, its various dialectical moves, the argumentative elements of *ādāb al-baḥth*: rational justifications, objections, responses, and related strategies? Shouldn't we be formulating questions about these as well?
    - ○ If I recall correctly, a response to this was that in this project we would better focus on the ethics of argumentation, rather than on the logic. However, I would disagree with that sentiment. In my opinion, the ethic and the logic can't be separated: adhering to a truth-seeking ethic demands the

practice of valid logic and accepted argument forms ("the good dialectic") and the avoidance of invalid logic and rejected argument forms—so a vital part of any *munāẓara* method has to be the defining and justifying of what constitutes valid logic and accepted argument forms. This quest, and the serious logical-epistemological debates it engendered among dialecticians, is itself an expression of the truth-seeking ethic in action—the quest to build valid and acceptable toolboxes for the determination, expansion, and preservation of truth is, inevitably, in the service of truth.

o If this is agreed upon, then I would propose the following questions related not to ethics / procedure, but specific to the argumentative elements of *ādāb al-baḥth* and their revival / contemporary application:

▪ Are the logical relations of Samarqandian *ādāb al-baḥth* (*talāzum*, *tanāfin*, *dawarān*) comprehensive enough—are further relations necessary for contemporary contexts?

▪ Are the "master category" objections of *munāqaḍa* / *manʿ* (with or without *sanad*), *naqḍ* (*ijmālī*), and *muʿāraḍa* comprehensive enough—are further objection types necessary for contemporary contexts?

▪ Samarqandian *ādāb al-baḥth* purports to be applicable for problem-questions (*masāʾil*) of *kalām*, *ḥikma*, and *khilāf* (covering three major positive, speculative, and normative domains of Islamic thought)—is this comprehensive enough for contemporary contexts? Would the juristic *khilāf* application, e.g., translate smoothly into the normative domain of modern political questions, or the *ḥikma* application, e.g., translate smoothly into the positive domain modern biological questions, or the *kalām* application, e.g., translate smoothly into the speculative domain of modern cosmological questions?

● Ethical argumentation method may require—to function as intended—something more than the mere creation of an ethics-cognizant theory. We all know that there is a fine line between dialectic and sophistry, and that it seems to rely solely upon the disputant's intellectual humility, adherence to a truth-seeking ethic, and conscientious eschewal of fallacy. This is something inculcated at a socio-cultural and psychological level; that is, regardless of how ethically focused and satisfying an argument theory might be, it will always be prone to abuse or misuse by one in whom intellectual humility / truth-seeking ethic / eschewal of fallacy are lacking.

o Scholars like Wael Hallaq have shown that, among other things, modernity uprooted premodern moral matrices of Islamic communities and societies around the world; Marshall Hodgson suggests that a "technicalistic" ethic focused on "efficiency" above all other concerns is at the heart of the "great Western Transmutation" which brought Europe to colonial domination over the rest of the world. Question: If truth-seeking dialectic can succeed only with sincere, intellectually humble disputants, how can it thrive in communities / societies wherein this ethic may have been displaced, or wherein it is not duly emphasized / inculcated?

▪ Should the ADAB project and/or future projects direct part of their effort at ways to re-inculcate the sincerity, intellectual humility, etc., requisite to a functional dialectic into societies at more fundamental levels, so that the moral matrix can be regrown in which real, truth-seeking dialog can flourish?

o Drawing on some of the same points, we might also ask: What role can an ethical, truth-seeking disputation method *ever* play in real, competitive political discourse, where the goal, ultimately, must be to win (and the side which refuses to cheat must necessarily lose more often)? In the competitive world of real politics, where the truth is touted only when it serves one's political agenda (and those who adhere more to truths than to what supports their agendas, whether truths or falsehoods, valid or invalid arguments, tend to lose more contests), can true dialectic ever play a role? Or is real politics forever the realm only of rhetoric and sophistry?

- Why only the *ādāb al-baḥth*? What about other Islamic dialectical theories, esp. the rich and varied traditions of juridical *jadal* / *khilāf*? If you will consider these, then you might ask the same questions about truth-seeking ethic and procedure in these traditions, as well as questions related to the argumentative elements of juristic *jadal* / *khilāf* and their revival / contemporary application. There is a rich treasure trove of many hundreds of distinct but "translatable" dialectical moves in this material.
- Will debate styles with referee / moderator be considered or elaborated? What would be the qualifications of such a referee, and how to guarantee his/her neutrality?