

EVOLVING A QUR'ANIC PARADIGM OF SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY: IBN SINA, SIR SEYYED AHMED KHAN, DR. MUHAMMAD IQBAL, AND SOME CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS¹

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Abstract— Philosophical doctrines and the scientific worldview of an epoch from which a scholar gets too much impressed, attain the status of the standard of rationality for him. He begins to think that to believe these ideas as compared to the ones believed by past generations, is more rational and logical. On the contrary, iman bil-ghaib (faith in the unseen) is the foundation of religion. This is the prime quality of the muttaqin (ones who qualify for attaining guidance from the Qur'an.)ⁱ The muttaqin firmly believe that if any metaphysical notion, principle of logic, or scientific worldview is contrary to the teachings of the revealed truth, fault lies not with the assertions of faith but with the metaphysical notion, logic, or science. Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, the renowned Muslim philosophers of the 10th and the 11th century are very close to each other in their philosophical views but Ibn Sina (Avicenna) developed these ideas much more than al-Farabi did. In history of Muslim philosophy they both are referred to as Muslim philosophers.ⁱⁱ The Muslim philosophers got so much impressed by Plato and Aristotle that they accepted their philosophical views as the standard of rational truth. As Muslim they believed religion as the revealed truth. In the history of religious philosophy, this desire for reconciliation has emerged in the form of reconstruction of religious thought in terms of prevalent philosophical and scientific theories. This is undertaken with the purpose to make the rational face of religion more bright. But in the end it is the religion that suffers. In their attempt at the reconciliation of religion and philosophy, Muslim philosophers had to deny all the major beliefs of Islam. To quote just one example here: Volition has been ascribed in the Qur'an to God as His Dignity and Majesty. The God-fearing ones believe that Allah has created the universe at Will and has created it ex-nihilo. They find no contradiction in believing Volition to be an attribute of God. Since volition had been denied by Aristotle to be an attribute worthy of God, Muslim philosophers too had to deny it; and with it they too had to deny the creation of the universe by God at His Will and Command. Imam Ghazali, with great philosophical acumen, locates the presuppositions which made them deviate from standard Qur'anic beliefs and reconstructs them so as to prove Islamic beliefs fully rational. Averroes makes his best to defend Avicenna against al-Ghazali's criticism but did not succeed. Controversy between these thinkers is not merely an intellectual heritage of Muslim history, but also has intimate relevance with our own times. This provides us with a criterion to examine succeeding attempts as well as our own approach towards evolving a Qur'anic paradigm for defining relationship between religion and the philosophico-scientific world-view of our own times. Rational supernaturalism and theology of modernity propounded by Sir Seyyed Ahmed Khan, construction of a scientific form of religious thought by Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, sociological interpretation of Islam and especially presentation of tauhid as world-view by Dr. Ali Shari'ati, blending creationism and evolutionism into a harmonious whole by Dr. Israr Ahmed, bifurcating the personality of the Prophet (pbuh) into various facets by Dr. Israr Ahmed, Dr. Ishaq Zafar Ansari and Maulana Abdul Waheed, the scientific interpretation of the Qur'an theory by Maurice Bucaille to prove the divine origin of the Qur'an, Islamization of Knowledge theories by IIIT, Ziauddin Sardar, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and similar attempts by various contemporary scholars need to be seen and evaluated in this perspective.

The writer considers attempts in the history of Muslim civilization from Avicenna to the contemporary scholars at the reconstruction of religious thought not to be on appropriate lines and proposes that the

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Muslim philosophers should be on their guard against such attempts and resist such irrationalities presented in the garb of rationality.

By 'reconstruction of religious thought' we mean taking a scientific theory and the worldview arising in its wake (i.e., philosophy) as the standard of rationality and setting on to reinterpret religious doctrines in philosophico-scientific terminology so as to prove them harmonious with these theories. History of Muslim philosophy is replete with such attempts. Failing to find anything in the Qur'an that could support their contention either they insert un-Qura'nic terminologies, identifications, analogies or metaphorical interpretations in the Qura'an or they try to search out a tradition in the corpus of traditions compiled in the name of the Prophet (pbuh) or the companions of the prophet (r.a.) on the basis of which they could insert their own suggestion in the Qur'an to read in it their desired meaning.ⁱⁱⁱ

Keywords- Qur'anic paradigm, theories, worldview, science, philosophy

“Philosophical system, and a scientific world view, by which one gets impressed, assumes the status of a rational version of truth for him. If one already believes in a revealed religion the problem of reconciliation of revealed and rational versions of truth takes utmost importance.”^{iv} Philo of Alexandria (also called Judaeus Philo c.20 BCE—40 CE) a Jewish scholar, got so much impressed by Plato that he referred to him as ‘the most holy Plato’. Believing Judaism as the revealed truth, and the Platonic philosophy as the standard of rationality, Philo set himself to developing a speculative justification for Judaism in terms of its harmonization with Greek philosophy. In the history of philosophy this was the first attempt at the rational reconstruction of religious thought. This created the scope for Hellenistic interpretation of Hebrew thought. In this way Philo laid foundations for the philosophical and theological development of Christianity as we see it today.

Ptolemy's model of the world which consisted of nine heavens with the earth in the center presented the scientific worldview of Ibn-e-Sina's times (Circa 980–1037 A.D.). Ptolemy's cosmology prevailed for 1400 years. Qur'anic model of the universe consists of seven heavens and is irreconcilable with Ptolemaic model.^v Remaining true to the Qur'an, Ibn-e-Sina could not accept Ptolemaic model. But then he had to reject the Ptolemaic model as false, or prove it doubtful, which he could not do. So he had to surrender his belief in Qur'anic cosmology consisting of seven heavens in favour of Ptolemaic cosmology consisting of nine heavens. Ibn Sina was as much impressed by Aristotelian metaphysics as Philo was by Platonic metaphysics. So he could not prove his competence in locating flaws in Aristotelian logic which was based on dualistic metaphysics, his concept of ‘will’ as implying imperfection, his concept of ‘cause/effect relationship’ as logical necessity, and his concept of ‘perfection’ as immutability etc. Accepting Ptolemaic cosmology and Aristotelian metaphysics as standard of rationality of his times, he set himself on the reconstruction of Islamic religious thought. This marred Ibn-e-Sina's whole metaphysics with inconsistency and self-contradiction. He had to surrender his belief in Qur'anic cosmology consisting of seven heavens in favour of Ptolemaic cosmology consisting of nine heavens, he had to surrender his belief in the creation of the universe in favor of eternal emanation, belief in Allah's Knowledge of particulars in favor of God's all-encompassing eternal knowledge, belief in human freedom in favor of determinism, belief in bodily resurrection in favor of spiritual resurrection, belief in miracles in favor of absoluteness of efficient causation and so on.



Geocentric universe of Aristotle and Ptolemy^{vi}

Ideas thrive upon terms and travel in history. If they are false they go on coloring the understanding and interpretation of other ideas. At times it may take centuries for someone to identify them and straighten them. It was around fourteen centuries after Aristotle when al-Ghazali (1058–1111) redefined the notion of Divine ‘Will’ to show that it was absolutely compatible with the perfection of Qur’anic God and a sign of His Dignity and Majesty. He also pointed out other inconsistencies in Ibn Sina’s philosophy which arose as implication of accepting Aristotle’s metaphysics, logic, concept of ‘causation’ and other ideas.^{vii}

Newtonian cosmology and naturalism

Expanding on the ideas of Galileo, Copernicus and Johannes Kepler, in 1687 Sir Isaac Newton presented a comprehensive worldview of an infinite, closed, static, steady state, [clockwork](#) universe, in which the total momentum of the Universe is conserved, interactions redistribute the momentum, but the total never changes. In this model, God was needed only to start the clock (initial cause), then it runs by itself for the rest of time. (cf. *The Physics of the Universe: Cosmological theories through history*, <http://physicsoftheuniverse.com/cosmological.html>) There could be no role for God in this universe Whose Goodly Names are mentioned in the Qur’an. Neither could there be any place in this universe for miracles, supernatural events, supernatural entities or divine intervention.^{viii} Prayer and supplication had no real meaning. [Laws](#) of nature are sufficient to account for everything relating matter, life, mind, soul, freewill, personal identity or whatever. “Prophecies and so-called [miraculous](#) events either are explicable by the known or hither to unknown [laws](#) of nature; if they are not thus explicable, their happening itself must be denied.

Since, for religious and moral as well as for scientific truth, human reason is the only source of knowledge, the fact of a Divine Revelation is to be explained in natural terms if it is to be believed. The contents of such revelations can be accepted only in so far as they are rational according to the prevalent standards. “If man must have a religion at all, it is only that which his reason dictates.” In short it can be said that Newtonian naturalism contradicts the most vital doctrines of Islam which rest essentially on the existence of a Person God, His so many Attributes, the Creator at Will of the universe and nature; and the idea of an organized system of Divinely administered universe,^{ix} angels, prophets, the [soul](#) and its spirituality and [immortality](#), human freedom and responsibility, resurrection, judgment and reward and the life hereafter.

Basic principle of Sir Seyyed’s theology of modernity

The philosophy of naturalism and Newtonian science, in line with each other, constituted the standard of rationality of Sir Seyyed Ahmed Khan’s times. The challenge he had in the second half of the 19th century in British occupied India was the following:

- (i) Either to prove naturalism to be wrong, or
- (ii) to show its assumptions to be doubtful, or
- (iii) to keep on believing what he believed as a traditional believer; or
- (iv) following Philo and Ibn Sina, to reconstruct his religious beliefs to demonstrate them as compatible with the standard of rationality of his own times.

Khan opts for the last and formulates a 15 point framework comprising, what he calls, his theology of modernity (*jadid ilm al-kalam*) to reinterpret the Scripture to harmonize it with the assumptions, implications and consequences of Newtonian naturalism.^x Like Ibn Sina he justifies his belief in God on the basis of cosmological argument as First Cause, conceives this First Cause as Absolute Existence in the sense of *wahdat al wujud*, interprets His Attributes in Mutazilite sense. This comprises his rational supernaturalism. How can an Uncaused First Cause be a Creator at Will, how can a First Cause descend revelation, how can He be a Command Giver and Administrator of the world etc! Conceiving God as First Cause, how could you believe in angels, prophets, the [soul](#), its spirituality and [immortality](#), human freedom and responsibility, bodily resurrection, judgment and reward and the life hereafter! How can a First Cause claim to have created the earth in two days, and in two days to have created the provisions on earth, and in two days to have created the seven heavens!(Q, 41:9-12)

The Qur’an is the basic source of teachings in Islam. It is believed by Muslims to be revealed *i.e.*, supernatural in its origin and the standard of truth/authority (*al-haqq*).^{xi} What conforms to it is true (*haqq*), what contradicts it is false (*bâtîl*), what is said in violation to this is wrongful (*bi ghayr ’l haqq*), deviation from it is error (*al-dalâl*), to express views without reference to it is to follow conjecture (*zann*), saying anything about Allah, not supported by the Qur’an, is concoction (*iftirâ*). The Qur’an calls itself ‘the Word of God’ (*Kalâm Allah*).

Sir Seyyed Ahmed Khan stipulates to call the created world *i.e.*, the phenomena of nature,) ‘the Work of God’ as compared to the Qur’an which calls itself ‘the Word of God’. In order to reconstruct the Qur’anic teachings in accordance with Newtonian naturalism, elaborating the close relationship between ‘the Work of God’ and ‘the Word of God’ in his ‘theology of modernity’ he introduces a principle that in case of conflict between science and religion “the Work of God’ overrides ‘the Word of God.” Developing this hermeneutics he makes the revealed Word of God (the ‘Standard of Truth’ in Islam) subservient to human knowledge based on the study of nature of which Newtonian scientific world-view being the best instance in Khan’s own times. Look at the irony of fate that Sir Seyyed Ahmed Khan passes away in 1898, and Einstein’s Special Theory of

Relativity replaces Newtonian naturalism in 1905 and his General Theory of Relativity appears in 1915.

Einstein's cosmology and naturalism

Newtonian naturalism believed no connection between space and time. Physical space was held to be a flat, three-dimensional continuum (*i.e.*, an arrangement of all possible point locations—to which Euclidean postulates would apply.) Time was viewed as absolute (*i.e.*, independent of space, as a separate, one-dimensional continuum) completely homogeneous along its infinite extent.^{xii} So Newtonian universe was an infinite space existing in an absolute time. Albert Einstein in his Theory of Relativity suggested that “time wasn't separate from space but connected to it. Time and space are combined to form *space-time*, and everyone measures his or her own experience in it differently.” Einsteinian naturalism sees the fabric of space as four-dimensional. In it *time* is not absolute, it is relative to the experiencing subject. The basic elements of space-time are *events* as compared to Newtonian naturalism which believes in static and steady state universe with *things* as its elements. “In any given space-time, an event is a unique position at a unique time.” Einstein also suggested that space-time wasn't flat, but curved or “warped” by the existence of matter and energy. Einsteinian naturalism states “that objects with large masses can warp [bend/twist] *time* by speeding it up or slowing it down. How many dimensions are needed to describe the universe is still an open question. According to some modern theories, the universe can only be adequately described by using a system with many more dimensions than were originally proposed by Einstein.”^{xiii}

Basic principle of Iqbal's theology of modernity—Construction of a scientific form of religious knowledge

Einstein's study of ‘the Work of God’ makes Sir Seyyed's reconstruction of Muslim theology outdated and incompatible with the newly arisen naturalism. As per his own principle “that Work of God overrides the Word of God”, a new Sir Seyed was needed to reinterpret ‘the Word of God’ to show that it was still compatible with the naturalism of Einstein, Einstein who definitely did not believe in a Personal God and who was a determinist. Einstein argues that the natural scientists cannot legitimately believe in the reality of supernatural causes behind natural events.^{xiv} Now Iqbal comes forward with a new interpretation of ‘the Word of God’ in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* in line with Einsteinian Naturalism and other modern sciences. Basit Bilal Koshul in his article “Muhammad Iqbal's reconstruction of the philosophical arguments for the existence of God”^{xv} rightly sums up Iqbal's understanding of the relationship between religion and science in the following words which could be termed as first point of Iqbal's theology of modernity (*jadeed ilm al-kalam*):

[i] ‘If religion aspires to attract seekers whose religious faith is based on personal experience (rather than tradition, culture and dogma) religion will have to open itself to science. [ii] If science aspires to give a coherent and holistic account of experience (rather than partial and mutually irreconcilable accounts) science will have to open itself to religion.’^{xvi}

According to Iqbal faith is ultimately based on a special type of inner experience. Sufism has been providing this facility by developing special spiritual and psychological techniques for directing the evolution of this inner experience in an individual believer but by becoming incapable of receiving fresh inspirations from the modern thought and experience, sufism has failed to fulfill this need. From here draws the second point of what Dr. Khalid Masud would rightly call, Iqbal's

theology of modernity. Keeping in view the unique characteristics of modern culture a scientific form of religious knowledge is but needed to make such inner experience possible.^{xvii} By accomplishing a reconstruction of scientific thought in terms of, what Dr. Basit Bilal calls, Qur'anically-informed perspective and accomplishing a reconstruction of religious thought in terms of modern scientific understanding of experience, Iqbal believes, we will provide that scientific form of religious knowledge which is essential for that special type of inner experience on which the faith is ultimately based on. Thus Iqbal sees the "harmonization of religion and science as essential precondition for the possibility of such inner experience in the modern, scientific cultural setting."^{xviii}

Iqbal starts by examining religious experience to pave the way for opening religion towards science and science towards religion. "As is evident from the very title of his work, Iqbal undertakes a philosophical discussion of some of the basic ideas of Islam in order to attempt a reconstruction of Islamic religious thought in terms of modern science and philosophy considering them the standard of rationality. Iqbal considers that the essence of religion is faith, that faith is based on religious experience [revelation] or intuition, and that science is a systematization of sense experience and philosophy an intellectual view of reality."^{xix} Developing an extended concept of thought, Iqbal persistently advocates his conviction that senses, reason and intuition are not independent sources of knowledge but only aspects of one wider source which he calls 'thought'. They seek visions of the same reality so they must be absolutely reconcilable. Intuition, however a higher form of thought, is more basic than intellect and sense experience and is not devoid of cognitive element. In the first lecture of *Reconstruction*, Iqbal examines the genuineness of intuition as a source of knowledge, and taking the Qur'an as the embodiment of religious experience, gives an account of reality revealed in it. In order to prove his contentions, he critically interprets and examines the accounts of reality discernible from scientists and philosophers with a view to discovering whether they ultimately lead us to the same character of reality as is revealed by religious experience. Thus in this chapter he analyzes religious experience as a source of knowledge and argues that intellectual thought and religious experience are not opposed to each other, they have common source and thus complementary to each other. The second chapter examines this experience philosophically and concludes that judgement based on religious experience fully satisfies the intellectual test. Through philosophical discussions of levels of human experience, and the meaning of creation, the primacy of life and thought, the teleological character of reality and the meaning of teleology with reference to God, by the end of this lecture he is able to reach the idea of God (or Ultimate Reality). He reaches this idea by identifying *Time* with God, and the spatial aspects of reality with God's manifestation in serial time. In this chapter Iqbal examines modern philosophical and scientific theories of space and time to find that philosophical theories in fact come to agree with the religious experience of reality; however conceding the limitations of the intellectual view of life, Iqbal asserts that it cannot take us beyond a pantheistic view of life whereas intuition of one's own self reveals that the ultimate nature of reality is spiritual (*i.e.*, a self) and must be conceived as an Ego. Further, the Qur'an emphasizes the individuality of the Ultimate Ego and gives Him the proper name of Allah.^{xx} The third chapter puts the religious experience of prayer to pragmatic test. Having reached and having identified the Ultimate Ego with the Qur'anic God citing Surat al-Ikhlās, which declares the incomparable uniqueness of God as Individual, in this chapter, Iqbal embarks upon drawing out either the characteristics of the Absolute Ego and reinterpreting the attributes of the Qur'anic God to reconcile them or the other way round."^{xxi} "The fourth chapter relates religious experience with modern and Islamic 'theories of self and its freedom' from the perspectives of religion and

philosophy. The fifth chapter explores prophesy as a fundamental of Islamic culture that demonstrates how religious experience transforms itself into a living world force. This particular perspective is possible only by disregarding the Greek classical metaphysical view of reason, matter and movement and by adopting the Qur'anic anticlassical approach to the universe. The sixth lecture on *Ijtihad* illustrates how the dynamism within the structure of Islamic thought was lost by the adoption of classical methods of reasoning that led to *taqlid* and stagnation. The concluding chapter comes back to the question "Is religion possible?" and argues that the religion and the scientific processes involve different methods but they are in a sense parallel to each other. In the scientific process self stands outside and in the religious experience the self develops an inclusive attitude. Both are descriptions of the same world but from different stand points."^{xxii}

For the sake of argument let us admit that Iqbal makes a very ingenious attempt in his lectures for the harmonization of science and religion, does this admission allows anyone to claim that it is on correct lines! Was not the attempt made by Ibn Sina an equally ingenious attempt for the same in his own times! Does not Sir Seyyed Ahmad Khan make a very ingenious attempt in harmonizing Qur'an with Newtonian naturalism through his principle "The Work of God overrides the Word of God"! If the basic suppositions of these both are contrary to the Qur'anic teachings, so not on correct lines, then should we not examine whether presuppositions of Iqbal's project are based on the teachings of the Qur'an or not! This alone will decide the genuineness, originality and worth of his thought.

In the second chapter of his *Reconstruction* commenting on Newtonian scientific view of Nature as pure materiality associated with a view of space as an absolute void in which things are situated Iqbal observes that it creates an unbridgeable gulf between the knowing subject (mind) and the known object (matter) (Iqbal, 27-28). Looking at Nature as a structure of interrelated events possessing the character of continuous creative flow, as presented by Einstein, Iqbal conceives it as a systematic mode of behavior and as such organic to the Ultimate Self (*i.e.*, God) as character is [organic] to human self. (Iqbal, 28, 45) (Koshul, 101)

Conceiving the relationship between Nature and God on the analogy of character to man, looking at Nature as habit of Allah, and considering Nature as organic to the Ultimate Self, as we shall see is one of the two fundamental presuppositions which enable Iqbal to bring about that scientific form of religious knowledge which he considers necessary for making special type of inner experience possible which according to him the faith is ultimately based on.

Any discussion on the negative or positive implications of the above idea drawn by Iqbal will be pointless unless the status of the basic idea is decided *i.e.*, whether it is correct or incorrect. Let us first examine the said basic idea presented by Iqbal.

Our point is that if Nature (as theo-philosophically interpreted by Iqbal) is to God as character is to human self, if it is organic to the Ultimate Self, if it is *habit of Allah* then Nature is must to be considered uncreated and eternal. And this is absolutely contrary to the Message of the Qur'an. Does God not say in the Qur'an: "Nothing is like Him." Hence Supremely Unique and Absolutely Transcendent of all analogies! Then how could you justify conceiving the Life of God on the analogy of man! The Qur'an says: "He is the Creator of heavens and the earth and whatever therein is!" Are not the domains of experience studied by physics, biology, and psychology *i.e.*, matter, life, and consciousness His creation! If so, then how can His creation be organic to Him! Should they be considered eternal with God!

The Qur'an says: "*If all the trees on the earth were pens and the sea, with seven seas behind it, were ink, still Allah's Words would not run out.*" (Q, 31:27) As creation Nature is replete with the Signs of its Creator. A Qur'anically informed scientific study of Nature is must to keep it within

Qur'anically prescribed limits; it will develop a worldview compatible with the features of the universe stated in the Qur'an; will discover the laws of nature and develop techniques, not for the maximum fulfillment of human desires but in the larger benefit of humanity. This study will add to the light of faith by verifying and highlighting Signs of God in the universe. Let us observe an example from al-Ghazali to understand what a Qur'anically informed scientific study of Nature could genuinely mean.

***What a Qur'anically informed scientific study of nature could genuinely mean!—
— An instance from Al-Ghazali***

As stated above Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina under the impress of Aristotle conceived God as Uncaused First Cause and denying 'Will' as His Attribute asserted 'Knowledge' at its place. Now they needed a theory where the universe could originate from God devoid of the attribute of *Will*. Here Plotinus's theory of emanation in which universe overflows from the perfection of God without His Will and Command, comes to their help. Ibn Sina reformulates this as theory of graded emanation where universe emanates from God's Knowledge in ten steps. Ibn Sina is a philosopher as well as a physician/scientist whereas Al-Ghazali is a theologian, philosopher and a mystic but not a scientist. Concept of cause is one of the two pivotal concepts of Ibn Sina's philosophy as well as science. The essential attribute of Ibn Sina's God is 'knowledge' and as per his perception divine knowledge could not be conceived of violating principles of logic at any place. In logic the conclusion draws from its premises with logical certainty. Being the Uncaused First Cause whatever will emanate from Ibn Sina's God as its effect at the first step must emanate with logical necessity. This 'first effect' will turn into a 'cause' for further emanation. Whatever will emanate from this 'effect turned cause' will also come about as a logical necessity and so on. Ibn Sina's theory of causation conceives the relationship between 'cause' and 'effect' as of logical necessity. As implied by this view, determinism prevails in the whole universe including psycho-ethical spheres of human beings. Even God could not remain free. To deprive human beings of freedom of moral choice and action, is to deprive morality of its grounds and to deny accountability and reward in the Hereafter. Conceiving God as 'Cause' and relating Him to its immediate effect with logical necessity not only translates determinism in the whole universe, deprives man from moral freedom and creativity but also deprives God too of all Freedom and Creativity. Prayer and invoking God for help loses all meaning. Miracles and bodily resurrection become impossibility. Omnipotence of Ibn Sina's God becomes subservient to the principle of universal causation. Universe becomes coeternal with God. God as cause is only logically prior to the universe, temporally both are simultaneous as sun is only logically prior to the light emanating from it whereas temporally both are simultaneous. Thus Qur'anic concept of the creation of the universe from *non-being* to *being* stands denied. The law of causation itself becomes an eternal fate eternally determining the destiny of everything including man as well as God. Ibn Sina translates the religious doctrine of the Oneness of God into the philosophical doctrine of the absolute simplicity of God. According to Aristotelian metaphysics which Ibn Sina inherits everything is composed of two principles *i.e.*, matter and form. There is dichotomy of essence and existence in everything. So nothing except God is absolutely simple. His attributes draw from Him as the theorem that 'the sum total of the internal angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles' draws as implication from the definition of a triangle. Thus there is no plurality of Being and Attributes or Essence and Existence in God. Now if God is absolutely simple, His Knowledge must also be one and without plurality. When there is nothing except God prior to Him then in what will His Knowledge consist of except that He alone is a Necessary Being and absolute source of whatever

is possible. So His Self-Knowledge must also be one and absolutely simple. When in all eternity God had only Self-Knowledge, from this Self Knowledge only one thing emanates as 'effect'. This one thing he calls 'First Intellect'. Here Ibn Sina draws another principle of his cosmology: From 'one' only 'one' emanates. Keeping in view the first principle of his theory of causation that the relationship between 'cause' and 'effect' is of logical necessity, the other principle introduced by him is the relationship of one to one correspondence between 'cause' and 'effect'. One specific 'cause' will always generate one specific 'effect' and one specific 'effect' will ever come into being by one specific 'cause'. He rejects the concept of plurality of causes. This very principle bars him to believe in the Qur'anic doctrine of bodily resurrection. Ibn Sina sees *cause* as a unitary event instead of 'a set of conditions which when become sufficient the *effect* occurs.' Another principle of his cosmology is that 'cause' and 'effect' both must belong to the same nature. Ibn Sina's God is of the nature of 'Thought' so what comes about from Him at the first step must keep close to Him *i.e.*, First Intellect is also not a material entity. Coming down step by step the physical world with all its genus, species and individuals emanate from the Tenth Intellect. This principle brings the God down to the category of efficient causes except one thing that He alone is Uncaused. The relationship of 'cause' and effect is how much important for Ibn Sina can be seen from the fact that as physician prescribing remedies in every case he says: eliminate the cause first. Had it been in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an, how much benefit it would have given to humanity, how much it would have contributed to the promotion of empirical sciences in Muslims centuries ago!

Now al-Ghazali, a renowned religious scholar of his times, who is neither a scientist nor a physician, does not accept this theory of causation on religious grounds. He is a firm believer in the Qur'an. He firmly believes that whatever has been stated in the Qur'an about the attributes of God or about the nature of the universe can never be untrue and that a theory, how ingeniously formulated may it be, if contradicts the Qur'an, is necessarily false. He could never believe anything manmade (Aristotelian philosophy) etc., at par with the Qur'an. He is in no doubt that Ibn Sina's definition of 'perfection' taken from Aristotle, which conceives perfection as immutability, and Ibn Sina's concept of 'volition' again taken from Aristotle, which force him to deny the attribute of 'Will' for God, his concept of 'Divine Knowledge' as Eternal Self-Knowledge which forces him to deny knowledge of particulars for God, his concept of God as Uncaused Cause and the theory of cause-effect relationship based on it with all its deterministic and other implications were certainly false. He was absolutely sure that a model of the universe consisting of nine heavens as opposite to the Qur'anic model of the universe consisting of seven heavens, could never be true. This strength of faith enables al-Ghazali to identify the flaws, faults and fallacies in Ibn Sina's thought and enlightens him to reformulate these concepts in accordance with teachings of the Qur'an. Al-Ghazali defines Divine Will' as a Dignity of God to take any one of the two absolutely possible but contrary options without any principle of particularization. This definition of 'Will' renders Volition a Dignity for God and rejects the view of perfection as immutability. So establishes the view of God as Creator at Will and Command. Rejecting Ibn Sina's concept of God as Uncaused First Cause on the grounds that the very cosmological argument itself is fallacious for the conclusion does not draw from the premises, al-Ghazali refutes his theory of causation with reference to Aristotle's definition of logical impossibility and falsifies each and every corollary mentioned above of Ibn Sina's theory of cause-effect relationship. Al-Ghazali had firm faith that the Qur'an is the standard of truth. He was so sure that what contradicts with the Qur'an is false. A false argument contains causes of its self-contradiction in itself, the point is only to locate it. Firmness of his faith in the truth of the Qur'an enables al-Ghazali to identify self-contradictions of

Avicenna's thought with little difficulty on the very grounds admitted by Muslim philosophers themselves. Out of this critical examination emerges al-Ghazali's own thought. He views God as Absolute Creator at Will and Command and beyond any resemblance to His creation. Rejecting Muslim philosopher's view which makes universe coeternal with God, Ghazali argues for a specific beginning of the universe in time in the past. He also denies the eternity of *time* and argues that *time* was created with the universe.^{xxiii} Rejecting concept of logical necessity in cause-effect relationship, he offers in place the concept of psychological necessity as cause-effect relationship. Originality, creativity and force of Ghazali's theory of cause-effect relationship can be seen from the fact that he presents this theory in the second half of the 11th century whereas Hume, a modern British philosopher presented the same theory in the second half of the 18th century. Till today same is the case. Modern philosophy and science do not admit the doctrine of logical necessity as nature of relationship between cause and effect. They simply admit it as a rule of the game.^{xxiv} 'Ghazali also argued that neither cause is a unitary event nor it is necessary that an effect always emerges from a single cause. In place al-Ghazali argued that cause is a composite event. In the modern period Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)^{xxv} supported Ghazali in this aspect of his theory of causation nine centuries later than him. Ghazali also falsified Muslim philosophers' principle of 'single effect generating from a single cause.' Ghazali argued that it is quite conceivable that the same effect comes about from more than one causes. Conceiving so does not give rise to any logical contradiction. For example, death is an effect, which can arise from many causes. Mill (1806-1873) a British philosopher and economist of the modern period known especially for his interpretations of empiricism and utilitarianism,^{xxvi} supported Ghazali's view by his doctrine of the plurality of causes.^{xxvii}

This is in real sense the best instance in the history of Muslim thought of what Iqbal perceives as reconstruction of scientific [and philosophical] thought in terms of Qur'anically-informed perspective and a reconstruction of religious thought in terms of scientific [and philosophical] understanding of experience, which as Iqbal believes, will provide us that scientific form of religious knowledge which is essential for that special type of inner experience on which the faith is ultimately based on. Let us examine Iqbal's own case in this perceptive.

Naturalism arising out of Einstein's theory of relativity which sees reality as a space-time continuum taking *time* as a fourth dimension of space, is a modern scientific understanding of experience of the physical world. This brings to the fore the concept of *time* with its implications with reference to *simultaneity*. Bergson, a renowned philosopher of Iqbal's period critically examines implications of Einstein's concept of *time* and refusing to accept it develops his own concept of *time* and of ultimate reality. Bergson conceives ultimate Reality as *Time*. Thus *time* acquires central place in both scientific and philosophical deliberations of Iqbal's period. Biology and psychology also develop in this period and problem of the nature of life, nature of self and its autonomy, and their relationship with *time* come to the fore as center of discussions in these fields. Modernity exposes itself to Iqbal through concepts of *time*, *life*, *self* and *autonomy of self*. Being a Muslim thinker Iqbal aspires to reconstruct these objectifications of modernity in Islamic perspective ultimately to relate this scientific form of religious knowledge to scientific and philosophical understanding of reality. Iqbal gets impressed by Bergsonian concept of *time* as essence of ultimate reality. In psychology introspection as a method for the study of *self*, impresses him and in it he sees the prospects of a philosophy of *self* and of the proof for the existence of God in place of traditional ones which he rejects. The question was how to relate *time* and *self* together. Iqbal conceives self as ego – a thing which conceives itself as 'I-am'. He argues that life and ego-hood cannot be conceived without *time*. *Time* is the essence of everything. When on the analogy of

human ego he conceives God as Absolute Ego, he identifies *time*—as ‘eternal now’ or ‘pure duration’—as the permanent factor in the Being of God. Now he needs something in the Qur’an which could substantiate his above contention. Not finding anything in the Qur’an to this purpose, he turns towards the *tradition (hadith)* where he finds one, on the basis of which rendering God and *Time* identical, he attempts to reconstruct what he calls scientific form of religious knowledge. Can a *tradition* not verified by the Qur’an be a saying of the Prophet (pbuh)! Should such thing bear any authority! Can such approach of harmonizing religion and science be termed a move in the correct direction!

If God is *time* or *time* is essential factor in the Being of God, as Iqbal puts it, then at least Iqbal and Bergson both have been able to discover at least one factor of God’s Being! If God is *time* or *vice versa*, does the *time* not become uncreated and eternal! Does the eternity of *time* not render universe or reality eternal and uncreated! (Without underestimating his intent and effort, it can be safely said that Iqbal’s philosophy, how ingeniously may it be reconstructed, does not essentially differ from Ibn Sina or Sir Seyyed’s attempts.) Thus the other principle, which the fate of this Iqbalian project of reconstruction of religious thought is ultimately based on, is his identification of God with *Time (al-dahr)*. From this identification Dr. Basit Bilal Koshul draws what he calls Iqbal’s Qur’anic-scientific conception of *time*.^{xxviii}

Iqbal’s conception of time and its identification with God

According to Dr. Basit Koshul the intimacy of the relationship between ‘*time*’ and ‘God’ is summarily conveyed by a hadith that Iqbal quotes in which “the Prophet said: Do not vilify *time* for *time* is God.”^{xxix} In order to justify Iqbal’s identification of God with *time*, Dr. Koshul, refers to “the dynamism, creativity, and freedom—to the degree that these are characteristics of *time*, they also are characteristics of God.” Dr. Koshul terms it as the Qur’anic-scientific conception of *time*.^{xxx} In order to support above contentions Dr. Koshul refers to eight passages from the Qur’an i.e. 3:190-1; 2:164; 24:44 and 10:6; 25:62; 31:29; 39:5; 23:80 as mentioned by Iqbal himself to point out that the Qur’an considers *time* to be one of the greatest symbols of God.^{xxxi} Iqbal conceives the real time as pure duration. He conceives God, his Absolute Ego, as the whole of Reality which exists in pure duration. Thus Iqbal asserts “*time* to be an essential element in the being of God.”^{xxxii}

There is a difference between ‘symbol’ and ‘sign’. “One thing, A, is a sign of another thing B, if A refers to B in some way or other. [And] there are different ways in which one thing can refer to another thing. But one thing A is a symbol of B if it is identical with B or some essential aspect of B. For example mathematical symbols are symbols not signs. In Islamic religious numerology the figure 786 is a symbol of the formula *Bismi-Allahi*. Basit Bilal is right in rendering Iqbal’s assertion which sees “*time* to be an essential element in the being of God.” as “Time is a greatest symbol of God.” But in our view Iqbal’s assertion and its rendering by Dr. Koshul both are absolutely un-Qur’anic. The correct thing would be to say that “*Time* is a sign of God.” as mentioned in the following verses: “Everything in the heavens and earth belongs to God. God is self-sufficient and worthy of all praise. If all the trees on earth were pens and all the seas, with seven more seas besides, [were ink,] still God’s words [kalimâtullah –signs] would not run out: God is almighty and all wise.” (Q, 31:27)

Since this study does not consist in an exclusive examination of Iqbal’s *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* so it is not possible to give a fuller examination of his work. Suffice it is to say that if his identification of God with Time is verified from the Qur’an, implications—teleological or whatever—drawn by Iqbal on the basis of this principle are most likely to be

accepted to be an ingenious attempt in the right direction. But if it is otherwise, shall anyone be unjustified if he considers this attempt too, like those made by Ibn Sina and then by Sir Seyyed Ahmed Khan, not rightly-directed, and the implications thereof as wrongful. Let us examine this Iqbalian principle and Dr. Koshul's attempt to justify it.

This tradition occurs in five versions, all narrated by Hazrat Abu Huraira (r.a.). First and fourth versions clearly deny any identification between God and time. The second and the third version can be interpreted in both ways. Whereas the last version very clearly identifies Allah with time. Leaving the first four versions aside Iqbal chooses the last version. *Following are the various versions of the above mentioned tradition:*

"(i) The Prophet (pbuh) said: Allah says: Man vilifies time, whereas time is in My Hand. I control the day and night."

(ii) The Prophet (pbuh) said: Allah says: Man tortures Me when he vilifies time, whereas I Myself am Time; I alter the day and night."

(iii) The Prophet (pbuh) said: Allah says: Man tortures Me when he says: Woe to the Time! So none of you should say "Woe to the Time for I Myself am Time; I bring the day and night. I will suspend their coming if I would feel like."

(iv) The Prophet (pbuh) said: Allah says: None of you should say, "Woe to the time; for time is in My Hand."

(v) The Prophet (pbuh) said: Allah says: Do not vilify Time, for Allah is Time." xxxiii

The Qur'an consists of 6238 verses. The text of the Qur'an is historically intact and throughout centuries the one and the same text in one and the same arrangement of verses and *surahs* is prevalent all over the world. So it is not difficult to examine whether this alleged 'Qur'anic-scientific conception of time' derives anywhere from the Qur'an!

The word '*ad-dahr*' (meaning '*time*') is an Arabic word and occurs only at the following two places in the Qur'an:

- i) Those who have taken their own desires as their god, those whom God lets to stray in the face of knowledge, sealing their ears and hearts and covering their eyes, they say: *"There is only our life in this world: we die, we live, nothing but time [ad-dahr] destroys us. They have no knowledge of this; they only follow conjecture."* (Q, 45:24)
- ii) Inviting man towards pondering over his own self, it has been said in Surah *Al-Insân* of the Qur'an (which is also known as Surah *Ad-Dahr*) that: *"Was there not a period of time [ad-dahr] when man was nothing to speak of!"* (76:01)

Out of the five different versions of the same tradition Iqbal picks up one which explicitly contradicts with the Qur'anic teachings. Let us now examine the eight passages of the Qur'an pointed out by Iqbal himself on the basis of which Dr. Koshul justifies what he calls Iqbal's Qur'anic-scientific conception of time.

1. *In the creation of the heavens and earth; in the alternation of night and day; in the ships that sail the seas with goods for people; in the water which God sends down from the sky to give life to the earth when it has been barren, scattering all kinds of creatures over it; in the changing of the winds and clouds that run their appointed courses between the sky and earth: there are signs in all these for those who use their minds.* (2:164)
2. *Control of the heavens and earth belongs to God; God has power over everything. There truly are signs in the creation of the heavens and earth, and in the alternation of night and day, for those with understanding; who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down, who reflect on the creation of the heavens and earth: 'Our Lord! You have*

not created all this without purpose—You are far above that!— so protect us from the torment of the Fire. (3:189-91)

3. *God alternates night and day— there truly is a lesson in [all] this for those who have eyes to see. (24:44)*
4. *In the succession of night and day, and in what God created in the heavens and earth, there truly are signs for those who are aware of Him. (10:6)*
5. *It is He who made the night and day follow each other— so anyone who wishes may be mindful or show gratitude. (25:62)*
6. *[Prophet], do you not see that God causes the night to merge into day and the day to merge into night; that He has subjected the sun and the moon, each to run its course for a stated term; that He is aware of everything you [people] do? (31:29)*
7. *He created the heavens and earth for a true purpose; He wraps the night around the day and the day around the night; He has subjected the sun and moon to run their courses for an appointed time; He is truly the Mighty, the Forgiving. (39:5)*
8. *It is He who gives life and death; the alternation of night and day depends on Him; will you not use your minds? (23:80)*

Is there even a slightest justification for taking *ad-dahr* to mean Allah at any of these places? Absolutely not. Can anybody else know the Being of God better than God Himself? Absolutely not. When Allah Almighty has not used the word '*ad-dahr*' for Himself, on what authority Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Dr. Basit Balal Koshul or anybody else can hold Allah and '*ad-dahr*' [time] identical? The Qur'an forbids the believers from ascribing anything not based on authority, to Allah. The Qur'an calls it concoction (*iftrâ*). The Qur'an says: "*So who does more wrong than he who fabricates lies against Allah with no authority in knowledge in order to lead people astray? God does not guide the evildoers.*" (6:144) The status of authority lies with the Qur'an as the Qur'an says: *Those who do not judge according to Allah's revelation disbelieve Allah's revelations. (5:44) Those who do not judge according to what Allah has revealed are doing grave wrong. (5:45) Those who do not judge according to what Allah has revealed are lawbreakers. (5:47)*

It is absolutely clear from the above verses of the Qur'an that the Qur'an gives no support to the contention that God is *time* or that *time* is God. To consider *time* to be one of the greatest symbols of God is one thing and to consider "dynamism, creativity, and freedom—to the degree that these are characteristics of time, they also are characteristics of God" is the same as to identify God and *time* which Qur'an does not endorse.

To translate *Sunnat Allah* as *habit* of Allah is also incorrect. Allah is not bound by anything like *habits*. He is Absolutely Free and Willing Person. He has placed patterns and harmonies in nature but laws of nature are subservient to His Will, His Will is not subservient to the laws of nature. How highly Iqbal evaluates this supposition can be seen from the fact that according to him this view has the potential of investing science with new meaning and significance.^{xxxiv} He observes this when he says: "The knowledge of Nature is the knowledge of God's behavior. In our observation of Nature we are virtually seeking a kind of intimacy with the Absolute Ego, and this is only another form of worship."^{xxxv} Let us examine the verses 33:62, 35:43, 48:23 of the Qur'an which he claims to endorse the above idea.

Prophet, tell your wives, your daughters, and women believers to make their outer garments hang low over them so as to be recognized and not insulted: God is most forgiving, most merciful. If the hypocrites, the sick at heart, and those who spread lies in the city do not desist, We shall rouse you [Prophet] against them, and then they will only be your neighbours in this city for a short while. They will be rejected. Wherever they are found, they will be arrested and

put to death. This has been God's practice with those who went before. You will find no change in God's practices. (33:59-62)

[The idolaters] swore their most solemn oath that, if someone came to warn them, they would be more rightly guided than any [other] community, but when someone did come they turned yet further away, became more arrogant in the land, and intensified their plotting of evil— the plotting of evil only rebounds on those who plot. Do they expect anything but what happened to earlier people? You will never find any change in God's practice; you will never find any deviation there. (35:42-43)

If the disbelievers had fought against you, they would have taken flight and found no one to protect or support them: such was God's practice in the past and you will find no change in God's practices. (48:22-23)

The whole Iqbalian project of reconciliation of science and religion is based on purging modern scientific thought from materialistic, mechanistic, and reductionist philosophical concepts by replacing them with so-called Qur'anic-scientific concepts of Nature and Time through the above mentioned two presuppositions. We have placed all the references from the Qur'an for an intelligent reader to decide the worth of this attempt by himself.

Some Contemporary Scholars

Blending "Creation" and "Evolution" together—Dr. Israr Ahmed

Following the same track Dr. Israr Ahmed (1932 – 2010) writes a Booklet *Ijâd-o-Ibdâ' i 'Alam sey 'Almi Nizam-e-Khilazfat tak Tanazzal-w-Irtiqâ' kay Maraḥil* rendered into English by his younger brother, the renowned philosopher and religious scholar, Dr. Absar Ahmed (b. 1945) by the title *The Process of Creation: A Qur'anic Perspective*.^{xxxvi} In Dr. Absar Ahmed's words "In this tract Dr. Israr Ahmed, by collecting and collating references primarily from Qur'an and Hadith, has endeavored to put forth a theory which in essence blends "Creation" and "Evolution" together into one harmonious thread." Dr. Absar Ahmed further says: "The thrust of the venture is on presenting the Qur'anic position on questions pertaining to the realms of existence as distinct yet overlapping phases of creation and evolution, all brought into effect by the Omnipotent God the Qur'an calls Allah."^{xxxvii} He further observes: "Dr. Israr Ahmed puts in bold relief the ontological dualism of man by emphasizing the evolutionary process only in the physical part of man."^{xxxviii}

Dr. Israr Ahmed states the problem in the following words: "According to Islamic theistic belief, only Allah is the 'Necessary Being' and the 'Eternal Being'."^{xxxix} In "stark contrast, the vast expanse of space and time and the sum total of creation and existence (including human beings) are only 'potentialities', 'possibilities', and 'contingencies'. While there can be no dispute regarding these two beliefs, the process by which 'probability' emerged from 'Necessity' and 'contingency' from 'Eternity' remains a topic of debate and contestation among the theologians."^{xl} In response to this issue Dr. Israr Ahmed says: "In this booklet, we will try to unravel the cosmogenesis unfolded by a deeper reflection on the highly subtle and profoundly significant Qur'anic verses and its convergence with certain points of modern cosmological, astrophysical and biological thought."^{xli}

The fault of Dr. Israr Ahmad's thinking is manifest in the above para in his use of terms like 'probability as opposite to necessity' and 'contingency [*haduth*] as opposite to eternity [*qidm*']'. The above mentioned terms used by Dr. Israr Ahmad are formulated in Greek metaphysics which is absolutely different from the Qur'anic metaphysics. These are polar concepts and applicable to entities

belonging to the same order of reality. Qur'anic ontology consists of three categories: God, the Creation (*khalq*), and Command (*amr*). God is Supremely Unique. He is beyond all determinations and beyond any likeness or analogy to the orders of *khalq* or *amr*. Whatever is other than God, belongs either to the category of *khalq* or to the category of His *amr*. Neither *khalq* nor *amr* partake in the Divinity of God. The point is that when you take an un-Qur'anic notion (*i.e.*, a mistaken notion) about God or His attributes, and try to read it in the Qur'an, you cannot avoid facing inconsistencies.^{xlii} No Good-Name of God in Muslim tradition amounts to the concept of 'eternity', 'timelessness', 'immutability', 'perfection' and 'un-caused cause'. Muslims borrowed these un-Qur'anic notions from Greeks either directly or through Christians.^{xliii} In Christian tradition the concept of eternity has been identified in two senses: everlastingness and timelessness; and neither of the two is applicable to the Qur'anic God. To make the point more clear let us see an example from the problem of the relation of Divine Essence and Attributes discussed in Muslim Kalam. There is no concept of any bifurcation of Allah into His Essence and Attributes in Qur'anic metaphysics. It was only when the Muslims mistakenly accepted from the Christians the Aristotelian concept of 'attribute'/'*ṣifah*', they got entangled into mistaken notions and formulated the problem of the relation of the Divine Essence and Attributes which genuinely could not arise had they stuck to the Qur'anic notion of *Ism* (اسم, Name). And the same problem when stretched further, reproduced the problem of the createdness vs. eternity of the Qur'an.^{xliv}

Basic supposition of Dr. Israr Ahmed's thesis

The nutshell of Dr. Israr Ahmed's attempt is that "the word '*Kun*' or '*Be*', the verbal imperative of Allah, is the basis and catalyst through which the process of Genesis or the event of Creation was initiated and that whenever Allah decides on a matter, it is sufficient for Him to utter this verbal imperative and the matter is done."^{xlv}

By a quite unjustified move he translates the Word '*KUN*' or '*Be*' the verbal imperative of Allah into "*Kalimah tu Allah*". The translation of verses 2:117, 3:47, 19:35, 40:68, 16:40, 36:82 referred to by Dr. Israr Ahmed, themselves refer to the Word *KUN* as Command (*amr*) and not the *KALIMA*. We will quote just one of these here. "...*The (nature) of His amr is such that when He wills a thing to be, He but says to it, "Be" ... and it is.*" (Yaseen, 36:82) The right rendering of the Word "*KUN*" is Command, and not the *KALIMA* (*i.e.*, statement). Allah Himself does not call the Word *KUN* as "*Kalimah tu Allah*" as He calls Hazrat Isa (pbuh) as "*Kalimatum minho*".^{xlvi}

Dr. Israr Ahmed further identifies the "*Kalimah tu Allah*" (with reference to verse nos. 17:109, and 31:27) with every single created being; hence every single being representing the manifestation of a Divine Imperative '*Be*'. If each single created being would need the expression of the Divine Word '*Be*' then there will be no species, no organization, classification or laws of nature etc. in the universe. So with reference to verse 87:1-3 Dr. Israr Ahmed identifies 'Laws of Nature' or the 'Physical Laws' as the manifestation of Allah's promise of 'apportioning' and 'guiding' in the realm of inanimate matter, 'biological laws' in the sphere of biology and the 'instincts' in the sphere of animal life, and rules of logic in the realm of human beings. And beyond this normal functioning of the created order there is nothing but 'Revelation'.^{xlvii} (p. 12) Thus 'normal functioning of the created order does not require any additional expression of the Divine Word "*Be!*" "But wherever there is a need to alter the normal functioning of the created order ---- to alter the normal chain of 'cause and effect' in order that a special Divine Decree is enacted then there is the need for a new Divine Word "*Be!*".^{xlviii} Thus identifying and translating the Word '*KUN*' into *Kalimah tu Allah* Dr. Israr Ahmed enters into an endless process of drawing implications from this apparently illegitimate move. Then he explains the creation of angels, human souls, jinni and whatever else in a manner reminiscent of mythological period in human

civilization. Why is this illegitimate move, can be made clear by looking into the Ash'arite attempt to solve the problem of the "createdness vs. un-createdness of the Qur'an" as a parallel case.^{xlix}

"The Mu'tazilites believed that the Holy Qur'an is 'created' and 'contingent'. Some believed that the Holy Qur'an was initially created on the preserved tablet (*lohim-mahfūz*) in non-verbal form which after its revelation took the form in which it is recited; some of them believed that it was created during its revelation. They argued that the belief in an uncreated and eternal Qur'an was opposed to the belief in the Oneness of God. They did not deny the Qur'an to be the 'Word of Allah', however they denied its uncreatedness and eternity."ⁱ Ash'arites believed the Qur'an to be 'Word of Allah'. (9:06) They argued that the 'Word of Allah' could not be created and contingent. Referring to verse 54 of surah al-A'râf which says that "... *all Creation and Command belong to Him*."ⁱⁱ 'Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari argued that 'Creation' and 'Command' are two different categories. From verse 25 of surah ar-Rûm which says that: "...*Among His signs, too, is the fact that the heavens and the earth stand firm by His Command*."ⁱⁱⁱ he argued that Allah's Word belongs to the category of His Command (*amr*), and His Creation (*khalq*) stands firm by His Command. The Qur'an is Allah's Word, so it belongs to the category of 'Command'. He further argues that it is necessary that the 'Command' precedes 'Creation'; for if some other 'Command' is perceived to precede the 'Command', it will again be a 'Command'; and infinite regress makes everything unintelligible. Al-Ash'ari further argues: "That as inherent in Allah's Attribute of *Kalâm*, Allah's Word (*Kalam Ullah*) was with God from ever as Unarticulated Speech (*kalam-i nafsi*). So the Qur'an is uncreated and eternal (*qadîm*) in its essence. At the beginning of the creation this was placed on the Preserved Tablet as 'Pre-existent Qur'an' where it remained till its revelation in articulated form (*kalam-i lafzi*)."^{liii}

The ideas of the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites both did not correspond to the Qur'anic teachings. However the case of Ash'arites is more appropriate to refer here. Declaring *Kalamullah* inherent in Allah's Attribute of Speech and drawing the conclusion that Allah's Word (*Kalamullah*) was with God from ever as Unarticulated Speech (*kalam-i nafsi*), was like Dr. Israr Ahmad's an illegitimate move. It was equivalent to the incarnation of the Divine Attribute of Speech in the form of the Qur'an. This will make the Qur'an co-eternal with God partaking in His Divinity.

Dr. Israr's relevance with the above instance is that referring to the four verses mentioned above and "numerous others addressing the same theme" he says that

"...and the conclusion to be derived from this is that, whenever Allah decides on a matter, it is sufficient for Him to utter the verbal imperative "*KUN*" (*i.e.*, Be!) and the matter is done."

He further says:

"...the "Word of Allah" [?] is all that is needed in order to bring a thing or event into being."

It is here that Dr. Israr Ahmed replaces what he calls 'the verbal imperative of Allah' by 'Word of Allah' or '*Kalima* of Allah'. He himself admits that "The relationship between the "*Kalima* of Allah" and bringing of a thing or event into being has a direct bearing on the issue of interpreting the meaning of '*kalimah*'." At the same time he further admits that "The Qur'an repeatedly refers to the legal injunctions, individual and social moral decrees, judicial decisions, and ordained laws set by Allah as the *Kalimaat* or "Words" of Allah, as all of these matters are indeed the outcome of

the “Word of Allah”.^{liv} [This sentence can safely be translated into the following: “That the ‘Words of Allah’ are the outcome of the ‘Word of Allah’.” Does it say anything!] He goes further and with reference to verses 17:109 and 31:27 identifies every single thing and matter in the created order with “Words of my Lord” and then with the verbal imperative ‘Be!’ by holding it as manifestation of the verbal imperative ‘Be!’ This entire booklet is a meaningless quibble of such utterly confused talk.

Dr. Israr Ahmad’s work relates to the interpretation of some verses of the Qur’an. Let us see what guidance the Qur’an gives concerning it. According to the verse: *It is He, Who has sent down this Book on you. Some verses thereof are Imperative [Muḥkamât]. These be the Mother of the Book [Umm ul Kitab i.e., foundation of the Book]. And others are Allegorical [Mutashabihât]. Then, those in whose hearts is perversity, follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it interpretation. And none knows its interpretation save Allah. And those firmly rooted in knowledge say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord...*(03:07) The Qur’an consists of two kinds of verses: the imperative (*Muhkamat*) and the allegorical (*Mutashabihat*). The imperatives (*Muhkamat*) are those verses that are directly in the form of commandments. The allegorical (*Mutashabihat*) are the verses that, on reading or listening, render an obligation on the reader or the listener according to that statement. Only the imperatival verses (*Muhkamat*) of the Qur’an are called the “Mother of the Book” (*Umm ul Kitab*). Some verses can clearly be categorized as imperatival and some others as allegorical, while the remaining others can be categorized on the basis of already established set of imperatival verses. The imperatival verses are the standard in any decision. These are the foundation of the Book. Whatever is to be inferred from the allegorical verses is necessarily to be verified by and be coherent with the imperatival verses. If otherwise, the interpretation is false.^{lv} Does Dr. Israr Ahmad follows this commandment in this enterprise!

Let us see the implications of Dr. Israr Ahmad’s enterprise for the development of science in Muslims. Does this theorizing adds any factual improvement in any present scientific theory of the origin of the world (*i.e.*, big-bang theory), or gives a new theory on the origin of the world parallel to the prevalent scientific theories! Or does it give a new and better approach to the scientific investigations! Does this effort introduce a scientifically verifiable kind of a new theory about the status of laws of nature or laws governing social changes? Does it contain any concrete suggestion for the development of science in accordance with Qur’anic teachings!

Dr. Israr Ahmed, Dr. Zafar Ishaq Ansari (1932 – 2016) and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b. 1925)

Dr. Israr Ahmed, Dr. Zafar Ishaq Ansari and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan are among those who trace the reason of Muslim’s lagging behind in science in improper understanding of Allah Almighty injunction “Say [O Prophet!]: If you aspire Allah’s love, then follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving Merciful” (3:31) They think that a Muslim scientist does not do research openly and courageously for he fears lest anywhere he defies this injunction. The solution they offer is in the shape of their classification of the person of the Prophet (pbuh) into various facets of authority, asserting his messenger-ship only one among these aspects and maintaining that he (pbuh) is to be followed only in this respect; and even in this respect he (pbuh) is to be followed in matters pertaining to religion alone and not in matters pertaining to mundane world. Referring to a tradition concerning the date-palm. We have critically

examined this view in our article “The Way of *Shahidīn*: The Construction of a Qur’anic Theology of Sufism in *Tafseer e Fâzli*” included in this book, where it can be seen.

Scientific Interpretation of the Qur’an

Maurice Bucaille (1920-98)

“The concern of this position is not to find an Islamic epistemological base for science nor is [it] concerned with moral or ethical issues of modern scientific research. People relating to this position are simply interested in correlating certain scientific “facts” with the Qur’anic verses.” “Since the publication of the English translation of his book, *La Bible, le Coran et la Science* (1976) as *The Bible, the Qur’an and Science* (1978), [by] Bucaille ...several studies have been devoted to “prove” the divine origin of the Qur’an on the basis that the Qur’an contains certain scientific facts which were unknown to humanity at the time of its revelation.”^{lvi}

One can support his contentions with such other references but to make the Divine origin of the Qur’an dependent on certain scientific facts will not be the right approach. Bucaille is well aware of it. Bucaille does not state that the Qur’an is a book of science, but that modern science can clarify and give the full meaning of certain verses of the Qur’an. He offers a very fruitful idea in his writings that ‘established scientific facts’ should be distinguished from ‘scientific theories’. He is absolutely sure of the divine origin of the Qur’an that he asserts that an ‘established scientific fact’ has never contradicted with the Qur’an, nor shall it contradict it ever. This is a very important point and this author has used it in reformulating his own paradigm.^{lvii}

IIIT, Ijmali School, School of Sacred Science

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (b. 1933)

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (b. 1933) has advanced the notion of a “Sacred Science”. He has untiringly advocated a reconstruction of Islamic scientific thought on the basis of the revealed knowledge. He attempts to outline the philosophical foundation of a sacred science which will not be based on conquering nature but which will attempt to function within the limits set by Divine Commands.^{lviii} But no solid results have been come about. As will become clear, the fault lies in his paradigm. Basic points of Nasr’s paradigm can be stated as follows:

- (i) Man is a theomorphic being (God-like). He believes that man is made on the image of God. [The Qur’an says: “Not is to His likeness.” (42:11)]
 - (ii) ‘Every revealed religion contains within itself “the Truth” and means of attaining the Truth.’ Every revealed i.e., orthodox and integral religion possesses ultimately two essential elements, the Doctrine and the Method. They all possess the Doctrine though they differ in doctrinal language; they all possess the Method, though they differ depending upon their traditional climates.
- [The way the Qur’an teaches to the Muslims for arguing with the People of the Book is that “they will not affirm anything said by them nor will they deny it; but they will say what Allah has revealed is truth. (29:46)^{lix}] Allah say: **لِّلْعَالَمِينَ** ۝ “It is not but the Advice for whole humanity.”(Q, 68:52) Our view is that nothing except the Qur’an can bring the whole humanity together. Nothing less than the absolute truth can entertain the status of authority; and

it is the Qur'an about which it has been said in the Qur'an: **إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ فَصْلٍ**. This truly is a decisive statement. (Q, 86:13) Those who do not believe the Qur'an to be the Advice for whole humanity, it is they who consider world religions to be the different ways of truth and human welfare. These, too, belie the Qur'an. Allah knows the beliers of truth.

Does Nasr not defy this injunction! He does not stop here, he includes Hinduism and Buddhism among orthodox and integral religions. Can he support this from the Qur'an!

- (iii) Only God is 'Real', 'Absolutely Real' or 'the Absolute'. 'The world' and for that matter 'man' and everything in the world is but 'the relative' or 'the relatively real' for it only 'appears to be real'.

[This distinction is un-Qur'anic. For detailed study see Abdul Hafeez Fâzli, "The Construction of a Qur'anic Theology of Sufism in Tafsir-e-Fâzli" included in this book.]

- (iv) From Absolutely Real to the relatively real, there are grades of reality and degrees of universal existence.

[This is Un-Qur'anic. Allah is the Absolute Originator of all the grades of reality and is Supremely Singular, Unique, and Alone.]

- (v) Method is a way of, a) concentrating upon the Real, b) of attaching oneself to the Absolute, c) living according to the Will of Heaven in accordance with the purpose and meaning of human existence.^{lx}

- (vi) Nasr calls his position 'Traditionalist School'. 'Tradition' for him denotes whatever is sacred. Everything received by man through revelation and by unfolding of revelation is sacred. As compared to it philosophy and all manmade sciences, technology, arts and civilization evolved out of it are profane and un-natural. Nasr asserts that the purpose of wisdom and the sacred science is to discover and unfold sacred aspect of nature, affirm oneness and inter-relatedness in nature. He aspires to develop a science which grants spiritual perfection to its seeker.

- (vii) Nasr's whole philosophy consist of very unfamiliar, vague, ambiguous and complicated terms derived from different religions, traditions, languages and philosophies. Some of these are as follows:

Tradition, sapiential dimentions, symbolism, sophhia perennis, philosophia perennis, traditional wisdom= al-hikma= theosophy, macrocosmos, microcosmos, prima materia, alchemy, alhorizontal, vertical, doctrine, method etc. [Our view is that to devise terms in *Dîn* is conspiracy against *Dîn*. The Holy Qur'an narrates its content in easy to understand language. (Q 54: 17, 22, 32, 40) Nasr is among scholars who idealize philosophy and try to convert *Dîn* into philosophy. We examined some other views of Seyyed Hossein Nasr in our article mentioned above.^{lxi}

Seyyed Hosein Nasr has never been able to practically develop any sacred science, wisdom or technology better than, equal to or comparable with the western science and philosophy, that can grant perfection to the seekers of knowledge except some positive talk on ecology. According to our view nothing sacred could be developed on the basis of doubtful and confused premises and vague and complicated terminologies.

Ijmali School of thought ----- Ziauddin Sardar (b. 1951)

Ijmali School of thought was a heterogeneous group of scholars who denied the objectivity of science and said that it was a cultural activity and connected to scientist and his worldview. Led by Ziauddin Sardar as its chief propounder, it failed to offer any paradigm and has long been dissolved. (Dr. Munawar A. Anees, one of its significant proponents, presently associated with the University of Management and Tecnology Pakistan, no more owns it as a genuine approach.) Sardar sums up in 12 short points what he thinks Nasr is telling us in his books. Leif Stenberg rightly thinks that they do expose some of the basic presuppositions underlying the ideas of both Sardar and Nasr. These points are as follows:

1. "All religions, including secular worldviews such as Buddhism [sic] are the same at a certain level of reality.
2. Pythagorean cult, neo-Platonism, and other ancient esoteric mythologies are the basis of Islamic metaphysics.
3. The Zoroastrian notion of a world perpetually in motion between the forces of light and darkness is a part of the Islamic metaphysical system.
4. The Hindu notion of a cyclic time, reincarnation and karma are also an integral part of Islamic metaphysical system.
5. Gnostics are somehow superior beings who know the truth.
6. Islamic cosmology is essentially a combination of gnosticism and occultism.
7. The history of Islamic sciences is basically a history of astrology and magic, numerology and alchemy, sacred geography and geometry, gnosis and Greek mystical mythology.
8. Islamic science has nothing to do with practical realm; it is a purely abstract form of mysticism.
9. Islamic science is divorced from ethics.
10. The goal of Islamic science is unity, but in science the unity is so all pervasive that there is no distinction the Creator and the created (*wahdat al-wajud*); it is certainly an elusive goal.
11. Islamic science is the study of ontological reality.
12. Islamic science is hierarchical, which means that it must submit to the authority of the gnostics and others who know the truth so that the correct esoteric interpretation can be given to Islamic science."^{lxii}

Nasr's critique of other perspectives is not direct. He seldom explicitly mentions persons, movements or regimes of which he is critical. However, in response to Sardar's criticism, Nasr's view as summed up by Leif Stenberg is as follows:

"Nasr's opinion is that Sardar is badly informed about the content of the various philosophical traditions within Islam in a historical as well as a contemporary perspective. In his eyes, Sardar is unable to make correct interpretation of Islamic traditions."^{lxiii}

The Position of IIIT [International Institute of Islamic Thought]

"The Position of IIIT [International Institute of Islamic Thought] is based on the premises that Muslim Ummah is in a state of malaise; the roots of this malaise are to be found in influences from a world of ideas based on a vision foreign to Islam." "According to this Position, the fundamental premises for establishing an Islamic science are based on the worldview which recognizes that the Word of God is relevant in each and every sphere of human activity, that God has created this universe with a purpose and has made Man his vice-regent for an appointed term.

The model and example to be followed is that of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Nature is not to be exploited but should be understood and treated as a trust given to him by the Creator.”^{lxiv}

They too have not been able to give a solid proposal or paradigm which could accelerate the scientific study of nature (physical as well as social) as worship of Allah as visualized by Sir Seyyed Ahmed Khan, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Dr. Israr Ahmed and many others. To underestimate the sincerity, honesty, acumen and devotion of the scholars or the schools of thought (including Avicenna and al-Ghazali both) who have been grappling with the problem since centuries, will be indecent and unbecoming. Rather we should be grateful to them for identifying the significance of the problem, devoting their lives and capabilities in working its solution and for the hardships suffered by them with perseverance. Nor have we any right to underrate their intentions for only Allah knows the intentions. Through this study we have tried to play our part, as per our ability and with no claim of finality, in enlightening the truth and to take the torch of knowledge ahead.

Analysis and Examination

Purpose of this study is not to underestimate the efforts of those who understand the significance of working out the principles of relationship between revealed knowledge and manmade knowledge in Islam. Rather the purpose is to take their work ahead. In the case of Sir Seyyed Ahmad Khan it is stressed that the very principle “The Work of God overrides the Word of God” is not correct. By ‘Word of God’ he means the knowledge based on the interpretation of the Qur’an. What he calls ‘The Work of God’ is actually nothing other than the theories of science and the world view based on the scientific study of nature along with philosophical investigation about nature. This is what we have called manmade knowledge. If these two spheres of knowledge dispute on some matter, which one of the two will override? If it is maintained, as Khan does, that in case of conflict between the Word of God and the Work of God, the later will take precedence, while the former will be interpreted metaphorically to accord with it, it simply means making the Qur’an subservient to prevalent science. This study does not consider raising this question a right approach to the matter. The right approach to this matter should be: ‘What is the appropriate theological principle for relating revealed knowledge with the manmade knowledge?’

This principle that “The Work of God overrides the Word of God.” is not something new introduced the first time by Sir Seyyed Ahmad Khan. Ptolemaic cosmology consisting of nine heavens was the scientific worldview of Ibn Sina’s times as Newtonian cosmology without any concept of heavens presented the scientific world view of Sir Seyyed Ahmad Khan’s time. Aristotelian philosophy with uncaused First Cause as its concept of God, denial of Will as Attribute of God, logical necessity as its concept of cause-effect relationship, dualistic metaphysics with its primordial concept of matter etc., was the philosophy of Ibn Sina’s times as Newtonian naturalism with its infinite space, absolute time, closed, mechanically self-regulating universe (instead of an organised and Divinely administered universe) was the philosophy of Seyyed Ahmad Khan’s times. Ibn Sina reinterpreted the Word of God to make it compatible with the dictates of Ptolemaic Science and Aristotelian philosophy as Seyyed Ahmad Khan did to harmonise it with Newtonian cosmology and naturalism. The same is true for Iqbal and his followers with the difference that Einsteinian cosmology and naturalism take the place of prevalent

science and philosophy. Iqbal accepts Einsteinian concept of time as fourth dimension of space. Under the influence of Bergsonian criticism of Einsteinian concept of time, Iqbal gets impressed by Bergson's concept of time (as pure duration) as the ultimate nature of reality. For the construction of religious knowledge in scientific form he needs to identify Pure Duration with Allah. Here he finds an alleged prophetic tradition, in literal meaning though overwhelmingly incompatible with the Qur'an, but suited to his purpose of bringing about what he calls 'a scientific form of religious knowledge'. He accepts it. Thus he prefers the Bergsonian philosophical reconstruction of Einstein's concept of *time* over the Word of God.

The standards of rationality change as the science and philosophy change. The Qur'an, the embodiment of revealed knowledge, is the standard of truth for all times to come. The question is why it is necessary for the Muslims to metaphorically or analogically interpret and reinterpret every now and then in each scientific epoch to prove that the Qur'an is compatible with the manmade knowledge! Ptolemaic science based on Aristotelian philosophical speculations, believed in nine heavens. There is no concept of heavens in Newton or in Einstein. Should we suspend our belief in the existence of seven heavens until science ever comes to prove it! While drowning, Pharaoh pronounces faith in the Lord of Hazrat Musâ and Hazrat Hâroon (Peace be upon them.). Allah says: "It is not accepted now. We shall preserve your dead body so that the coming generations take lesson." (Q, 10:91-92) No one knew about the dead body of Pharaoh at the time of revelation till it was discovered in the last quarter of the 19th century. Should the Muslims suspend their belief in the contents of this verse till that time! Should they suspend their beliefs in many other things relating scientific facts till they are ever confirmed by science or philosophy! Shall a Muslim be held answerable for believing or not believing the correctness of Darwin's or Lamarck's theory of evolution, or a big-bang theory of the creation of the universe in the Hereafter!

Conclusion

This study argues that while discussing problem of the relationship of science (& philosophy) with Islam following points should be kept in mind:

1. It should be accepted that Word of Allah (al-haqq) alone is the standard of truth in all matters and for all times to come.
 - i) Allah has taken upon Him to ensure its protection.
 - ii) Allah pronounces it as a Book which is best of all narrations (*Ahsanul Biyan*). So it is consistent *par excellence*. Seeing contradiction in it proves one's own inability.
 - iii) All verses of it are to be categorized into two kinds only: The Imperative and the Allegorical. The Imperative verses are the foundation of the Book; only that interpretation of the Allegorical verses will be true which is consistent with the former ones.
2. The Qur'an is authority over *hadith* and not the *vice versa*.
 - i) Validity of a tradition will be judged on the touchstone of the Qur'an. It is necessary for a valid *hadith* to be compatible with the imperative verses. Only that interpretation of a *hadith* will be correct which is consistent with the imperative verses.

- ii) The Qur'an is *Hukam* (Imperative) (13:37) and the Hadith is implementation of *Hukam*. *Hukam* is universal and the implementation always conforms to time, place and quantity/ number.
3. It should be kept in mind that the theories of science (natural, rational, biological, social or whatever) and the intellectual view of reality (philosophical theories) are closely interlinked. Either a scientific theory is embedded in a philosophical worldview or a worldview gives rise to a theory.
 - (i) 'Established facts of science' should be differentiated from 'the theories of science.' 'Established facts of science' are the one time theories of science which have been scientifically verified and have become facts. It should be made absolutely clear to a Muslim that until and unless anything establishes as a scientific fact, it will only be a conjecture even if it is a so-called well-accredited theory.
 - (ii) It should also be made absolutely clear on a Muslim that an 'established scientific fact' can never contradict with the Qur'an (the Word of the Creator of Everything.) No instance from the past can be presented to refute this assertion. Keeping this difference in mind a Muslim can go to any level of study or research in science.
 - (iii) Let us see the instances:
 - (a) There was a time when the earth's being round was not an established fact. It was just a scientific theory. The invention of supersonic aircrafts and satellites irrevocably proved it to be an established fact. The earth's being round is no more a theory, but an established scientific fact.
 - (b) Whether the matter was only divisible into very small units of matter (*i.e.*, atoms) or it was infinitely divisible was a question, before the rise of modern science, to be answered by philosophical speculations and had given rise to many theories. Now matter's divisibility into atoms, breakable but not further divisible into smaller material particles, is an established scientific fact.
 - (c) There were various scientific theories regarding the nature of energy. The inter-convertibility of matter and energy is now an established scientific fact.
 4. That scientific worldviews are only scientifically supported cosmological theories regarding the nature and structure of reality. Ptolemaic worldview prevailed for sixteen centuries, Newtonian worldview prevailed for two centuries. If the theories in the past were replaced by other theories, present ones may also be replaced. It should be made clear on a Muslim that holding an opinion about a scientific or philosophical worldview *e.g.*, Ptolemaic, Avicennian, Newtonian, Einsteinian, or Bergsonian unless it contradicts with an explicit teaching of the Qur'an, has nothing to do with faith. The same applies to holding an opinion about a theory of the origin of species.
 5. A scientific theory relates to some specific aspect of the universe for example: theory of causation, theory of gravitation, theory of quantum mechanics, theory of the origin of the world (*i.e.*, big-bang etc.), or theories of the origin of life or origin of species. The same is true regarding theories of social change, political administration or governance etc. These are all human attempts to understand and discover the laws of social change, political administration and better governance and have the status of intelligent conjectures. Theories may be considered well-accredited or not well-accredited, yet they are theories only. They give us a control on nature. There is nothing unlawful in using them in

accordance with the principle of innovation for a better control on forces of nature and society for the best interest of humanity. The benefit of mankind is how much dear to Allah is evident from verse 13: 17 where developing a similitude of *al-ḥaqq* and *al-bāṭil* Allah says: *Al-ḥaqq* is to remain on the earth for it benefits the mankind; *al-bāṭil* is to pass away like foam that scum on the bank.

6. According to the Qur'an laws of nature are subservient to Allah's Omnipotence and not the *vice versa*. The universe is not an absolutely mechanical system, it is a systematically organized but administered universe.
 - (i) The empirical facet of reality is not the only facet of reality. There are various facets of reality with laws of their own. (a) The Qur'an narrates a person who could bring a huge throne within the blinking of an eye. Allah says: *He had a knowledge of the Book*. (Q, 27:40) This apparently miraculous event was based on a special knowledge. (b) The Qur'an narrates the creation of a self-conscious living, creature (Jinni) from fire. This creature also has moral-consciousness and will be held accountable for their deeds. Can anyone with any stretch of imagination conceive the creation from fire of such creature! Fire is a physical entity. It can be asked from Dr. Israr Ahmed: were the Jinni came into being through a kind of process of evolution or were they created directly as Jinni! What were the necessary steps in the evolution of this specie in its final form and what are the laws governing this process if they came into being through a process of evolution! What specie is immediately prior to the Jinni! If they were created from fire as such why can't Allah create Adam from mud as such! Each sphere of knowledge has its own laws. All reality is an organized but administered system.
7. The Qur'an pronounces freedom of will for man and holds him accountable for his actions. All activity of science presupposes law of universal causation. Law of universal causation implies determinism in all spheres of the universe including determinism in man's bio-psychological and ethical life. Yet practically man never has stopped considering others responsible for their actions and will never stop doing so. Is it not unscientific and irrational! If we as Muslim are never embarrassed in believing freedom of will and accountability at the face of psychological determinism, why should we feel embarrassed in believing creationism, seven heavens, judgment and reward, moral limits, in the face of a Ptolemaic, Newtonian, Einsteinian naturalism or Darwinism etc.!
- (a) Philosopher has not been able to devise a substantial proof for one's own existence, for one's own self-identity over the years. Phenomenalism, perspectivism, relativism and the like show that philosophers have not been able to prove the existence of the external world in which they live. All their views about the nature and structure of reality are mere conjectures. Why should a Muslim be embarrassed over believing God, prophets and the revelation if man with lofty claims of knowledge has not been able to prove his self-existence, self-identity, nature of time, nature of void, existence of the external world, freedom of will, nature of mind, nature of mind-body relationship, moral-consciousness etc.
8. Qur'anic ontology differs with the scientific ontology. Qur'anic ontology consists of three principles: God, the Creation (*khalq*), and the Command (*amr*). Whatever other than God is either 'creation' or 'the command'. Regarding 'command' it has been said that "*you have been given but little knowledge of it.*" (Q, 17:85) So man's knowledge of certain things will always remain little. A Muslim researcher must realize this limit to his knowledge. The sphere of

empirical science relates only to the orbit of *khalq*. A Muslim will keep on believing things relating the orbit of *amr* and continue his research on *khalq*.

9. Three things emerge from scientific research: Worldview, theories, technology. What attitude should be taken by a Muslim about the scientific or philosophic worldviews as well as theories of science and facts of science have been discussed above. So far as scientific technology or institutions arising from social theories are concerned, Islam does not leave us to wander in darkness. The Qur'an gives us the principle of *innovation (bid'at)* to relate manmade knowledge with revealed knowledge. *Bid'at* (innovation) can be of two types: lawful (*bid'at-e hasana*) and unlawful (*bid'at-e sayyia*). Working out the limits of lawful innovation i.e., working out appropriate limits for relating manmade knowledge with revealed knowledge is *ijtihad*. *Rahbaniyat (monastic asceticism) was an innovation (bida't) of the Christians, Allah did not enjoin it on them. They had initiated it with the purpose of seeking Allah's pleasure. [Allah does not disapprove it.] They did not confine them within viable limits as they should. (Cf. Q, 57:27)* Similarly Qur'an says: *And proclaim the Pilgrimage among men: they will come to thee on foot and (mounted) on every kind of camel, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways. (Q, 22:27)* [Can the Muslims go on hajj as stated in this verse now? This is *bidat-e-hasana* that now we go by air for acting upon this injunction.]
10. 'No *bid'at* (innovation) in respect of prohibitions is allowed' is the basic principle of *ijtihad*. Not everyone is qualified for carrying out this job.^{lxv} The Qur'an qualifies 'The sound in knowledge'^{lxvi} for working out the limits and scope of *lawful/comely innovations* to help people in coming towards righteousness. 'The sound in knowledge' are the ones who are best qualified for working out an appropriate relationship between revealed knowledge and manmade knowledge in line with the Divine decree: *la talbisul haqqa bil batili ...* 02:42^{lxvii}
 - (i) Examples help in understanding matters on analogical grounds. Firmly believing that postulates of manmade knowledge are against Islamic paradigm, we cannot conceive of living without the products of science. Already acting upon the principle of *innovation* we are making use of them. We are making use of western system of medicine, methods of physical and psychological treatment, all kind of technology, economic, financial, commercial, educational, administrative and social institutions but with a sense of guilt. Why not to make use of these products of modernity with open heart on the basis of religious sanction of *innovation* reconstructing them according to our Qur'anic paradigm.
 - (ii) *Bid'at-e Hasana* had always been part of Islam, and it will remain so for ever. This is the Qur'anic principle for using knowledge generated by human experiment, experience and speculation. Muslims have disregarded this principle because of short sightedness, rather they have rejected it ignorantly as they for centuries had been considering that the door of *ijtihad* was closed.
 - (iii) It is a very sad reality that the Muslims have not been able to translate commandments, insights, values and disvalues stated in the Qur'an into systems, institutions, approaches, technologies, models, methodologies, sciences and disciplines covering all walks of life to demonstrate their worth on laboratory bench of a global society because of disregarding the principle of *innovation*. In the present global scenario making use of the principle of *bid'at-e hasana* is right way for the above purpose.
11. Purpose of exploration and research in science, philosophy or technology is not the implementation of our desires against truth; it is to seek the Pleasure of Allah by providing convenience to human beings in fulfillment of their obligations with reference to truth. The

Qur'an says: "So set your face towards religion as a man of pure faith. This is the natural disposition Allah instilled in mankind. There is no altering in Allah's creation, and this is the right religion. Most of the people do not realize it." (Ar-Rûm 30:30) Prohibition in this verse relates to altering the natural disposition of human being. Natural disposition of human being relates to piety. To keep our desires within Allah's prescribed limits is piety. Implementing our desires against truth will mean altering Allah's creation. That is absolutely forbidden. There is no scope for *innovation* regarding prohibitions. Theories regarding biomedical ethics, amputations, organ-donation, organ transplantation, genetic engineering and geno-modification etc., are to be seen in the light of the principal of *innovation* by committees comprising of enlightened non-fundamentalist Muslim religious scholars and experts of related sciences.

12. The last but not least is that Man has been sent on earth as *khalifa*. Usually it is translated in the exegeses of the Qur'an as *vicegerent* of God. Being Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient Allah transcends any need for a kind of second-in-command to run the affairs on earth. Man is given mandate for using the provision placed on earth in accordance with Divine guidance in the face of freedom to follow desires. Everything in the universe is made subservient to man. Qur'anic science will entrust man with freedom to make research in any sphere of life as *khalifa* not defying any imperative of Allah. It is obligation on a Muslim as *khalifa* to do his best to innovate ways and means to make use of earthly provisions in the best interest of humanity. Pleasure of Allah will be the ultimate motive behind all his activity. If he is given authority in the land, he will invent ways and means to judge between the people with truth and seal the ways leading towards injustice. (Aş-Şâd, 38:26) The knowledge to govern people is that matters between the people should be decided according to the truth and personal desires must not have any influence over the judgment. One's liking when mixed with the truth pushes the person away from the right path. Allah has appointed man as *khalifa* on earth to see how they behave. (Q, 10:14) When Allah spoke to the angels about the appointment of Adam as vicegerent on the earth, He told them that everything on the earth was meant for the use of mankind. The angels saw that the true purpose of vicegerency was to use resources of the world with great efficacy. They also saw that it will not be possible for mankind to live like angels. Having no social life they have nothing to share with each other. The inhabitants of the earth will fight and shed blood on the use of things needed for the fulfilment of their desires. There is apparent possibility of mischief and bloodshed when man has a vast capability of using things and these are to be shared by him. To make it clear on the angels that there will be no mischief and bloodshed if the knowledge of using things is perfect because then everything is kept at its proper place, Allah taught Adam the names of all the objects he had to use in his life. The name of a thing does not mean just the word by which it is known or identified but it also denotes its proper use, right measure, place of use, benefits and remedy in case it harms. The aggregate of all this information constitutes knowledge of things. In Qur'anic perspective 'to evolve this knowledge of using things which nullifies any chance of mischief and bloodshed is the purpose of all research.' (cf. Q, Surah al-Baqara:30-33)

6. Evolving A Qur'anic Paradigm Of Science And Philosophy: Ibn Sina, Sir Seyyed Ahmed Khan, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, And Some Contemporary Scholars

ⁱ Al-Qur'an, (02:2-3)

ii “These two philosophers were Aristotelian. They were also Neoplatonists who had formulated two closely related but quite distinct emanative schemes. There are, moreover, differences between these two thinkers, not only in their emanative schemes, but also in their theories of the soul, epistemologies, and eschatologies. At the same time, however, there is overlap in their ideas, so that many of al-Ghazali's criticisms apply to both.” Michael E. Marmura (tr.), “Translator’s Introduction” in *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, (Eng. tr. of Ghazali’s *Tahafut al-Falasfa*), Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Pmsi, 2000, p.xix

iii Abdul Hafeez Fazli, “Ibn Sina, Al-Gazali And Ibn Taymiyyah On The Origination Of The World” *IJHR*, 2(1), February, 2013, 19

iv Abdul Hafeez Fazli, “Ibn Sina, Al-Gazali And Ibn Taymiyyah On The Origination Of The World” *IJHR*, 2(1), February, 2013, 19

v Claudius Ptolemy c. AD 90 – c. AD 168, was a Greek [Roman citizen](#) of [Egypt](#). He was a renowned [mathematician](#), [astronomer](#), [geographer](#), [astrologer](#), and poet.

vi Source:Cartage.org: <http://www.cartage.org.lb/en/themes/sciences/mainpage.htm>

vii For details and references, please see the article, “Creationism, Emanationism, and Co-Eternity”.

viii “While naturalism has often been equated with [materialism](#), it is much broader in scope. ...Strictly speaking, naturalism has no ontological preference; *i.e.*, no bias toward any [particular](#) set of categories of reality: [dualism](#) and [monism](#), [atheism](#) and [theism](#), [idealism](#) and [materialism](#) are all *per se* compatible with it. So long as all of [reality](#) is natural, no other limitations are imposed.’ ‘Naturalists point out that even when one scientific theory is abandoned in favour of another, man does not despair of knowing nature, nor does he repudiate the “natural method” in his search for [truth](#). Theories change; methodology does not.” (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/406468/naturalism>, last updated 9.11.2013)

ix Verily Allah keeps the heavens and the earth in place lest they leave their places. If they move from their places, no one can grasp them. Allah is Ever Most Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving. (35:41)

x Naturalism did not exist as a philosophy before the nineteenth century, but only as an occasionally adopted and non-rigorous method among natural philosophers. It is a unique philosophy in that it is not ancient or prior to science, and that it developed largely due to the influence of science. Naturalism begins with Galileo and Isaac Newton, who began to explain nature by theoretical and experimental descriptions of matter and their motions. The outstanding success of this method led others to emulate them, and a comprehensive understanding of the universe was initiated. Galileo and Newton were not naturalists; they did not hesitate to attribute supernatural causes to things that they thought could not be explained by natural causes. Until the late eighteenth century, most scientists agreed with them, but the influence of the Enlightenment led scientists, such as Antoine Laurent Lavoisier, Pierre Simon de Laplace, and James Hutton to abandon all supernatural explanations in favor of natural ones. Biology was the last science to be so treated, by Jean Baptiste Lamarck and Charles Darwin. I am convinced that each of these men intentionally tried to be the Newton of his day--and science--by finding purely natural laws to explain natural processes and objects. Naturalism is Today An Essential Part of Science, by Prof. [Steven D. Schafersman](#), at http://www.stephenjaygould.org/ctrl/schafersman_nat.html

xi Allah’s Word is *al-Haqq*. (Al-Qur’an, 6:73, 2:42 etc.) *Al-Haqq* means ‘the standard of truth’. Whenever Allah reveals *al-Haqq*, it comes to humankind as the certain truth. (*ibid*, 32:2-3; 34:6 etc.) And *al-bâtil* (falsehood, untruth), *al-dalâl* (error) or *ẓann* (conjecture or opinion) have no reality of their own. *Al-bâtil* is but the attempted rejection of *al-Haqq*. To say anything in violation to *al-Haqq* is without justification and wrongful (*bi ghayr ‘l haqq*). (*ibid*, 02:61; 03:21 etc.)

To prefer suspicions, conjectures or opinions in the face of *al-Haqq* is to follow *ẓann*. Whatever the Qur’an upholds is truth (*haqq*), whatever it disapproves is untruth (*bâtil*). To express views without reference to it is to express opinion or conjecture and ‘*Assuredly conjecture can by no means take the place of truth.*’ (*ibid*, 10:36)

Al-dalâl (error) is nothing except deviation from truth. (*ibid*, 10:32) It results in the generation of erroneous ideas, and ideological systems. It is the outcome of giving equal importance as *al-Haqq* to man-made ideas and ideologies, human experiments, opinions, suggestions, insights, imaginations, visions (*ro’yâ*), unveiling (*kashf*), direct witnessing (*shahūd*) and traditions (*riwayât*) and confounding them to *al-Haqq* (the Word of Allah). But it is the Way of Allah that He wipes out *the falsehood* and establishes *the truth* with His Words. (08:7-8)

Allah commands the believers 'not to utter aught concerning Allah save the truth' (4:171) for saying anything about Allah, not supported by the Qur'an, is *iftirâ* (concoction). (3:94)

Al-Haqq is the epithet used for Allah's Word revealed to His messengers (peace be upon them). Allah is the Descender of *al-Haqq*. (cf. *ibid.*, 5:83, 84; 11:120 etc.) Qur'an verifies that the People of the Book have tampered *al-Haqq* revealed in the past (cf. *ibid.*, 4:46; 5:13,41 etc.) and that Allah has taken on Him to protect the Qur'an against any such attempt, (cf. *ibid.*, 15:9) so virtually epithet *al-Haqq* (*the truth*) rightfully applies to the Qur'an alone and the status of *authority* lies with it only.

^{xii} Cf. Space-time in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/557482/space-time> Last updated 19.2.13)

^{xiii} Cf. (http://www.skwirk.com/p-c_s-4_u-138_t-400_c-1407/einstein-s-theory-of-relativity-/nsw/einstein-s-theory-of-relativity-/the-big-bang-and-our-universe/the-origin-of-the-universe)

^{xiv} "The more a man is imbued with the ordered regularity of all events the firmer becomes his conviction that there is no room left by the side of this ordered regularity for causes of a different nature. For him neither the rule of human nor the rule of divine will exist as an independent cause of natural events. To be sure, the doctrine of a personal God interfering with the natural events could never be refuted, in the real sense, by science, for this doctrine can always take refuge in those domains in which scientific knowledge has not yet been able to set foot. But I am persuaded that such behaviour on the part of the representatives of religion would not only be unworthy but also fatal. For a doctrine which is able to maintain itself not in clear light but only in the dark, will of necessity lose its effect on mankind, with incalculable harm to human progress. It's probably not surprising that religious leaders have refused to heed Einstein's advice not to take refuge in the "dark" of what science has yet to illuminate. On the one hand, religion is indeed forced to constantly retreat and narrow its claims on behalf of its god, but on the other religion would have to explicitly abandon all of its traditional doctrines. Both are arguably fatal: the former will mean that religion is continually squeezed and forced to make excuses for its errors; the latter will eliminate much of what encourages religious passion and commitment.

Unfortunately, there are far too many religious believers in the world who would prefer a retreating religion that still tries to defend traditional doctrines than a religion which admits that the doctrines wrong to begin with [?]. Conservatism requires that the alleged "truths" of the past be held to tightly because otherwise, there won't be anything to conserve. Holding on to the superstitions and falsehoods of the past does, however, accomplish exactly what Albert Einstein feared: incalculable harm to human progress." *Science and Religion* (1941), <http://atheism.about.com/od/einsteingodreligion/a/GodNature.htm>

^{xv} Basit Bilal Koshul, "Muhammad Iqbal's reconstruction of the philosophical arguments for the existence of God" in *Muhammad Iqbal: A Contemporary*, (edt.) Muhammad Suhail Umar and Basit Bilal Koshul, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 2010, p. 127

^{xvi} *Ibid*

^{xvii} *Ibid*, p.96

^{xviii} *Ibid*

^{xix} Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious in Islam*, ed. & annotation, M. Saeed Sheikh (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, reprint 1986), 1,49.

^{xx} cf., *ibid*, 48-50.

^{xxi} Abdul Hafeez, *The Muslim World*, vol. 95, Number 1, January 2005, pp. 125-45, Hartford Seminary 77 Sherman Street Hartford CT 06105 USA

^{xxii} Muhammad Khalid Masud, "Iqbal's Approach to Islamic Theology of Modernity", *Al-Hikmat*, 27(2007), p. 12.

^{xxiii} For detailed study on these points please see the following: Abdul Hafeez Fâzli, "Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Taimiyyah on the problem of the origination of the world",

^{xxiv} Hospers, John, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis*, Reprint 1978, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, p. 317

^{xxv} "Bertrand Arthur William. Third Earl Russell, British philosopher, mathematician, social critic, and writer who had profound influence on the development of symbolic logic, logical positivism, and the set theory of

mathematics.” His written works include *Principia Mathematica* (1910-1913), written with Alfred North Whitehead, and *A History of Western Philosophy* (1945). He won the 1950 Nobel Prize for literature.

^{xxvi} British Literature by Credo Reference: Victorian Era, <http://libguides.iun.edu/c.php?g=10054&p=50552>

^{xxvii} Cf., Abdul Hafeez, “Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Taimiyyah on the Origination of the World”, *International Journal of Humanities and Religion*, Vol 2, No 1 (2013), p.27

^{xxviii} Koshul, *ibid*, p.110

^{xxix} Iqbal, *Reconstruction ...*, p.8

^{xxx} *Muhammad Iqbal: A Contemporary*, p.110

^{xxxi} Koshul, *ibid*, p.110

^{xxxii} Iqbal, *Reconstruction...*, p.46-7

^{xxxiii} Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim Sharif, (Urdu version) trans. Allama Waheed uz Zamân, Urdu Bazar Lahore: Mushtaq Book Corner, 1995, p.421-22.

^{xxxiv} Koshul, p.126.

^{xxxv} Iqbal, *Reconstruction...*, 45

^{xxxvi} Dr. Israr Ahmad, *The Process of Creation: A Qur’anic Perspective*, tr. Dr. Absar Ahmad, Markazi Anjuman Khuddam ul Qur’an Lahore, 2013

^{xxxvii} *Ibid*, p.5

^{xxxviii} *Ibid.*, This is not the first ever attempt solely made by Dr. Israr Ahmed for blending the ‘Creation’ and ‘Evolution’ together in one thread. “In his encyclical *Humani Generis* (1950), [Pope] Pius XII had already stated that there was no opposition between evolution and the doctrine of the faith about man and his vocation, on condition that one did not lose sight of several indisputable points.” Pope John Paul II in his address entitled *Truth Cannot Contradict Truth* to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (October 22, 1996) admits that “Today, almost half a century after the publication of the encyclical, new knowledge has led to the recognition of the theory of evolution as more than a hypothesis. It is indeed remarkable that this theory has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The convergence, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted independently is in itself a significant argument in favor of this theory.” But neither the author of this tract nor the translator considers mentioning it and attempt to show as if it is an original attempt of Dr. Israr Ahmad.

^{xxxix} For my comments on the concept of eternity in western tradition please see: Abdul Hafeez Fazli, “Christian View of Omniscience and Human Freedom”, *Iqbal Review* 47:4 (2006), Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan

^{xl} *Ibid*, p.7

^{xli} *Ibid*, p.9

^{xlii} *Ibid*

^{xliii} So far as Christians are concerned it has been admitted even by them that there is no evidence of these concepts being Divine Attributes in Christianity before Augustine (354-430), nor is there any evidence in the Old Testament for it. Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1977, p. 217.

^{xliv} Abdul Hafeez, “H. A. Wolfson and A. H. Kamali on the Origin of the Problem of Divine Attributes in Muslim Kalam”, *Iqbal Review*, 40(3), 1998, p. 81-96

^{xlvi} Conf. *ibid*, p. 9-10

^{xlvi} Conf., *Ibid*

^{xlvi} Dr. Israr Ahmed, *ibid*, p.12

^{xlvi} *Ibid.*, p.12

^{xlvi} Abdul Hafeez Fâzli, “The Qur’an: Creation or Command” *International Journal of Humanities and Religion [IJHR]*, 2(10) December 2012: 75 -83, India.

¹ Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Harverd University Press Cambridge, 1976, p. 263-74.

^{li} The Qur’an, cf. 07:54

^{lii} Ibid., 30:25

^{liii} Abu 'L-Hasan 'Ali Ibn Isma'il Al-Ash'ari, *Al- Ibaanah an Usul Ad-Diyaanah*(Eng. tr. *The Elucidation of Islam's Foundation* by Walter C. Klein), American Oriental Society, New Haven, 1940, p. 66, 67, 76; also see translator's note at page 66. Klein in this note writes "In this section al-Ash'ari repeats himself frequently. He attempts to show, on the one hand, that the Qur'an is not created, because it has not the characteristics of a created thing and exists independently of creation, and, on the other hand, that it is eternal and uncreated because, it is in a sense, a predicate of God's attributes, like His Knowledge and His Will..." For details see: Abdul Hafeez Fâzli, *ibid*

^{liv} Dr. Israr Ahmad, *ibid*, p.11

^{lv} *Ibid*.

^{lvi} cf. Review article by Muzaffar Iqbal on Leif Stenberg, *The Islamization of Science : Four Muslim Positions, Developing an Islamic Modernity*, Coronet Books: New York, 1996.

^{lvii} Leif Stenberg, *The Islamization of Science : Four Muslim Positions, Developing an Islamic Modernity*, Coronet Books: New York, 1996, p. 240

^{lviii} *ibid*

^{lix} Argue not with the people of the Scripture, But in the best way, except with those as do wrong. And say: We believe in what was revealed to us and revealed to you. Our Allah and your Allah is One, We are devoted to Him. (29:46)

^{lx} Cf. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ideal and Realities of Islam*, p.15-16

^{lxi} Leif Stenberg, *ibid*, pp. 116-25

^{lxii} *Ibid*, p. 270

^{lxiii} *Ibid*, p.273

^{lxiv} Review article by Muzaffar Iqbal on Leif Stenberg, *Ibid*,

^{lxv} Not everyone is qualified for the demarcation of limits for the relationship between truth and untruth. *Those who know and those who do not know are not equal.* Az-Zumar, 39:09) Only those who are endowed with understanding grasp the Message. (... *Wa Mâ Yadhakkaru 'Illâ 'Ulû Al-'Albâbi.* Āl-i-Imrân, 03:07).

^{lxvi} Al-Qur'an, 3:7

^{lxvii} Also consider the following: Fine flour, which is very harmful for health, was never used by the Prophet (pbuh) in his life time. But now it is used by Muslims all over the world. The products of fine flour are used in Makka and Madina in highly abundant quantity. Is it not *bid'at-i-sayia*? To have photographs was once considered *bid'at-i-sayia* but is it not the case that performance of *Hajj* or *Umra* is not possible without it? Has it not become *bid'at-i-hasana*! Many more examples from everyday life can be given.