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The Oneness of God in Islamic Theology: Qur'anic Foundations and Classical Rational Arguments

Muhammad Harris Suhaib
Research Scholar, Department of Islamic Studies, Al Ghazali University, Karachi. harrissuhaib1999@gmail.com
Bisma Tariq
PhD Scholar, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, GCU Lahore. bismabinttariq@gmail.com
Hazrat Ali
MS Scholar, Department of Islamic Studies, Al Ghazali University, Karachi. alihazrat290@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the concept of tawhid (Divine Oneness) in Islamic literature, exploring its foundation in the Qur'an and the rational arguments developed by classical Muslim philosophers and theologians. It begins with the Qur'anic foundation for monotheism, highlighting how the Qur'an itself provides an epistemic basis for recognizing one necessary cause behind all existence. Several major philosophical proofs for God's unity are then analyzed, including Ibn Sina's argument from contingency to a Necessary Existent, classical kalam arguments against the possibility of multiple gods (as articulated by Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni, al-Ghazali, and others), the argument from omnipotence, which shows that two omnipotent wills would conflict, and the argument from the unified order in the cosmos. The paper also examines the concept of Divine simplicity (non-composition) as argued in the Maturidi-Ashʿari tradition, the problem of joint causation and redundancy if multiple creators are posited, and finally the metaphysical perspective of Mulla Sadra, who frames Divine unity in terms of the unity of *wujud* (existence) itself. A synthetic discussion shows the convergence of revelation and reason: the Qur'anic worldview and classical logical arguments reinforce each other in affirming that God must be one. These approaches are also compared with perspectives in modern analytic philosophy of religion, illustrating the continued logical relevance

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of the classical proofs.

Keywords: Tawhid; Islamic Theology; Monotheism; Ibn Sina; Kalam; Contingency Argument; Omnipotence; Divine Simplicity; Mulla Sadra; Philosophy of Religion

2. Qur'anic Foundation of Divine Oneness

Islamic belief in the oneness of God (*tawhid*) is first and foremost grounded in the Qur'an, which provides a **primary epistemic premise** for monotheism. The Qur'an not only declares God's oneness as a matter of faith but also uses rational arguments and signs (*ayat*) in nature to point inquisitive minds toward the conclusion that there can only be one ultimate deity. For example, the Qur'an presents a concise logical proof against polytheism in the verse:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا

"Had there been within them [the heavens and the earth] other gods besides Allah, *they both would have been ruined.*" (Qur'an 21:22)

This verse suggests that a multiplicity of gods with independent powers would lead to conflict and disorder (*fasad*) in the cosmos, which is empirically not the case. In Qur'anic reasoning, the harmonious governance of the heavens and earth points to a single, Necessary Cause that maintains order (Al-Juwayni, 2000). Thus, the Qur'an itself appeals to the **impossibility of multiple gods** by inviting people to reflect on observable unity and consistency in nature. Another verse states,

"If there were in them (the heavens and earth) other gods besides Allah, they would surely disintegrate" (21:22)

Directly linking the concept of *tawhid* to the integrity of the universe's design in a manner that anticipates later philosophical arguments (Al-Juwayni, 2000). Such Qur'anic *ayat* establish a foundational principle: **only one divine will and power can coherently sustain reality**.

Beyond specific verses, the **Qur'anic epistemology encourages the use of** reason (*'aql*) in conjunction with revelation. The scripture often poses rhetorical questions about the natural world's signs — the alternation of night and day, the precise orbits of celestial bodies, the provision of life-sustaining rain — implying that these phenomena are intelligible only under a single sovereign orchestrator. The Qur'an describes God as *"having no partner in His dominion"* and instructs

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believers to observe creation for evidence of this unity (e.g., Qur'an 23:91, 41:53). In short, the Qur'an provides both **the proclamation and a rational basis** for Divine Oneness, which later Muslim theologians and philosophers expounded on using more formal logic.

3. Argument from Contingency (Ibn Sina)

One of the most influential philosophical demonstrations of God's oneness is the **argument from contingency**, famously formulated by Ibn Sina (Avicenna) in the 11th century. This proof begins by classifying all existents into two categories: those that are **contingent** (possible) in themselves and those that are **necessary** in themselves. The argument can be outlined in a logical structure of premises and conclusion:

3.1 Logical Structure: Avicenna observes that things in the world come into being and pass away, indicating that their existence is not intrinsic but *contingent* – in other words, any being that can conceivably not exist is contingent. Such a being requires an external cause for its existence, since there is no internal guarantee of its existence. Suppose we chain back the causes of contingent beings. In that case, we either have an infinite regress of contingent causes (which Avicenna deems impossible) or we arrive at a first cause that is **Necessary in itself** (wajib al-wujud bi-dhatihi)*(Morvarid, 2022)*. This Necessary Being must exist by its very nature and thus does not require a cause.

From this point, Avicenna's reasoning moves to the **unicity** (oneness) of the Necessary Being. If there were two or more necessary beings, Avicenna argues, they would have to differ in some respect – otherwise they would not be two but the same. Any differentiating attribute or limitation, however, would negate the very concept of a Necessary Being (which must be absolute and unlimited)*(Wainwright, 2012)*. Therefore, *there can only be one Necessary Existent.* In Avicenna's own analysis, *"existence belongs to [the Necessary] necessarily, and it cannot be multiplied"* – a principle that secures both the existence *and unity* of God (Avicenna, 2005). The conclusion is that a single uncaused cause underpins all contingent reality.

3.2 Scholarly Commentary: Philosophers have noted that Ibn Sina's contingency argument is not only a proof of God's existence but also implicitly a proof of God's

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oneness. By grounding the concept of necessity in the analysis of contingency, Avicenna "developed his doctrine of the Necessary Being" such that the Necessary Being is *unique and the ultimate source* of all that exists (Wainwright, 2012; Lasica, 2020). As Michael Marmura explains, Avicenna's proof in the *Metaphysics of al-Shifa'* deduces that the Necessary Being must be *uncaused, one, and utterly simple,* since any internal complexity or plurality would introduce contingency into its being (Marmura, 1980). In Avicenna's own words, *"If existence belongs to a thing by virtue of itself, it cannot have a partner in that"* – thereby rejecting the possibility of multiple self-sufficient existents (Avicenna, trans. Marmura, 2005, p. 259). The *unity* of the Necessary Being is a direct corollary of its necessity. Later Islamic philosophers and theologians widely adopted this Avicennian principle, which became a cornerstone in Islamic philosophy: "the Necessary Existent is one" (a formula appearing in various commentaries) *(Trindade, 2017)*. Thus, Ibn Sina provides a bridge between metaphysics and monotheism: by analyzing being and causality, one arrives at a single, indivisible source of all existence*(Morvarid, 2022)*.

***3.3* Qur'anic Anchor:** Interestingly, the philosophical concept of a Necessary Being finds resonance with Qur'anic descriptions of God. One of the most famous is from *Surat al-Ikhlas*, which proclaims God's self-sufficiency:

ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ

"Allah – the Eternal, the Self-Sufficient" (Qur'an 112:2).

The term *al-Samad* in Arabic implies one who is absolutely independent and upon whom everything else depends*(Open Madrasa Ltd., 2024)*. This corresponds closely to the Necessary Existent in Avicenna's argument – a being that must exist and is not reliant on anything else, whereas all contingent beings rely on it. Thus, the Qur'an encapsulates in devotional language what Avicenna's proof establishes philosophically: that there is a single ultimate reality which itself needs no cause. The **congruence between revelation and reason** is notable. The Qur'an presents the concept of al-Samad as an article of faith, and reason, through the contingency argument, reveals a being possessing exactly those properties (necessary, uncaused, and one). In this way, the contingency argument not only demonstrates God's existence but also reinforces the Qur'anic notion that *only one* such necessary, self-

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subsisting being can exist.

4. Argument Against Multiple Necessary Beings (al-Juwayni, al-Ghazali)

Islamic theologians of the classical period (often associated with the **Ashʿari** school of kalam) offered their own logical demonstrations that the existence of *two* (or more) Gods is impossible. Building on simpler Kalam cosmological arguments for a creator, they developed a specific proof, later known as Burhan al-Tamanuʿ (the "Proof from Mutual Hindrance" or incompatibility), to refute the notion of multiple gods. We can break down this argument into logical premises:

4.1 Logical Premises: Suppose, for the sake of argument, that there are **two independent necessary beings**, i.e., two Gods. Each, by definition, would have absolute power (omnipotence) and an independent will. Now, consider a hypothetical situation: these two gods intend opposite outcomes for a particular event or object – for example, one deity wills an object to move while the other wills it to remain still. If both wills are truly sovereign, this scenario leads to a logical contradiction in the state of that object (it cannot simultaneously move and not move). If, on the other hand, **neither god's will is fulfilled** (each "cancels out" the other), then both beings would appear *impotent*, failing to realize their aims, which contradicts the concept of a true God *(Al-Juwayni, 2000)*. If **only one god's will is realized** and not the other's, then the one whose will was thwarted cannot be truly omnipotent, meaning it was never a god in the complete sense to begin with*(Al-Juwayni, 2000)*. In every case, the assumption of two unlimited, self-sufficient beings leads to a negation of one or both of their supposed attributes.

This logical trap illustrates that you **cannot have two "necessary" beings** without depriving one of them of some aspect of necessity or power. As al-Juwayni succinctly stated, any scenario of two independent almighty agents entails that *"the one whose wish was not effected"* would be rendered weak or limited, and thus not truly a god (Al-Juwayni, 2000). Therefore, there can only be *one* omnipotent, sovereign Necessary Being in reality.

4.2 Ashʿari Kalam Justification: Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni (d. 1085) and later Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111) famously expounded this argument in their kalam works. Al-Juwayni, in his *Kitab al-Irshad*, writes that if two gods are assumed, *"one*

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might desire motion, the other rest" for a given creature; any attempt to realize both desires violates the law of non-contradiction, and the failure of either or both desires proves the impossibility of two omnipotent wills *(Al-Juwayni, 2000)*. He further notes that even if one imagines two gods who always *agree* on what to do (never conflicting), the very possibility of divergence means each is *dependent* on the other's concurrence, which again contradicts necessary self-sufficiency *(Al-Juwayni, 2000)*. Al-Ghazali echoes this reasoning, stating that if we imagine *"two gods and one of them resolved on a course of action,"* either the second must comply (proving subordination) or resist (in which case either could be thwarted, negating omnipotence) (al-Ghazali, 1963). In Ashʿari theology, God's will is absolutely decisive — the notion of another co-equal will is not only scripturally absent but logically inadmissible *(Wainwright, 2012)*.

The theologians also elaborated an argument from **exclusion**: if we suppose two equally almighty creators, each could *prevent* the other's creating activity (*tamanuʿ* meaning "mutual thwarting"). The observed fact, however, is that the universe operates as a cohesive whole rather than a cacophony of divided realms or clashing outcomes. This indicates there is no such mutual exclusion happening in reality, hence no plurality of gods. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi later reinforced these points in his works, systematically addressing possible counter-scenarios (like "what if two gods always willed the same thing?") and concluding that even then, positing two separate *essences* is gratuitous and philosophically unsound – two omnipotent beings with identical will would be indistinguishable in substance, effectively *one being (Wainwright, 2012)*. In summary, the Kalam scholars deemed **God's unity** a rational necessity: *"If there were two necessary agents, the cosmos could not coherently exist as it does"* (Al-Juwayni, 2000).

4.3 Qur'anic Anchor: The Qur'an itself presents a striking image of the incompatibility of multiple gods, which the theologians often cited as inspiration for this line of reasoning:

وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُۥ مِنْ إِلَـٰهٍۚ إِذًا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَـٰهٍۭ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ

"Never did Allah take to Himself any son, nor was there ever any god with Him. *Had there been, each god would have taken off with what he created, and some would surely have*

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tried to overcome others!" (Qur'an 23:91)

This verse vividly illustrates the scenario of divided creation and competition ("each god with his own creation, and vying for supremacy") that would result if more than one God existed. The clause *"some would have risen over others"* implies that multiple absolute powers cannot coexist peacefully – one would dominate or negate the other. Classical commentators note that this *fasad* (ruin) of cosmic order is not observed; instead, we see an integrated universe *(Open Madrasa Ltd., 2024)*. The verse thus implies the **unity of creative authority**. Al-Ghazali and others frequently referenced such verses as divine confirmation of what logical analysis also reveals: the world **cannot tolerate dual sovereignty**. In essence, Qur'an 23:91 is a scriptural parallel to the *burhan al-tamanu'*, cementing the idea that *tawhid* (oneness) is both a revealed truth and a rational conclusion.

5. Argument from Omnipotence and Will Unity

Closely related to the above is the argument focusing specifically on **omnipotence** and the unity of the divine will. This line of reasoning focuses on the attribute of al-qudra al-mutlaqa (absolute power): if God is defined as an omnipotent being, then, by definition, there cannot be *two* omnipotent beings. **Al-Ghazali's will-conflict proof** compellingly articulates this: *"Were there two gods and one of them resolved upon a course of action, the second would either have to aid Him – thereby proving himself subordinate and not all-powerful – or oppose Him – thereby proving the first weak, hence not all-powerful"* (al-Ghazali, 1963, p.40, paraphrased)*(Wainwright, 2012)*. In modern terms, it is a proof by contradiction: assume two omnipotent agents, derive the contradiction that at least one is not truly omnipotent, therefore reject the assumption.

This argument can be formalized as follows:

- By definition, **omnipotence** entails that an omnipotent being can accomplish any possible outcome by will.
- If there are two essentially omnipotent persons, it is *possible* for their wills to diverge (since each is a distinct center of volition)*(Wainwright, 2012)*. If it were absolutely impossible for their wills ever to conflict (even by hypothetical possibility), they would not truly be distinct agents in any

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meaningful sense(*Wainwright, 2012*).

- Suppose one omnipotent wills X and another wills $\neg X$ (the negation of X). There are no logically coherent scenarios in which both omnipotent wills can be fulfilled simultaneously(*Wainwright, 2012*). If X occurs, the second fails to actualize its will; if X does not occur, the first fails. Either way, one of them was *prevented* from accomplishing a feat within the scope of omnipotence, meaning that being was not truly omnipotent.
- Therefore, it is **impossible to have two distinct omnipotent wills** in the same world(*Wainwright, 2012*). Omnipotence, as an exclusive attribute, can belong to only one entity.

Al-Ghazali, in his kalam works (such as *al-Iqtisad fi al-I'tiqad*), emphasized that the concept of two omnipotent gods *"collapses under the possibility of conflict."* If omnipotence is an essential attribute of God (which, in Islamic theology, it is), then logically **only one God can exist** (because premise: "Necessarily, God is omnipotent" and conclusion: "Necessarily, only one omnipotent being can exist")(*Wainwright, 2012*). This is essentially the same insight as the tamanu' argument, but honed specifically to the notion of power.

Razi's Reinforcement: Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 1210) reinforced Ghazali's proof by addressing subtle objections. One possible objection is: *What if two omnipotent beings always will the same thing?* Razi responds that even this scenario is problematic – if it is **logically necessary** that they agree, then their supposed distinct wills are an illusion (there would effectively be one will). If it is not logically necessary, then the *possibility* of divergence is sufficient to trigger the contradiction in omnipotence (*Wainwright, 2012*). Moreover, Razi points out, even if two omnipotent beings never come into actual conflict, the very *division of sovereignty* implies each has "less than total" control, since neither can unilaterally decide an outcome without the other also deciding it – again a compromise of omnipotence. In summary, classical scholars argue that **omnipotence is an undivided attribute**: the world cannot contain more than one All-Powerful will. This argument aligns with similar arguments in Western medieval philosophy (e.g., Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus concluded that two omnipotent beings are impossible, and modern philosophers have echoed

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this using modal logic)*(Wainwright, 2012)*. The Islamic contribution is that this was articulated within a robust monotheistic framework early on, aligning with the Qur'anic insistence on Allah's unrivaled power (*"He has no partner in sovereignty"*, cf. 17:111). Indeed, in Islamic thought, *shirk* (association of partners with God) is seen not only as scriptural heresy but as a violation of a basic **rational principle** about omnipotence and unity.

6. Argument from Unity of Cosmic Order

Another intuitive yet profound argument for Divine unity is drawn from the **unity of the cosmic order**. This is essentially a teleological argument (argument from design) repurposed to demonstrate not only that a creator exists, but also that only one creator is responsible for the design. The observable universe operates under *uniform laws* of physics, with integrated systems and a harmonic organization, from the galactic scale down to the subatomic level. This coherence and unity in the *afaq* (horizons/universe) and *anfus* (within ourselves) strongly suggest a single organizing principle. The Qur'an invites us to reflect on this:

سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَـٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْـَٔافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ

"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that He is the Truth." (Qur'an 41:53)

These *signs in the horizons* encompass the marvels of the natural world and the inner workings of the human being – all functioning according to one set of laws (the signs of a single Truth behind them) *(Open Madrasa Ltd., 2024)*. The **teleological coherence** of the cosmos – a cosmos, not a chaos – implies *one intentional will* and *one plan*. Classical scholars argued: if multiple gods were in charge, we might expect disjointed realms or clashing systems. Instead, everything in nature is interdependent and follows a coherent order (for example, the way the earth's ecosystems, the solar system, and the laws of chemistry and biology interlock). This is best explained by *monotheism* as opposed to a polytheistic assembly of conflicting wills.

From a Kalam perspective, this argument is framed in terms of **purpose and governance**. The world is seen as a single dominion (mulk) under one King. If two kings tried to rule the same kingdom, disorder would ensue – likewise, the smooth

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functioning of the universe testifies to one ruler. The theologian al-Baqillani (d. 1013) wrote that the consistent patterns in nature (sunrise, seasons, life cycles) act as **indicative proofs (dalaʾil)** that the Creator is one, for disunity in lordship would manifest as irregularity or disruption in those patterns. This is akin to the sentiment expressed in the Qur'an:

"Allah has not made for a man two hearts in his chest" (33:4)

Some interpreters take this allegorically to imply that ultimate loyalty (and, by extension, ultimate governance of creation) cannot belong to two sources – it is naturally singular.

Philosophically, one could also argue that positing more than one creator is an unnecessary multiplication of causes. The universe as a unified effect does not demand multiple independent agents when one agency sufficiently accounts for the observed unity (**Occam's Razor** applied to theology). As the *open-minded* theologians often challenged, *"What work remains for a second god to do, when one omnipotent God can do all things?"* Any additional deity would be redundant (see Section 8 below). Thus, the unity of cosmic order not only *proves* a creator but also *hints at the oneness* of that creator as the most rational explanation.

In Islamic tradition, this argument from order complements the more analytic arguments: the world's harmony is an accessible sign to ordinary humans that "God is One," matching the more abstract proofs. **Teleological coherence** thereby acts as a common-sense bridge between everyday experience and the doctrine of tawhid. Notably, this line of reasoning finds echoes in modern intelligent design arguments and discussions of the anthropic principle; however, the Islamic version is careful to use it to reinforce God's unity specifically, not just existence.

7. Argument from Simplicity and Non-Composition (Maturidi–Ashʿari Tradition)

A more technical argument for Divine oneness in Islamic theology comes from the **principle of Divine simplicity** – the idea that God is not composite or made of parts. This argument, championed by scholars of the Maturidi and Ashʿari kalam traditions, posits that the Necessary Being must be straightforward (*basit*), for if it were composed of multiple constituents, several problems would ensue that

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contradict necessary existence.

Premises & Syllogism: The argument can be summarized as follows:

- Anything that is composed of parts (whether physical components, metaphysical constituents like form and matter, or even distinct attributes that are separable) is dependent on the combination of those parts. Its existence would rely on something more fundamental – the prior existence or unification of its parts.
- A faithful God, as the Necessary Existent, cannot depend on anything more fundamental; otherwise, it would not be *necessary in itself.* If God had parts, those parts would either be eternal (co-existing alongside God) or created. If eternal and independent, each part is a rival "necessary" entity – effectively introducing plurality in the godhead. If created, then something else must have composed God, which is absurd since God is the first cause.
- Therefore, the Necessary Being must be **absolutely non-composite** and indivisible. It has no spatial divisions, no separate "members" or hypostases, no ontological components that require assembly. God is one *simple* essence.

From this reasoning, it immediately follows that there cannot be *two* Gods, because at least in *essence* or *parts* they would differ. As soon as you posit a difference, you have introduced composition (each would have something – an attribute, a property – that the other lacks, meaning each is missing something and thus not absolutely complete in itself). Theologically, this is reflected in the insistence that Allah is unique (Ahad) and Samad (self-sufficient unity), as stated in Qur'an 112, and which some commentators argue against imagining God as a composite being.

"Nothing is like unto Him" (42:11)

Implication: The necessary being **cannot have parts or equals**, because composition implies contingency. Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 944), the eponym of the Maturidi school, stressed in his *Kitab al-Tawhid* that any multiplicity in God's essence would *"imply dependence"*, since parts would need to come together or be distinguished*(Husnain Naqvi, 2019)*. Something dependent or lacking wholeness contradicts the very notion of the Almighty (Al-Maturidi, 2019). Thus, God must be one in every respect: one in essence, without any internal division, and uniquely

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singular without peer. The Ashʿari theologians made similar arguments, often in the context of refuting the Christian Trinity or pagan concepts of divisible deities. They argued that even God's attributes (life, knowledge, power, etc.) are not parts of Him but inseparable aspects of a single, unitary reality. This preserved God's unity against any notion that attributes are like pieces.

In modern philosophical terms, this is related to the **Doctrine of Divine Simplicity**, which many classical theists (in Christianity as well) uphold: God has no composition, no genuses or differentiae, no body, no spatial or temporal parts. While the doctrine is complex and sometimes controversial, its *monotheistic payoff* is clear – it renders the existence of two "Gods" impossible because a God who is simple and absolutely actual leaves no room for another. If God is thought of as "the fullness of being" or "the sum of all perfections" (as per later philosophical language), two such fullnesses cannot co-exist; there would either be *one* all-encompassing being or two partial beings (which would not truly be God). In Islamic kalam, the emphasis is that Allah is *"wahdat al-wujud"* in the sense of being a singular necessary existence on which all else depends, qualitatively distinct from the composite, transient created things.

8. Joint Causation & Redundancy Argument

Another rational consideration is sometimes referred to as the argument from **redundancy** or the problem of **joint causation**. It asks: if more than one god is responsible for creating or governing the universe, what exactly is the role of each, and is any one of them *necessary*? This thought experiment illustrates that positing multiple gods either renders some of them superfluous or introduces logical inconsistencies in their interactions, resulting in problematic effects.

One version of this argument, known by later scholars as *Burhan al-Tawarud* ("Proof of Concurrence"), considers the case of two gods "co-creating" something. Suppose two purported gods, G1 and G2, both have the power to create a particular entity or effect. There are a few possibilities:

- **They act together to produce the effect.** However, if *G1* alone was sufficient to produce it (being omnipotent) and *G2* alone was also sufficient, then having both act is unnecessary. Each is doing work that the other could

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have done alone. This raises the question of **redundancy**: why have two causes when one omnipotent cause can do the job completely? It violates the principle of parsimony and implies that neither cause is truly fundamental (since the effect was not beyond the capacity of one). In fact, if *each needs the other's help*, then neither is omnipotent independently – each would lack something without the other*(Wolfson, 1976)*. As one theologian put it, *"if a thing cannot be produced except by two gods working together, each of them, by needing the other, would be incapable by himself, thus not self-sufficient or truly God"(Wolfson, 1976)*. A faithful God should not need a partner to accomplish anything.

- **They divide tasks or domains.** For instance, polytheistic systems often depict different gods with distinct realms (such as the sky, sea, and underworld). However, this division means each has limited jurisdiction, not absolute power. Moreover, the separate domains still interact (the sea meets the sky at the horizon, etc.), so coordination problems arise. The unity of nature argues against such partitioned lordship.
- **One is the "real" cause, and the other is idle.** Suppose G1 does all the actual work and G2 ends up doing nothing causative (or G1 also does everything G2 does). In that case, *G2* is effectively irrelevant – not a God in any meaningful sense, just a redundant entity. The principle of sufficient reason would then ask: why would such an unnecessary being exist at all? In Islam, God is described as doing *"not in vain"*; everything in creation has purpose. The existence of a completely redundant second deity would violate this principle of wisdom and efficiency in creation.

The Muslim theologians thus argue that **multiple sufficient causes** for the universe lead to an untenable scenario. Either one cause is enough (rendering others pointless) or each cause is limited (undermining their divinity). They often used analogies: imagine two carpenters, both independently capable of building a house. If they try to do it together, either they get in each other's way or one of them is doing all the meaningful work. The more perfect the carpenter, the less he needs another. God, being All-Powerful and all-knowing, does not *need* assistance or partnership in His

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creative act.

Scholars like al-Razi and later Saʿd al-Din al-Taftazani discussed these points under the rubric of *preventing association in causation*. Taftazani formalized *Burhan al-Tamanuʿ* in his *Sharh al-Maqasid*, arguing that two omnipotent agents are an *inference to absurdity*: any scenario you propose for how they coordinate or compete leads to a compromise in omnipotence or a violation of observed order (Taftazani, as cited in modern analyses). In essence, **Occam's Razor** in theology favors one God: introducing a second adds assumptions that solve no problems but create new ones. This was intuitively recognized in the Qur'an's rhetoric as well. When addressing the pagans, the Qur'an asks if they think *"Allah has partners who share in creation"*, and then points out the absurdity by saying, *"Show me what those partners have created!"* (31:11). The implication: everything works as a seamless whole because Allah alone is behind it. There are no *"leftover"* parts of creation for another god to point to and say, "That part is my independent work."

In summary, the redundancy argument strengthens monotheism by demonstrating that multiple gods are not only unnecessary but also logically problematic. A single omnipotent God fully accounts for the existence and maintenance of the world, and nothing is gained — only lost — by multiplying deities.

9. Sadrian Metaphysics of Existence

In later Islamic philosophy, especially with the 17th-century sage **Mulla Sadra** (Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi), arguments for Divine unity took on an even deeper metaphysical form. Mulla Sadra introduced the doctrines of the Primacy of Existence (al-Salat al-Wujud) and the Gradation of Existence (Tashkik al-Wujud), culminating in a view sometimes described as **wahdat al-wujud** (the Unity of Being). Although debated in interpretation, one reading of this doctrine is that *all existence is ultimately one reality* and that reality is God's existence, with all other things being contingent modes or degrees of that one existence. This argument, although widely rejected by Sunni Theologians, is still important to highlight what the argument is about.

Sadra's approach might be seen as an "ontological" argument for unity: rather than starting from the world and reasoning to one God, he starts from the nature of

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Existence itself. He argues that existence is **singular and indivisible** in the sense that existence qua existence has no plurality – what we perceive as multiple existences (different beings) are in fact like different intensities or "concentrations" of one infinite ocean of Being. In his view, God is *Existence in its fullness* – Necessary, self-subsisting, and all-encompassing. Created things are *contingent existences* – they exist, but only by the "loan" of being they continually receive from the Necessary Being. There cannot be two "independent existences" because if they are genuinely independent and necessary, they would have to be identical (as Avicenna also argued) or else one would limit the other, which is impossible. Mulla Sadra goes further: **existence as such is a unity**; it admits of no duality at the highest level. Duality comes only at the level of *essences* or *forms*, which are like transient, less real reflections of the one Light of existence.

In *al-Asfar* (Sadra's magnum opus) and other works, he presents what is known as the **Siddiqin argument** (Argument of the Truthful) for God's existence and unity. A simplified version: by reflecting on existence itself, one realizes that contingent existences cannot be ultimate – the ultimate reality must be existence that is pure, unlimited, and one. Thus, God is not just one being among beings, but Being itself (*wujud mutlaq*). This makes it clear that numerical plurality cannot apply to the Necessary Existent, because numbers divide beings of a common genus. In contrast, God has no *genus* – His *Existence* is sui generis, utterly unique. Sadra would say that calling God "one" is actually an understatement, because numbers apply to quantitative or categorical beings, while God's unity (*wahda*) is transcendental, beyond the countable*(Rizvi, 2009)*.

In Mulla Sadra's metaphysics, any hypothetical second God is not just an impossibility logically. However, a confusion of the mind – since *Reality* with a capital "R" is a single continuum of existence, a second "Reality" cannot be posited. This is somewhat analogous to monistic tendencies, but Sadra stays within a framework that preserves a distinction (in gradation) between Creator and creation. He frames unity as an **ontological necessity** rather than just a numerical count: God's unity is the fact that *there is only one truly real being*, and everything else is real only through its relation to that ultimate Being (Mulla Sadra, 1981). This

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perspective complements earlier Kalam arguments by providing a more philosophically sophisticated, arguably mystical, understanding of *tawhid*. It influenced later thinkers and demonstrates how deeply the principle of Divine unity is ingrained in Islamic intellectual traditions: not only is it supported by cosmology and logic, but it is also the very fabric of reality as understood in Islamic metaphysics.

10. Synthesis: Convergence of Revelation & Reason

Throughout the preceding sections, we have observed a convergence of revelation and reason regarding the doctrine of Divine Oneness. The Qur'an lays down the theological truth that *"your God is One God"* (2:163) and provides rational motifs (order in the universe, impossibility of conflict, God's self-sufficiency) to support this truth. Classical Muslim scholars, working in various disciplines (philosophy, kalam, mysticism), took up these motifs and developed them into rigorous arguments. The **comparative framework** of these arguments shows a remarkable harmony: whether one starts from empirical observation (unity of nature), logical analysis (contingency and omnipotence), or metaphysical intuition (the unity of existence), one arrives at the *same conclusion* – there can only be one Ultimate Reality worthy of the name God. Furthermore, these Islamic arguments bridge well to discussions in **modern analytic philosophy of religion**. Contemporary philosophers have independently explored many of the same issues: Can there be more than one omnipotent being without contradiction? (Most say no, echoing Ghazali's point *(Wainwright, 2012)*. Could two gods share the job of creation? (Analytic debates often invoke the *parable of the two painters* or possible world semantics, similar in spirit to the kalam arguments.) The so-called *"argument from design"* for God's existence in modern apologetics often implicitly argues for a single designer due to the integrated complexity of the world – a parallel to the Qur'anic teleological argument for unity.

Even the contingency argument has found new life in what is known as the Leibnizian cosmological argument, which concludes in a single necessary being. In academic literature, one finds articles like "Could there be more than one Almighty?" (e.g., Zagzebski 1989), which examine the issue using modal logic and arrive at conclusions consistent with the classical proofs *(Wainwright, 2012)(Wainwright,*

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2012). This demonstrates **compatibility with Qur'anic epistemology**: the Qur'an encourages using one's intellect (`aql), and indeed, unaided reason (when rigorous) aligns with the revealed truth of monotheism.

Conclusion

In sum, Islamic scholars synthesized **revelation and rational inquiry** to fortify belief in God's unity. By doubling down on both scriptural evidence and rational arguments, they created a multifaceted defense of monotheism that addresses the heart (*through verses and spiritual sense of wholeness in worship*), the mind (*through syllogisms and proofs*), and the intuitive sense of reality's unity. The doctrine of *tawhid* thus stands not as a mere dogmatic assertion, but as a truth that one can arrive at through reflective observation and clear reasoning—a point of pride in the Islamic intellectual legacy. As one classical scholar beautifully concluded, *"There is no real dispute about God's oneness except from those who have not truly considered it"*. The **unity of God** is evident to the observant, compelling to the logician, and ultimately indispensable for a coherent worldview.

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