



## Differences in the Approach of $\square$ Ulama' to Modern Science and Tawhidic Paradigm: A Brief Note

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### Abstract

Science and Scientism have from the very beginning posed a challenge to all religions including Islam. Muslim World's response to it was varied. Muslim scholars depending upon their perception to religion and science looked upon this challenge according to their perspectives, with the result various responses could be noticed from the Muslim. However, it is the Philosophical underpinnings of modern science, rather than science itself, that has mostly perturbed the Muslim intellectuals. A number of scholars perceived science as human endeavor throughout history of mankind, therefore, with no inherent incompatibility with the religion of Islam. They challenged the scientism and the atheistic interpretations of the science not the science as such and focused on the need of *Tawhidic* paradigm.

**Keywords:** *Scientism, westernization, Philosophical underpinnings.*

### Abstrak

Sains dan scientism dari awal merupakan satu cabaran kepada semua agama begitu juga dengan Islam. Tindakan dunia Islam terhadapnya adalah pelbagai, mempunyai personaliti-personaliti yang berbeza, bergantung kepada persepsi mereka kepada agama dan sains, memandangkan cabaran ini mengikut perspektif mereka; pelbagai keputusan tindakan berbeza-beza yang timbul. Walau bagaimanapun, falsafah merupakan asas kepada sains moden, dan bukannya sains itu sendiri, yang telah kebanyakannya tidak disenangi oleh intelektual Islam. Beberapa sarjana melihat sains sebagai usaha manusia melingkari sejarah kemanusiaan, tanpa ketidakserasian yang wujud seiring dengan agama Islam. Mereka mencabar scientism dan Ateis menafsir sains seperti demikian dan memberi tumpuan kepada keperluan paradigma Tawhid.

**Kata Kunci:** *Scientism, Kebaratan, sokongan falsafah.*

### Introduction

Seventeenth century Muslim world had lost its dynamism and intellection to face the challenges posed by the emergent West's intellectual movement and scientific revolution. So there was no unanimous Muslim response to the modern

science and knowledge of the West. The success of science in the West is generally seen as continuing victory of the empirical over the religious mind, religion (Christianity) being treated as outdated, unreasonable and enemy of science and progress. With its expansion it treated all religions to be dogmatic and anti-scientific. However, contrary to other religions, Islamic intellectual tradition demonstrates that there is always a close link between religion and science with the Qur'ān as main source of inspiration to scientific activities. Islam is in harmony with the principles discovered by scientific reason, was indeed the religion

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demanding by reason.

The progressive intellectual as well as material weakening of the Muslim world from seventeenth century onwards, on the one hand and growing Western dominance on the other, made it possible for the West's secular worldview to generate crisis in the Muslim mind and Thought resulting into intellectual division of the Muslim society and weakening of faith about the Islam's absoluteness and solution to all problems. With this engineered secularization of Muslim society, which by its essence could never be wholly secularized, a chasm was generated which revealed itself in every aspect of life. If there would have been unanimous and unambiguous response from the Muslim scholars and 'Ulamā' to the modern science and knowledge from the *Tawhidic* perspective, the fracture depicted in the Muslim thought and division in the society and consequent decline could have been saved. The books and articles by; Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas such as, *Islam, Secularism and the Philosophy of the Future*, (1985), article, 'Islam and the Philosophy of Science' (Al-Attas, 1989), Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1987), *Science and Civilization in Islam* (Nasr & De Santillana, G., 1968) article 'Islam and the Problem of Science' (Nasr, 2010), Ibrahim Kalin's article, 'Three Views of Science in the Islamic World' (Kalin, 2002) and several other works have brought out the significance of this issue and dealt with certain implications of modern science from the Islamic point of view and provided an indepth criticism of some features of the modern scientific outlook. This paper discusses various Muslim responses to the modern science mainly that of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and criticism to their approach especially by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Seyyed Hossein Nasr and others. It will also seek to delineate an alternative paradigm from Islamic perspective, which essentially is based on *al- Tawhid*, the fundamental message of Quran.

### **Different Approaches**

Muslim *Ummah* once was the most powerful, dynamic and at the forefront in technology and sciences. From eight to twelfth century A.C.,

Islamic civilization reached its zenith and being the world leader in philosophy and scientific thought, Muslims contributed immensely to the advancement of knowledge. In the field of natural science Muslims made obvious advance and achieved their greatest triumphs. Islam has never become a barrier to scientific progress and in fact the success was possible largely due to the tremendous ideological motivation provided by Islam for the study of natural phenomena and the pursuit of empirical knowledge (Kazi, 1982). History cannot cite the instance of any other religion that has given such encouragement to scientific progress as Islam did. Who, indeed, can know this better than the Europeans themselves, for, is it not to Islam and to the Muslims that Europe owes its intellectual and cultural rebirth after it had been sinking deeper and deeper in barbarism from the fifth to the tenth centuries? In the words of Rob Briffault, "It is highly probable that but for the Arabs modern European civilization would not have arisen at all...There is no single aspect of European growth in which decisive influence of Islamic culture is not traceable...what we call science arose in Europe as a result of a spirit of enquiry, of new method of investigation, of method of experimentation, observation, measurement, of the development of Mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. That spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs (meaning Muslims) (Briffault, 1919). It is absolutely certain that but for them, it would not have assumed the character that has enabled it to transcend all previous phases of evolution. The rise and expansion of Islam brought about the beginnings of the Middle Ages in the Western history, it caused revolutionary changes in the linguistic, social, cultural, political and economic aspects of Western life. The Muslim Centers of learning in the West radiated knowledge to the Western world and with that knowledge Western scholars, thinkers and theologians were able to regain their lost intellectual legacies of ancient civilizations, which later were to exert such great influence in nurturing the spirit of their renaissance. Islam carried to the West superior knowledge and the spirit of intellectual and rational investigation of higher truths that was to

set the pace in the development of Western intellectual history (Al-Attas, 1985).

Undoubtedly the method and the spirit of intellectual and rational investigation offered by Islamic worldview can, indeed, be traced to itself. The use of power of intellect and reason is not only accepted, it is also urged in the Qur'ān (*The Qur'an* 30:8; 7:185; 17:70) (Ali, 2009). The rise and the flourishing of scientific temperament in the early history of Islamic civilization was mainly due to Qur'anic encouragement to the quest for knowledge and emphasis on knowledge inquiry (*The Qur'an* (96:1-5), (3:190-191; 13:3; 16:10-13; 25:2; 29:44 ; 39:62-63; 10:5-6). Therefore the reason is neither irrelevant to the strengthening of one's faith, nor is it the antithesis of faith which is often propagated. Islam played the dominant role in the shaping of world history at least for a thousand years. Unfortunately, later, Muslims deviated from the Islamic path and fell down from that exalted position. Muslims reduced Islam to a body without a soul. They have deprived it of its social content, its sense of purpose and dynamism, and made it a mere dry husk of belief and practices. But fortunately, the idea underlying the precepts of the Qur'ān and their interpretation through the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAAS) has remained intact and there is no reason why it cannot be put into practice once again. Because it was not the Muslims that had made Islam great, it was Islam that has made Muslims great. The rise of the West began with the scientific revolution in the thirteenth century and gradual growth in the subsequent centuries dominated the Muslim world which was progressively weakening due to many internal as well as external reasons (Al-Attas, 1985). Modern Western civilization precipitated crisis in the Muslim world. It challenged the Muslim world on all fronts, political, social, economical, educational etc. Muslims had faced many tribulations in the past, Crusades, Mongol invasion, but overcame such challenges. Yet no perception of decline or the need to borrow from the enemy was ever poignantly felt as an exigency. The West was able to inculcate the projection of its worldview in the Muslim mind and thence to dominate the Muslims intellectually. The dissemination of the basic

essentials (including Aristotelianism and the epistemological and philosophical principles driven from Greco- Roman thought) of the Western world view and its surreptitious consolidation in the Muslim mind was gradually accomplished through the educational system based upon a concept of knowledge and its principles that would ultimately bring about the de-islamization of the Muslim mind (Al-Attas, 1985). In the words of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the Western science and its application in the form of modern technology have affected in one or another nearly the whole of the Islamic world and posed a challenge of monumental dimension for the Islamic worldview and what remains of culture and civilization of Islam not to speak of the challenge of this science and its *weltanschauung* to the Islamic religion itself (Nasr, 2010).

The renaissance of science and learning in Europe was accompanied by a separation of the religious and the secular, due to the peculiar conditions then prevailing. This value-neutral framework of science has over the years led to moral relativism and ethical anarchy. Knowledge has increasingly come to perform a utilitarian function. Modern science, mistakenly based on the separation of the secular from religious, has been cut off from its moral moorings. Science is a cultural phenomenon and Western science reflects the worldview of Western societies. At the zenith of its civilization and scientific achievement, Islam produced its own unique culture and tradition of science. It developed a mould of science and knowledge that progressed and flourished under the paradigm of belief in divine unity and unity of universe and reflected the Islamic value system. Islam integrates the sacred and the temporal. The application of knowledge and science in Islam is for beneficent ends and in harmony with the purposes of the Creator.

Modern science found its way into the Islamic world in the early eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. Islamic world had to deal with modern Western science for practical and intellectual reasons. At the level of practical needs, modern science was seen as *sine qua non* for the advancement and defense of the Muslim countries and at the intellectual level

it gave rise to various reactions. We find, among the exponents of science in the Muslim world, people with a variety of attitudes, including those wedded to a wholesale appropriation of entire baggage of science with its positivist underpinnings. However, it is the philosophical underpinnings of modern science, rather than science itself, that has mostly perturbed the Muslim intellectuals.

Owing to a variety of frames of reference that exist among Muslims, there is a wide range of reactions to the modern science in the Muslim world. These reactions can be mentioned under following categories;

1. There is, first of all, a small minority of (conservative or isolationist) traditional religious scholars who do not welcome modern science as they considered it incompatible with Islamic teachings. They remained by and large aloof and distant from this science and refused to study it. In their view, Islamic societies should have their own science rather than borrowed from others. But, they did not carry out the kind of intellectual debate and critical examination of modern science on the basis of Islamic criteria like their ancestors thousand years back in Basra, Baghdad and other centers of learning. Who, allowed Islamic science to develop, not simply by an uncritical examination of the Greco-Hellenistic, Persian and Indian sciences, but by a critical examination of these sciences with criteria drawn from the tenets of the Islamic revelation and the intellectual tradition which grew in the light of that revelation. According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, this isolation and uncritical approach of traditional *ulama* towards modern Western science instead, allowed the ever greater spread of Western science under the banner of a 'religiously' coloured positivism into the Islamic world without an effective Islamic response. Otherwise, if the Western science were critically examined and appropriated according to revealed sources it would allow the Islamic world to digest and make it part of its own organism through assimilation as well as rejection rather than through the wholesale uncritical swallowing (Nasr, 2010).

2. There are some Muslim intellectuals who stand for the adoption of modern science in its totality. They are not content merely with appropriating the substance of modern science but are also fascinated by its empiricist worldview. They believe that mastery of modern science is the only solution to the stagnation of the Islamic world. They see science as the only means of real knowledge and enlightenment, like the believers of scientism claims that science alone can render truth about the world and reality. Scientism's single-minded adherence to only the empirical, or testable, makes it a strictly scientific worldview. Scientism sees it necessary to do away with most, if not all, metaphysical, philosophical, and religious claims, as the truths they proclaim cannot be apprehended by the scientific method. In essence, scientism sees science as the absolute and only justifiable access to the truth. Therefore they believe that modernization is not possible without complete westernization. Proponents of this thought, like Mustafa Kamal Atatürk (founder of modern Turkey) advocated the incompatibility of traditional beliefs with the dicta of modern science (Von Grunebaum & Grunebaum, 1962). While criticizing such ideas as creating conditions for confusion and error in knowledge, Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, considers them such as they who have been most vociferous and vehement in disparaging and denouncing the past and its great and learned scholars and thinkers and jurists and men of spiritual discernment. According to him, "Their conception of the past has been influenced by Western ideas on human evolution and historical development and secular science. They opened the doors to secularism without knowing it. The great Muslims of the past were not their intellectual ideals, instead, people like Rousseau, Comte, Mill, and Spencer were more properly their intellectual ideals. Islam in reality did not seem to be the principle of their thought; they attempted to fit Islam to their Ideals".

There are also some Muslim scholars generally regarded as Muslim modernists, who recognize that modern science has played a very important role in the advancement of the West and hence

advocate the assimilation of modern science. At the same time they have religious concerns which distinguished them from the Muslim intellectuals mentioned above (believers of scientism or so called Kamallists). This group forms the majority of Muslim scholars, and can be further categorized into subgroups. Such as, thinkers like Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani/Asadabadi (1838-1897) and Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935), attempted to justify modern science on religious grounds. They saw modern science as continuation of science that had flourished in the Islamic civilization several centuries ago. They, therefore, tried to persuade Muslims to acquire modern science in order to safeguard political independence and to protect themselves from the criticism that Islam is an obstacle to scientific progress.

As far as science is concerned, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani criticised the conservative Muslim 'Ulamā' for their blindness and hostility towards modern science and technology. In his lecture in Calcutta, 1882 "On Teaching and Learning" he said that;

"The strange thing of all is that our Ulama these days have divided science into two parts. One they call Muslim science, and one European science. Because of this they forbid others to teach some of the useful sciences. They have not understood that science is a noble thing that has no connection with any nation, and is not distinguished by anything but itself. Rather, everything that is known is known by science, and every nation that becomes renowned becomes renowned through science. The truth is where there is proof, and those who forbid science and knowledge in the belief that they are safeguarding the Islamic religion are really the enemies of that religion. The Islamic religion is the closest of religions to science and knowledge, and there is no incompatibility between science and knowledge and the foundation of Islamic faith" (Keddie, 1983).

He regarded science and technology as universal necessity and do not belong to any nation. According to him science is continuously changing its capital, sometimes it moves from east to the west, and other times from west to east. Science in the view of al-Afghani is the potential force which makes a nation strong and

prosperous, and apathy towards it makes it weak and poor. He further says, "The king of the world is science and without it kingship has never existed, does not exist." Afghani reiterated upon Muslims that progress and prosperity of a nation without science is impossible. But for him the urgent question was how they could be learned, because simple blind imitation would degenerate into submission to the west and ultimately dissolution of our thought and identity. They could not be acquired simply by imitation; behind them lay a whole way of thought and more importantly a system of social morality and culture. It is clear that for him, modern science is necessary and essential for the progress and development of the Muslim Ummah. But how to acquire it is problematic because there lies a whole cultural baggage accompanying the adoption of Western science and knowledge to which Afghani was reluctant to adopt. Therefore he advocates modernization but not westernization which is inimical from his point of view and demands to be selective in assimilating these sciences as well as called for translating these Western sciences into local language before accommodating them to minimize its cultural onslaught. This line was adopted by many of his followers including Egyptian Shaykh Muhammad Abduh (d.1905) as well as Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935). But after departing from his mentor Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and became more inclined towards the adoption from the West as only solution to all ills in the Muslim world, Muhammad Abduh thereby forgetting the negative influences as well as the line adopted by Afghani who throughout remained revolutionary and anti imperialist. However, Afghani's response to Ernest Renan (1823-92) has generally been considered by some later scholars like Seyyed Hossein Nasr as apologetic and as trend setter for modernist Islam. But while considering his other writings, including *Haqiqat-I mazhab-I naichri wa bayan-I hal-I nachiriyān* translated into Arabic by Muhammad Abduh as *al-Radd 'ala'l-dahryyin*, he shows a reluctant attitude towards wholesale adoption of Western science and knowledge as well as being cautious of its perverse impact on Muslim society. He believed that Islam was the one true, complete, and perfect religion, which

could satisfy all the desires of human spirit. He accepted Ernest Renan judgment on the Christianity of being unreasonable and enemy of science and progress, but wished to show that these criticisms did not apply to Islam. On the contrary, Islam is in harmony with the principles discovered by scientific reason, and a religion demanded by reason, being neither irrational nor intolerant that, could save the secular world from revolutionary chaos (Hourani, 1962). It seems that Afghani's approach viz-a-viz modern Western education / science was somewhat different from that of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and others and could not be put into same category, who lost their confidence and were overawed by the West's achievements.

Another group of modernist Muslim thinkers whose approach vary from that of the above mentioned Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and rest attempt to trace all important scientific discoveries to the Qur'ān and to the Islamic intellectual tradition. For them Western science was clearly and categorically distinguishable from Western values, the underlying assumption being that the secular worldview of modern West had no inroads into the structure and operation of the natural sciences. The task is therefore not to unearth the philosophical underpinnings of modern science but to import it without the ethical component that comes from Western culture, which is alien to the Islamic ethos (Kalin, 2002). They were motivated by two fold purpose:

- I. First to show that modern science is compatible with Islamic teachings and there is no contradiction or dichotomy between the science and religion. With regard to misunderstanding concerning the nature of modern scientific education, as Mr. Marmaduke Pickthal puts it; consider those Muslims who regard modern scientific education as something altogether foreign to Islam, as hardly less absurd than such a man, who refuses to acknowledge his own son merely because that son whom he had lost long back had now grown to manhood since he last beheld him. And who used such arguments as these, my son was small and weak, he had a little voice, and no hair on his face. This creature, on the other hand, is big and strong; he has a deep loud

voice and wears a beard. Therefore, he is quite a stranger to me. According to him, "this great forward movement is not child of Christendom. Medieval Christendom contained no germ of such a thing. It is the offspring of the old enlightened days of Islam. Therefore, there should be no reservation to adopt him again."

- II. Second, to show that by using the findings of modern science, one can explain various aspects of his faith. These people believe that modern science had arrived at some of those very facts, which can be traced back to the Quran and Prophet (SAAS) some fourteen centuries ago. Thus the Islamic revelation could be seen to have virtually foretold what was discovered by science many centuries later. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1873- 1960) of Turkey who in his *Risale-i Nur* demonstrated that faith and science are not adversaries but rather allies and that science's breathtaking discoveries of the universe's functioning corroborate and reinforce the truths of religion. His views on faith and science were formulated at a time when the positivism of late 1900s was made official ideology of the newly established secular republic. With the adaption of materialism as the sole legitimate platform of scientific thought and mixing science with philosophy, scientism turned into a pseudo-religion preaching atheism and challenging all sorts of belief in the divine.

Being aware of the influence of modern physical science, instead of taking a position against it, Said Nursi, ought to integrate the scientific findings within the theistic perspective, choosing observation and reason as his main platform of study, with testimony serving as a supporting role. Instead of taking script as indisputable facts, he uses observation and reason to prove the stated facts in the scripts. That is, he closed the door to blind submission and opened the way for convincing via rational argument. He considered religious sciences "The light of heart" and the modern science "the light of the reason" therefore, according to him, the truth emerges out of the blinding of the two, if separated former

causes dogmatism and latter deception and suspension. He maintained that there can be no contradiction between confirmed scientific facts and religion, and that careful observations and objective thinking that form the platform of positive sciences necessitates belief rather than disbelief. For him, reading the verses of the Qur'ān through the eyes of modern physical sciences had not only an instrumental value for protecting the faith of the youth who were coming under the sway of 19<sup>th</sup> century positivism and empiricism. It was also the beginning of a new method of substantiating the Islamic faith on the basis of the certainties of modern physical science, and reading the cosmic verses of the Qur'ān within the matrix of scientific discoveries (Kalin, 2002).

This trend of reinterpret a number of Islamic theological matters in the light of modern sciences was earlier started by Indian scholar, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), who was interested in this regard in so far as he formulated a theology of nature through which one could re-interpret the basic principles of Islam in the light of modern science. The means he adopted towards that end was essentially to reinterpret the Qur'ān. He laid down certain principles for his *tafsir*, the most central of which was that there could not possibly be any contradiction between the Work of God (Nature) and the Word of God (the Qur'ān). If there were such a contradiction between the two, he argued, it would necessarily follow that the Word of God is false, since the Work of God is undeniably self-evident; and since the Word of God cannot be false, therefore both have to be uniform (*muttāhid*). He regarded human reason (*insānī'aql*) the sole arbiter and harmoniser between the two. His commentary on the Qur'ān is a good illustration of this trend. Sir Sayyid said:

“The science and art have progressed to a much higher level. The natural sciences, as far as they have been investigated critically, have reached a degree that pertains to self-evident and observable things *mashahid*. The science has established that truth cannot be in contradiction to the critically established sciences, *ulume muhaqqaqah*. Whatever religion it may be if today it turns out on balance to be in

contradiction to science, then it cannot stand up..... as soon as a person shares in the science he can never accept as true the jumble of truth and error which has been received as Islam..... No person has the power any more to prevent the rays of these sciences from shining forth..... I am certain that the pure religion of Islam is free and clear from blemishes which can befall any religion which faces the truth of science. It is our wish that there may be born in the hearts of our people both the light of the science (as in the hearts of Europeans) and confirmation of faith (as is the heart of Abu Bakar)”.

It seems that these intellectuals were worried about the truth and validity of the belief which were being threatened by modern science, concerned with the intellectual formulation of Islamic as a faith; and were trying to redefine the contents and methods of faith –primarily under the impact of the West. They, therefore, turned the contemporary scientific world view into the overriding principle of the interpretation of the Qur'ān, thereby causing more confusion than ever. According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the dislocation caused by the spread of teaching of natural science without any reference to God is so extensive that one cannot in all honesty simply claim that there is no problem by claiming modern science to be '*ilm*' which Islam encourages or by ignoring modern science as if it did not exist (Nasr, 2010).

Muslim modernist thinkers paved the way for propagating modern scientific knowledge in the Muslim world but were unable to assess its secularising impact on the thought and faith of its adherents. They called for the adoption of Western science for self strengthening but could not visualize confusion and dualism created by secular premises of the modern Western science. However, they tried their best to respond to contemporary situations, to reinvigorate the Muslim community in order to face the adversaries. Their intentions were clear to make Muslim Ummah vibrant once more by equipping them with their lost treasure, but could not make a distinction between the cultural phenomenon embedded in the science, the modern science now depicting the worldview of Western societies. The renaissance of science and learning

in Europe was accompanied by a separation of the religion and secular, due to peculiar conditions then prevailing. This value-neutral framework of science has over the years led to moral relativism and ethical anarchy. As the crisis brought about by the modern science and technology in the West itself began to manifest after the Second World War, a new wave of awareness began to develop among some Muslim thinkers concerning the nature of modern science and its challenges to Islam. They began to differentiate between the findings of modern science and its philosophical underpinnings. Thus, while they advocate the discoveries of the secrets of nature through experimentation and theoretical work, they warn against empiricist and materialistic interpretations propagated in the name of science. In their view, scientific knowledge can reveal certain aspects of the physical world, but science *per se* cannot give us a complete picture of reality. Thus believe that science has to be embedded in the Islamic worldview in order to give a more comprehensive picture of reality.

Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi, Murtaza Muthari, Ismail Raji Al Faruki, etc, were some of the prominent advocates of this worldview during the second half of the twentieth century. They did not deny experimental observations of science but challenge their philosophical inferences. The improper usage of science or scientific claims, the belief that the methods of natural science, or the categories and things recognised in natural science, form the only proper elements in any philosophical or other inquiry, or that science, and only science, describes the world as it is in itself with a concomitant "elimination of the psychological dimensions of experience". As explained by Hutchinson Ian, it is one thing to celebrate science for its achievements and remarkable ability to explain a wide variety of phenomena in the natural world. But to claim there is nothing knowable outside the scope of science would be similar to a successful fisherman saying that whatever he can't catch in his nets does not exist (Hutchinson, 2011). Once we accept that science is the only source of human knowledge, we have adopted a philosophical position (scientism) that cannot be verified, or falsified, by science itself.

It is, in a word, unscientific. On the theoretical level, it has led to a greater interest to discover the philosophy of modern science and the limitations of its methodologies parallel with a re-discovery and re-formulation of the Islamic philosophy of science (Nasr, 2010). At the zenith of its civilization and scientific achievement, Islam produced its own unique culture and tradition of science. It developed a mold of science and knowledge that progressed and flourished under the paradigm of belief in divine, the unity of universe and reflected the Islamic value system. Islam integrates the sacred and temporal. The application of knowledge and science in Islam is for beneficent ends and in harmony with the purposes of the Creator. Consequently, knowledge was not considered an end in itself, it was a means for the attainment of higher moral and spiritual goals.

As explained by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, those who wish to create a paradigm within which to develop a veritably Islamic science and not simply a second hand imitation and continuation of Western science, must know the various schools of the Islamic intellectual tradition well. They must know the epistemology which is rooted in the noble Qur'ān and which has been developed in great amplitude and depth by many generations of Muslim thinkers and in numerous schools ranging from those of jurisprudence to those of philosophy. They must know the Islamic concept of nature described so majestically in the Qur'ān and the Islamic philosophy of science as elaborated by numerous masters of traditional Islamic thought. The result would be a science which, while incorporating all the factual discoveries of modern science, would relate these facts to higher principles and would remain aware of the ultimate cause of all things which is God, a science which would affirm rather than neglect Unity or *al-Tawhid*, the essence and the core of Islam and purposefulness of all creation. *Al-Tawhid* as a world view in a sense the whole universe as a unity, instead of dividing it into this world and the hereafter, the natural and the supernatural, substance and meaning, spirit and body. It means to regard the whole of existence as a single form. As articulated by Ismail-Raji al Faruqi, *al-Tawhid* is that which gives Islamic civilization its identity, which binds all its

constituents together and thus makes of them an integral, organic body which we call civilization. Muslims develop the science of *'ilm al-Tawhid* and subsumed under it the disciplines of logic, epistemology, metaphysics and ethics (Faruqi, 1995). In the world-view of *al-Tawhid*, man fears only one Power, and is answerable before only one Judge. He turns to only one *qibla*, and directs his hope and desire to only one source. *Al-Tawhid* bestows upon man independence and dignity; submission to Him alone- the supreme norm of all being (Shari'Ati, & Algar, 1979), as well as the most basic principle of piety and mainstay of its various aspects (Al-Dihlawi, 1995).

### Conclusion

After the infiltration of modern science into Islamic lands, some Muslims who were overly infatuated with modern science pleaded that even theology should be subjected to the methods of empirical science. They went so far as to claim that science was the only road to Allah (S.W.T.). The Qur'ān verses mentioning the natural phenomena were adduced as an argument for the self-sufficiency of the scientific method. Some scholars even identified the Qur'ān's wisdom with positivism (Tubarah, 1993). Observation and experimentation were necessary tools for understanding nature, but it is difficult to believe in the sufficiency of the senses to accomplish that. However, intellectual effort was needed before one could give a theistic interpretation of the worlds. Empirical science can make us familiar with the work of God, but the inference of an Omniscient and Omnipotent God of the Qur'ān, as a result of studying a part of the nature, requires an intellectual exercise. The leap from the finite to the infinite requires intellection. The ways of proving God through the existence of order and guidance in the created world are very good but they are good up to the point that makes us aware that this world is under the supervision of a designing force that governs it. What science can tell us at the most is that the designer of this world has had knowledge of the things made, but can science [also] prove that "He has Knowledge of everything?" (*The Qur'an* 57:3). There is no incompatibility between the science

and the religion of Islam but yes there is incompatibility between Islam and scientism (science becoming the pseudo-religion of the age and forcing religion to the margins of modern society or at least making it a matter of personal choice and social ethics), between the basic perspectives of life, way of thinking, world views, atheistic weltanschauung and *Tawhidic* weltanschauung. It has been repeatedly reiterated by many religious Scholars ('Ulamā'), that the source of conflict frequently lay in the philosophical underpinnings of science rather than in science itself. And it is important to look for the hidden philosophical assumptions, which lay behind the scientific arguments.

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