

Manufacturing Rooted in the Quran

Understanding our Identity as
Manufacturers Through the Lens of
Fatimi Philosophy



Abstract

This article explores the profound connection between manufacturing and Islamic philosophy, specifically through the lens of Fatimi traditions and teachings rooted in the Quran. By delving into the wisdom of Fatimi philosophy and the guidance of Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS}.

The article aims to highlight how timeless principles offer valuable insights into modern manufacturing practices. The objective is to provide an understanding of how these historical lessons are not only relevant but crucial for shaping a sustainable, innovative, and ethical approach to manufacturing today. Furthermore, this article encourages reflection on our collective identity as manufacturers, grounded in faith, knowledge, and purpose.



Section 01

The Philosophy of Craftsmanship and Manufacturing.

All praise is due to Allah^{TA}, the Creator of this universe, whose creation exhibits the utmost perfection, as stated in al-Quran al-Majeed:

"صَنَّعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ج" ¹

"The creation of Allah, who has perfected everything."

Among His remarkable creations is humankind, endowed with *al-'aql* (intellect), enabling us to think, innovate, and improve our standard of living. This connection between human intellect and craftsmanship is emphasized by al-Imam Ahmed al-Mastur^{AS}, particularly in the *Rasaail Ikhwan al-Safa* as al-Imam Ahmed al-Mastur^{AS} explains:

"فالصنّاع هم الذين يعملون بأبدانهم وأدواتهم في مصنوعاتهم الصور والنقوش والأصباغ والأشكال وغرضهم طلب العوض عن مصنوعاتهم لصلاح معيشة الحياة الدنيا"

"Craftsmen work with their bodies and tools to shape raw materials into images, engravings, and forms. Their goal is to enhance their lives and the lives of others."

This reflects the deeper philosophy of *Sina'at Amaliyah* (Practical Craftsmanship), where a craftsman not only envisions but brings that vision to life through labour and raw materials. The ultimate objective is to contribute to the betterment of society, echoing Allah Ta'ālā's divine act of creation. As al-Imam Ahmed al-Mastur^{AS} adds:

"واعلم يا أخي بأن الحذق في كل صنعة هو التشبه بالصانع الحكيم الذي هو الباري جل ثناؤه ويقال إن الله تعالى يحب الصانع الفاره الحاذق" ³

"Know, my brother, that expertise in any craft is an imitation of the wise Creator, and it is said that Allah^{TA} loves a skilled and proficient craftsman."

This resonates with the hadith shareef of *Rasulullah*^{SAW}:

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الصَّانِعَ الْمُتَقِنَ فِي صِنْعَتِهِ" ⁴

"Indeed, Allah^{TA} loves a person who excels in his craft."

¹ al-Quran al-Majeed, 27:88

² Al-Imam Ahmed al-Mastur^{AS}, *Rasaail Ikhwan al-Safa*, vol 1.

³ Al-Imam Ahmed al-Mastur^{AS}, *Rasaail Ikhwan al-Safa*, vol 1.

⁴ Al-Imam Ahmed al-Mastur^{AS}, *Rasaail Ikhwan al-Safa*, vol 1.

Section 02

Craftsmanship in the Historical Account of Nooh Nabi ^{AS} and Its Eternal Relevance

Al-Quran al-Majeed recounts the example of Nooh Nabi ^{AS}, who was commanded by Allah ^{TA} to build the *Safeenah* (Ark):

" وَأَصْنَعِ الْفُلَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحِّينَا " ⁵

"And construct the *Safeenah* (Ark) under our supervision and with our *Wahye* (revelation)."

Despite being mocked, Nooh Nabi ^{AS} persisted, fulfilling Allah's command and constructing the *Safeenah* (Ark) under divine guidance, preserving humanity and the species of Earth from the flood. As al-Quran al-Majeed reveals, the *Safeenah* (Ark) sailed through waves like mountains:

" وَهِيَ تَجْرِي بِهِمْ فِي مَوْجٍ كَالْجِبَالِ " ⁶

"And it sailed with them through waves like mountains."

until the *Safeenah* (Ark) came to rest on the Mount Judi, as Allah ^{TA} states:

" وَأَسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ " ⁷

"And the *Safeenah* (Ark) came to rest on [the mountain of] Judi."

The manufacturing aspects discussed in this article are a reflection of just a few examples from the broader spectrum of Fatimi history and philosophy. They serve to illustrate how these timeless principles have been part of our tradition and how we can benefit from them in our modern context.

⁵ al-Quran al-Majeed, 11:37

⁶ al-Quran al-Majeed, 11:42

⁷ al-Quran al-Majeed, 11:42

Phase I

Pre- Manufacturing (Planning & Preparation)

1. Planning

As often stated, “Failing to plan is planning to fail.” For instance, tech companies like Apple plan years ahead to ensure their products meet consumer demands.



2. Research & Development (R&D)

Modern companies invest heavily in the R&D sector to find durable, efficient materials—just as Tesla researches new battery technologies to make electric cars more sustainable and long-lasting.



3. Financial Management

Financial management refers to the strategic planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of financial resources to achieve a company's objectives while ensuring efficiency, profitability, and sustainability. For example, **Unilever** efficiently applies financial management by streamlining its global operations, employing cost-saving measures, and using sustainable financial strategies to invest in innovation and expand into emerging markets, all while maintaining steady cash flow and profitability.



4. Human Resource Management

In today's corporate world, HR management serves a pivotal role, where selecting/hiring the right people is critical for a project's success. Modern companies like Google emphasize recruiting talented, motivated individuals to drive innovation.



5. Risk Management

Companies today **manage risks** in projects, calculating potential threats and preparing contingency plans. For instance, Boeing conducts extensive risk assessments related to safety, compliance, and project management. They utilize advanced data analytics to predict potential failures and improve safety protocols.



6. Technology Integration

In the modern world, this is akin to companies integrating advanced technology like **AI** or **automation** to remain competitive, whether in the automotive industry or digital marketing. Toyota can be a prime example wherein Toyota integrates robotics and automation in its production lines. The Toyota Production System (TPS) emphasizes lean manufacturing and uses technology to enhance flexibility and efficiency.



Phase II

During Manufacturing (Operations & Execution)

1. Operations Management

In modern manufacturing, **operations management** involves overseeing the production process from start to finish, ensuring everything runs efficiently. For example, companies like Amazon have streamlined operations to fulfill orders at an unmatched speed.



2. Communication

In a corporate setting, **effective communication** is key to aligning employees with organizational goals. In companies like Siemens, regular training sessions that incorporate interactive workshops are conducted. These sessions ensure employees are up-to-date on new technologies and processes while encouraging open dialogue and questions. This allows the employees to achieve their goals with enough clarity.



3. Inventory Management

Inventory management in companies plays a vital role, which ensures minimal waste and optimized resources. For instance, Walmart employs advanced tracking systems to ensure just-in-time inventory, reducing overhead and increasing efficiency.



Phase III

Post Manufacturing (Sustainability & Legacy)

1. Calibration

Calibration is the process of adjusting and verifying the accuracy of a device or instrument by comparing it to a known standard, ensuring that it produces precise and reliable measurements. Technology companies like **Ford Motor Company** uses calibration efficiently in its automotive manufacturing processes, particularly in engine and emission control systems, to ensure optimal performance, compliance with environmental standards, and vehicle reliability.



2. Supply Chain Management

The modern **supply chain management** process ensures goods and services flow smoothly from production to consumer. Global companies like Procter & Gamble optimise their supply chains to reduce costs and deliver products efficiently.



3. Performance Monitoring

Modern businesses use **performance metrics** to assess success. Google Analytics, for example, helps companies track performance in real-time, ensuring goals are met and resources are efficiently utilized.



4. Repair and maintenance

Repair and maintenance refer to the activities involved in restoring and preserving equipment, machinery, and infrastructure to ensure they operate efficiently, safely, and reliably over their lifespan. General Electric (GE) exemplifies effective repair and maintenance practices by implementing advanced predictive maintenance techniques and digital monitoring systems across its various sectors, ensuring timely interventions that reduce downtime and enhance equipment longevity.



Craftsmanship as an Everlasting Legacy

The *Safeenah* (Ark) of Nooh Nabi ^{AS} symbolizes not only physical craftsmanship but also the philosophical craftsmanship of ideas and leadership. This legacy continues to inspire generations of builders, engineers, and manufacturers.

A similar legacy of craftsmanship is embodied in the restoration of **Al-Jamea al-Anwar** in al-Qahera (Cairo). Commissioned by al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin ^{RA}, this Fatimid-era Jame' was meticulously restored using traditional techniques, symbolizing both the beauty of Fatimi architecture and the preservation of its values in the modern world. The Jame' is a perfect example of how historical craftsmanship can be revived to meet contemporary needs, serving as a beacon of faith and excellence.

As al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Taher Saifuddin ^{RA} alludes towards one of his verses:

"قدوة المقتدين بهم يقتدى * في خلال الشريفة والسير" ⁸

"Awliyaa Allah ^{AS} serve as ideals for those who follow them in good deeds and characteristics."

This timeless craftsmanship encourages us to see our work not just as production, but as an act of *ibadat* (worship) and societal contribution. The *qissat* (narrative) of Nooh Nabi ^{AS} teaches us that every effort, when done in service to others and Allah's ^{TA} will, becomes a lasting testament to our faith and values. Thus, the knowledge of manufacturing and craftsmanship has deep roots in Fatimi tradition, not only in construction and architecture but also in the intellectual and educational realms as al-Imam Ahmed al-Mastur ^{AS} asserts:

"علمنا يستغرق العلوم كلها" ⁹

"Our knowledge encompasses all forms of knowledge."

⁸ al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Taher Saifuddin, *al-Adab al-Fatimi* (الطه الرضى خيرة الخير) وامن الانام من الغير

⁹ al-Imam Ahmed al Mastur, *Rasaa'il Ikhwan al-Safa*, vol 4.

Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin's ^{TUS} Call Towards Manufacturing

Under the guidance and leadership of al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS}, the Dawoodi Bohra community has continued to uphold and strengthen its deep-rooted connection to craftsmanship and manufacturing. His Holiness ^{TUS} has placed significant emphasis on:

1. Reviving Traditional Craftsmanship

Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} has encouraged the preservation and promotion of traditional Dawoodi Bohra crafts, such as calligraphy and textile weaving. This revival not only preserves cultural heritage but also supports sustainable livelihoods for *mu'mineen* artisans.



2. Supporting Sustainable Manufacturing

Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} has been a strong proponent of **environmentally sustainable practices** in manufacturing and daily life. His ^{TUS} guidance to the community includes a focus on minimizing waste, promoting eco-friendly products, and ensuring that industries take steps to reduce their environmental footprint. Many community initiatives now focus on adopting green technologies and sustainable manufacturing techniques that align with the global call for ecological responsibility.



3. Encouraging Innovation in Businesses

Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} has frequently emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship, especially within the **al-Tijaarat al-Raabehah** initiative, which fosters business growth through ethical practices and innovative approaches. This initiative has spurred the modernization of manufacturing processes in businesses, helping them become more efficient and competitive in global markets.



4. Promoting Skills Development

Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} has actively encouraged the **development of technical skills** within the community, particularly in manufacturing sectors. Through various **community-run educational programs**, artisans and entrepreneurs receive training on modern manufacturing techniques, helping them adapt to new technologies while maintaining traditional craftsmanship.



5. Fostering Global Trade and Manufacturing Links

Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} has worked tirelessly to build global networks that enable community members to expand their trade and manufacturing operations across borders. This global perspective not only strengthens community businesses but also creates opportunities for collaboration in international markets, fostering growth in both traditional and modern manufacturing sectors.



Conclusion

The historical account of Nooh Nabi ^{AS} and the construction of the *Safeenah* (Ark) offers profound lessons that transcend time. It teaches one the importance of planning, diligence, and faith in overcoming challenges. In today's world, these principles guide *mu'mineen* in manufacturing, leadership, and ethical business practices. By reflecting on these timeless teachings, *mu'mineen* can find guidance for their own endeavors. Whether in leadership, innovation, or craftsmanship, emulating the wisdom and ethical precision of **Awliyaa Allah** ^{AS} enables *mu'mineen* to contribute meaningfully to society and leave behind an enduring legacy in service of Allah ^{TA} and humanity.

