author will add value to the book, if revised in future, by asserting his position on almost all the issues discussed in a stronger way. Much as Ushama, in our view, has achieved his aim of providing students (and scholars) of Islamic studies a readable and dependable comprehensive book in English, he is strongly encouraged to expand the scope of discussion about the modern development of *tafsīr*. Finally, *'Ilm al-Tajwīd* (the knowledge of the proper recitation of the Qur'ān) should also receive adequate coverage in the subsequent edition of this book.

Islam and the future of tolerance: A dialogue. By Sam Harris and Maajid Nawaz. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2015, pp. 144. ISBN: 978-0-674-08870-2.

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The rise of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) has captured the attention of the global community, overshadowing the previous global newsmaker, Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. Global media is replete with news of ISIS and its violent activities in the Middle East, with the recent Paris and Brussels attacks dominating the news. Though there may be different causes for the emergence of such a group, the ideology of Islam is thought by many as the prime cause for its establishment.

Islam and the Future of Tolerance is set against the same backdrop of the violent and barbaric activities of ISIS, alongside the heinous acts of TTP (*Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan*) in Pakistan, and Boko Haram in Nigeria. The book takes the form of a dialogue between the famous atheist, Sam Harris, and an ex-member of *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* and the cofounder of Quilliam, a counter-extremism organisation in London, Maajid Nawaz, who discuss, among other topics, the nature of Islam, the power of Islamic beliefs in generating extremism, reinterpretation of the Islamic Texts – Qur'ān and ḥadīth, ways to rebut radical elements among Muslims, and the possibility to create a democratic liberal mind-set among Muslims. Broadly, the book seeks a modern interpretation of

the Islamic texts. The purpose of the dialogue is to identify and suggest the means to check the growing religious intolerance erupting in some parts of the contemporary Muslim world.

Sam Harris sees intolerance and extremism as intrinsic to the Islamic texts where fighting finds ample justification. In addition, he holds the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) as the architect of the Qur'ān's prescribed religious violence. Harris feels that the entire history of Islam is filled with fanaticism though it has only become the gravest in contemporary times. He mentions, "It is not an accident that millions of Muslims recite Shahadah or make pilgrimage to Mecca. Neither is it an accident that in the year 2015, horrific footage of infidels and apostates being decapitated has become a popular form of pornography throughout the Muslim world. All these practices, including murder, "find explicit support in scripture" (pp. 101–102). The other participant in the dialogue, Nawaz, defends the doctrines and teachings of Islam. He considers identity crisis, cultural aggression, and Western intervention as the initial factors that helped inflame intolerance within Muslim societies. However, he further adds that any "given interpretation of Islam on society" (p. 18) as undertaken by Islamists like ISIS and Al-Qaeda weaves all such grievances into an ideological dogma, thus inducing radicalisation among Muslims.

As the dialogue deals with the theme of tolerance in Islam, the duo identify the radical elements within Muslims and seek to articulate the efforts to curtail those elements of intolerance. Nawaz first judges the knowledge of Islamic history expressed by his counterpart as incomplete though not incorrect. He adds to the knowledge of Harris that the scriptural interpretation in Islam follows some methodology. "To interpret any text", mentions Nawaz, "one must have a methodology, and in that methodology there are jurisprudential, linguistic, philosophical, historical, and moral perspectives" (p. 73). Nawaz sees what he calls as the "vacuous" reading of the Islamic scriptures as the main cause of initiating, supporting and sustaining intolerance among Muslims. He argues, "I personally do not use the term "literal" readings, because this implies that such readings are the *correct*, literal meaning of the texts. I would simply call it "vacuous"...the question is, do we accept a vacuous approach to reading scripture − picking a passage and saying this is its true meaning regardless of everything else around it − or do we concede that perhaps there are other methods of interpretation (pp. 74–75)?"

Next, the pair identify extremist forces among Muslims. All such forces are labelled as "Islamists". Islamists are those who desire to impose their own interpretation of Islam on to the society. Then, a fine sub-classification of Islamists is made: 1) Political Islamists, who stand for the implementation of Islamism in the society through the ballot box by taking part in elections, e.g. Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt; 2) Revolutionary Islamists, who strive for the implementation by resorting to military coups, e.g. *Hizb-ut-Tahrir*; and 3) Militant Islamists or Jihadists or Jihadist Terrorists, who use arms to execute their plans, even killing civilians and non-combatants along the way, e.g. ISIS and Boko Haram. Such an organised minority of Muslims exploit the objectives of the religion of Islam for their own interests, socially, politically, and economically. They interpret scriptures to suit their version of Islam. They ignore the opinions of great scholars of the religion, past and present. According to Nawaz, the ways by which issues such as apostasy, infidelity, and *dhimmah* (minority citizenship within Muslim territories), as raised by some of those Islamists, most prominently today by ISIS, reveal the narrowness and shallowness of their visions. Such issues have been settled by influential scholars of Islam under the broader purview of Islam. "Such debates are revived only for various ideological, socio-economic, and post-colonial reasons" by the Islamist groups like ISIS, Boko Haram (p. 103).

The dialogue suggests that to defeat the scourge of radical elements like ISIS, it is their ideology that needs to be exposed and uprooted. Military interventions by Europe and the U.S. are bound to fail, until and unless the particular dogmas of such organisations are nullified. Nawaz says, "The US killed bin Laden, yes, but something worse (which we couldn't have imagined prior to al-Qaeda) emerged to replace him. This will keep happening until and unless the ideology that breeds these groups is discredited. Islamism must be defeated" (p. 118). The challenge requires hard work. The narrative of violence must be succeeded by initiatives towards peace and harmony. "This is possible with a combination of cultivating more Muslim reform voices − along with more liberal, ex-Muslim, and non-Muslim voices that are willing to speak critically about these issues" says Nawaz (p. 125).

In Nawaz's analysis, the future of Islamic tolerance seems bright, as signalled by *Hizb an-Nahda*, an Islamist inspired political movement in Tunisia that voluntarily ceded power and called for an election and

subsequently allowed room for a secular party to form a government after them in 2014. *Hizb an-Nahda*, realising popular sentiments, respected the wishes of people and called for re-election so that the public would make their choice freely. Besides, the 2013 PEW poll conducted in 11 Muslim majority countries, cumulating Muslim public opinion about the brutal activities of extremist organisations like TTP, Al-Qaeda etc., reflected an overwhelming rejection of the heinous acts against humanity perpetuated by those extremist elements pretending to represent Islam (p. 6). It suggests that the majority of Muslims do not subscribe to those extreme ideas.

The dialogue also intends to initiate and strengthen secular democracy at the grassroots level within Muslim societies. By acknowledging that pluralism and diversity exists among nations and between human beings, the doors towards secularism to democracy to human rights may open. To revive and reawaken the spirit of tolerance within the Muslims, Arab secularists, for example, should work with post-Islamist factions, similar to *Hizb an-Nahda*. Harris and Nawaz also suggest the approach employed by Quilliam, a counter-extremism think tank that seeks to challenge the narratives of Islamist extremists run by the latter in Britain, and the Khudi, an activist group that aims to reach out to Muslims and challenge the Islamist narrative in Pakistan to oppose the radicals and cultivate the temperament of forbearance and collective peace.

The dialogue encased in *Islam and the Future of Tolerance* offers good suggestions to curb the menace of intolerance, which has erupted within sections of the Muslim world. Maajid Nawaz rightly says that it was not Al-Qaeda that inspired extremism, but extremism that inspired Al-Qaeda (p. 121). Such extremism needs to be identified first before organisations and movements that it inspires can be dealt with. The factors that prompted Al-Qaeda and ISIS to rise in arms need to be thoroughly researched. Harris makes a good point by saying that while we may hold America and Israel responsible for everything bad that happens in the Muslim world or the atrocities that occur all too regularly in Afghanistan and Iraq, we should also ask what does the Sunni bombing of Shia and Ahmadi mosques in Pakistan have to do with Israel or U.S. foreign policy. Muslims cannot blame foreign elements for everything; many tragedies are self-inflicted (p. 57).

However, there appear to be some loopholes in the book. When Maajid Nawaz says that there is no correct interpretation of the scriptures, he opens the door for everyone to become a *mujtahid* (one who derives injunctions from Islamic texts). He hardly distinguishes between the established interpretation of texts (*qaṭ'ī*) and speculative interpretation of the texts (*ẓannī*). He passes on a general statement on the entire text of the Qur'ān and *aḥādīth* (Sayings of the Prophet). Similarly, when he says that the relationship of a believer with the texts of Islam is more spiritual than legal, he reduces Islam to mere philosophy. Likewise, when Sam Harris claims that violence is intrinsic to Islam and that modern values are antithetical to the specific teachings of Islam, he fails to go beyond the literal meanings and the historical background of the Qur'ānic verses, besides failing to recognise the good Islam has done to the cause of human rights and individual freedom.

Islamic fundamentalism since 1945 (Second Edition). By Beverley Milton-Edwards. London and New York: Routledge, 2014, pp. 192. ISBN: 978-0-415-63989-7.

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Islamic movements are frequently dubbed by the West as Islamism, Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic fanaticism, militant Islam, or political Islam (for example, see G. P. Makris, *Islam in the Middle East*, USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007, pp. 192–193, and B. Laurence, Muslim Fundamentalist Movements: Reflections toward a New Approach, in B. Stowasser (Ed.), *The Islamic Impulse,* London: Croom Helm, 1987, pp. 15–16). These movements, which surfaced in the twentieth century, are a manifestation of what can be called a "revivalist" or "reformist" trend in Islam, with positive and creative aspirations to address the social, political, and economic decline of Muslim societies. Their aim is to rebuild and restructure Muslim societies through the foundations laid by Islam.

In this light, the book under review by Beverley Milton-Edwards, who is Professor at Queen's University, Belfast, is, on the one hand,