

*"This book finds its place among the meadows
of gold and mines of gems" - Syed Ahmad Fathi*

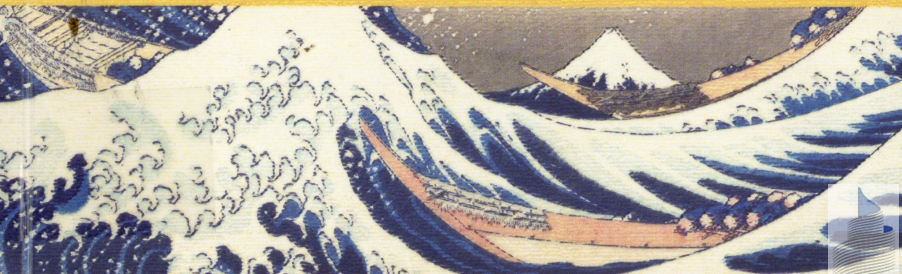
A VISION



of UNITY



**SELECTED WRITINGS ON HISTORY,
POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY
AND LITERATURE**



S.M.Y. KAYSERI



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POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY AND
LITERATURE*



S.M.Y KAYSERI



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A Vision of Unity: Selected Writings on History, Politics,
Philosophy and Literature

S.M.Y. Kayseri

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About Author

S.M.Y Kayseri, Mb BCh BAO (RCSI, NUI), LRCP & SI (Hons.), is a medical practitioner training in psychiatry at Hospital Canselor Tuanku Muhriz, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. He graduated with a First-Class Honors from RCSI & UCD Malaysian Campus (RUMC), earning multiple accolades, including First Prize in Dissection (2017) and representing the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, in the all-Ireland H.H. Stewart Prizes in Physiology and Biochemistry (2019).

His academic and research interests centre on psychotherapy, particularly in the introduction and dissemination of schema therapy in Southeast Asia, precision psychotherapy, and the gamification of psychotherapy via virtual reality, artificial intelligence and digital-assisted technologies.

A dedicated and omnivorous reader, he has special interest particularly in Jungian psychoanalysis, Sufistic metaphysics and Husserlian phenomenology.

With his personal motto of, “*Volare Aeternum Altius*”, “Soaring Forever Higher”, he aimed to explore and integrate the intersection of metaphysics, phenomenology and clinical psychiatry, integrating philosophical depth with psychiatric practice.



Among The Meadows of Gold: A Foreword

Reading through this book has given me a much-needed mental break from the historical records that have been my daily reading diet since God knows when — I have long since lost track of time. Although I have not known S.M.Y. Kayseri personally, I hope I can offer a more balanced and non-biased perspective on the writing.

Reading books and writing commentaries has been a hallmark of the Islamic intellectual tradition for centuries. Past readers and writers have left behind a vast corpus of literature that no one could possibly complete in a single lifetime. This is why the work of S.M.Y. Kayseri is so important. By reading a compendium of book reviews, we are given the opportunity to access the thoughts of countless writers without having to dedicate extensive time to reading each work individually. It allows us to glimpse their central ideas through the minds of others.

This is a great intellectual adventure — but it comes with a catch. The ideas have been filtered through another's interpretation, and we might not always capture the full essence of the original works. As the saying goes, 'every translation is an interpretation' — and likewise, every book review is itself an interpretation. That said, such a compendium still offers a great advantage: it provides a general understanding of what a book contains, and if a particular work sparks our interest or imagination, we are free to pursue it further and read it for ourselves.

I have no intention in this small space to comment on the entirety of S.M.Y. Kayseri's works; instead, I will focus on a few subjects that I find particularly interesting. As the saying goes, 'don't judge a book by its review,' so take my comments with a pinch of salt. The first essay in the book *A Conflicts of Visions* discusses Thomas Sowell's



idea about why we encounter so many different ideas in the world. The simplest explanation would be that people simply have different opinions, but Sowell thought otherwise — and thus decided to write an entire book about it! He argues that people hold fundamentally different visions.

As usual, philosophers never fully agree: some believe that human beings are limited, and thus the outcomes of human affairs are more deterministic. Others believe that man is the master of the universe — that man determines what man is. We see this latter way of thinking especially in the realm of science, where man seeks not only to understand nature, but also to subdue and reshape it. All of this generates different views on how we should behave in the world. I think S.M.Y. Kayseri has done an excellent job of summarizing Sowell's idea of visions.

As a student of history, I read with great interest some of S.M.Y. Kayseri's summaries of historical literature. One that particularly caught my attention was about *Asal Usul Melayu*, which discusses the flooding of the Sunda landmass. The summary reminded me of one of my recent readings — a book by Philip Bowring, where he described the people of Nusantara as 'children of a drowned parent.' S.M.Y. Kayseri dives straight into the dispute over the origins of the Malay people and does not shy away from offering his own opinion. My view is that all of these 'out of somewhere' theories remain far from settled. Given the vast distance in time separating us from our ancestors, I do not think the matter will be conclusively resolved within our lifetime.

Some of the commentaries by S.M.Y. Kayseri bring back memories to me, as the book discussed were the same book, I have read a long time ago. This is especially true to book like *Orientalism* and *World Order*, it is interesting to find that the same book can mean different things to



different people. Well, at least that prove that Sowell was right, we have different visions.

I would like to register a small criticism on how S.M.Y Kayseri approach the work of Henry Kissinger, a war criminal that played a significant role in carpet bombing civilian during the Indochina war. The war that killed hundred thousands of civilians including the usage of chemical weapons such as napalm and Agent Orange, which is a stain on Kissinger criminal record that cannot be washed away. As E.H. Carr once wisely advised, 'study the historian before you study the history.' Kissinger's Eurocentric and American-exceptionalist writings cannot be treated as purely academic and intellectual discourse without acknowledging his political actions. His criminal background cannot be overlooked and should have been addressed within the review. In this regard, I believe S.M.Y. Kayseri erred by not informing his readers of this essential context. Omitting this background, in my view, amounts to an unintended whitewashing of Kissinger's crimes. Even a Eurocentric atheist like Christopher Hitchens found Kissinger's actions intolerable, which led him to author *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*. In this instance, I believe S.M.Y. Kayseri should have undertaken a more careful background analysis of the figure he discussed and integrated this critical information into his writing.

Finally, I would like to reflect on S.M.Y. Kayseri's engagement with fiction, especially his readings of Japanese literature — a field that is quite foreign to me. The last time I read any Japanese work was an autobiography by the reformist Fukuzawa Yukichi. Fiction is not my forte, but reading through S.M.Y. Kayseri's analysis of Natsume Soseki's works truly struck something within me. I agreed with him on the uniqueness of the Japanese artistic style, which celebrates the mundane aspects of life. This spirit can be felt not only in novels, but also in anime. The world

of Studio Ghibli is a perfect example of how the Japanese instil meaning and beauty into everyday life. You start to feel that even a rainy day carries something worth feeling. You begin to see the existence of drama and nostalgia in every drop of life.

In conclusion, I would wholeheartedly recommend S.M.Y. Kayseri's book to every bibliophile. It takes the reader on an adventure rich in philosophical meaning and aesthetic prose. Be sure to prepare a large cup of coffee to sip as you journey through its pages — you can thank me later.

Congratulations to S.M.Y. Kayseri on the publication of this beautiful work, which I am confident will not be his last. This book firmly registers S.M.Y. Kayseri among the long tradition of readers and writers who have made significant contributions to literature and the pursuit of knowledge. To quote the words of the great al-Mas'udi, the Herodotus of the Arabs, this book will surely find its place among the 'meadows of gold and mines of gems'. I eagerly look forward to holding the physical copy of this well-crafted book. To all readers: good luck on your philosophical adventure

Syed Ahmad Fathi

Sungai Petani, Kedah

April 2025



"...while inequalities become broader, people did not flock behind the socialists or Marxists that promised to appeal to the poor and the middle class..."

writings on Identity, Fukuyama

"...I personally believed that his way is of the novel ways of securing the real existence of the world, until I read the works of al-Attas..."

writings on Prolegomena, Kant



From one reader to another...

Vision of Unity is a journey through the timeless search for harmony, weaving insights from history, philosophy, psychology, and literature into a single tapestry.

The first part, Civitas, explores how major thinkers — from Samuel P. Huntington and Francis Fukuyama to Thomas Sowell — envisioned unity amid the shifting currents of politics and history. Here, the author introduces his unique idea of concord: the natural tendency of diverse groups to come together into a united whole, not through assimilation or force, but through shared lived experiences — a dynamic he calls spectations.

The second part, Noesis, ventures into the philosophical landscapes of Spinoza's rationalism, Kant's transcendental idealism, and Husserl's phenomenology. It traces how the eternal quest in study of lived experience by Western philosophers made complete by the intuitive insights of Islamic metaphysics, offering a profound vision of the intuition of Being.

The third part, Mythos, calls for a return to humanity's mythopoetic imagination — the deep symbolic understanding of life that flourished before the Enlightenment's age of reason. It reminds us of a time when destiny, belonging, and Reality itself were intimately woven into everyday existence.

Rather than turning away from lived experience, Vision of Unity embraces it — much like the serendipitous flashes of insight that shaped Newton's laws, Bohr's atomic model, Sartre's existential awakening in Nausea, and the ecstatic certainties glimpsed by whirling Sufis of Konya.

"This book firmly registers S.M.Y. Kayseri among the long tradition of readers and writers who have made significant contributions to literature and the pursuit of knowledge. To quote the words of the great al-Mas'udi, the Herodotus of the Arabs, this book will surely find its place among the 'meadows of gold and mines of gems'" - Syed Ahmad Fathi

