

**PHILOSOPHY**  
**ISLAMIC THOUGHT**  
**REVIVALISTS & REFORMERS**

**By Aftab Khan**

**Peace Forum Network**

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful  
There is no one worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is messenger of Allah

“Those who listen to the Word, and follow the best in it: those are the ones whom God has guided, and those are the ones endued with understanding.(Quran;39:18),” and whoever is granted wisdom is indeed given a great wealth”(Qur’an;2:269),“Thus clearly do We spell out Our signs un to people who think” (Qur’an;10:24) “a Scripture that We have revealed unto thee, full of blessing, that they may ponder its revelations, and that men of understanding may reflect”(Qur’an;38:29)

# **PHILOSOPHY**

# **ISLAMIC THOUGHT**

# **REVIVALISTS & REFORMERS**

الفلسفة والحكمة

By Aftab Khan



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## Author:



Aftab Ahmad Khan is involved in voluntary research on Semitic religions. He observed divergent cultures during his stay & world wide travels to North America, Europe, Middle East, China, Far East and Australia.

A retired Army Brigadier, holds Masters in Business Administration, Political Science, post graduated in Strategic Studies. As a freelance writer his articles are regularly published in Defence Journal Karachi, also compiled in the form of e-books & posts available at web links, blogs and social media, grouped under the title: "PEACE FORUM NETWORK". The main themes are Religion, Abrahamic Monotheism, Interfaith Dialogue, Ethics, Science, Culture, Spiritually & Peace.

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## Foreword

During first millennia Muslims excelled in all the fields of knowledge and laid the foundation of great Islamic civilization. However lack of interest in knowledge became start of decline. Presently Muslims as a community are mostly illiterate and ignorant, though Islam encourages rational thinking & learning. Gradually the Muslims started to concentrate on rituals and ascetic practices, leaving their philosophy of rational thought, reason and scientific knowledge, the hallmark of their intellectual development. Their heritage of intellectual treasure slowly passed on to the West, which now dominates the world. Islamic world, the one fifth of humanity, is backward despite possessing energy and other natural resources in abundance. Some Muslims philosophers, intellectuals and scholars realizing the importance, of rationale thinking & wisdom (*hikmah*), tried to revive the original message of Islam, while others call it reformation to meet challenges of modern society.

The term 'Reformation' is used for 16th-century movement in Western Europe that aimed at reforming some doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church and resulted in the establishment of the Protestant churches. As far as Islam is concerned there is no scope for 'reformation' of its basic doctrines and practices, since Qur'an declared Islam as complete way of life: *"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."* [Qur'an;5:3]. However there is provision of *Ijtehad* by competent scholars to cater for changing new situations, with in the basic parameters of Islam. Hence the basic thrust of Muslim scholars (revivalists or reformers) and intellectuals is on revival of original spirit of Islam, in the contemporary environments. Since *Ijtehad* is a human work possibility of error exists, hence it is not binding for ever, subject to revision.

# Contents

## Philosophy, Islam & Reformers

Author:

Foreword

Contents

Introduction:

### CHAPTER-1: PHILOSOPHY

Philosophical Traditions:

The Western Philosophical Traditions:

Philosophy and Judaism:

The Hebrew Wisdom:

Philosophy and Christianity:

### CHAPTER-2: ISLAM: PHILOSOPHY (FALSAFAH)

Islam – The Philosophic Interest:

Non-Religious Sciences & Theology:

Islamic theology was Islamic in the strict

Theology (kalam) and Philosophy (Falsafah):

Works of Medieval Muslim Philosophers:

Ibn Rushd (Averroes):

Al-Ghazzali (1058–1111 CE):

Islamic Influence on Jewish Philosophy:

Views of Muslim Philosophers:

Immanuel Kant: (1724-1804 C.E):

Iqbal:

3: Ontological Arguments:

Anselm's Argument:

Synthetic Statement:

Thoughts of Muslim Philosophers on 'GOD':

Criticism of 'Perpetual Universe':

Verifiable Evidence:

Proof of Existence of God through Scientific

### CHAPTER-4: THEORIES OF CREATION OF THE

Accident Theory:

The Big Bang:

Creation by Design:

Criticism on Existence of God:

Free Will Defence:

Critique:

Free Will- Islamic Perspective:

Existence of God Prerequisite in Islam:

### CHAPTER-5: CONCEPT OF EVIL

Medieval Islamic Philosophy:

Modern Attempts:

The Religious Experience:

### CHAPTER-6: NEW WISDOM

Synthesis of Theology, Philosophy & Mysticism

Personal Experience and Direct Vision:

Mysticism- Overriding Theology:

Wisdom of Illumination:

School of Esfahan:

Refutation of the New Wisdom:

Medieval Reformers:

Modern Reformers

New Wisdom, Lack Political Philosophy:

### CHAPTER-7: ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHICAL

Defence of Traditionalism by Ibn Taymiyah:

Philosophical Developments in India:

Social and Moral Reforms:

Wahabi Movement:

Deoband School:

Intellectual Stagnation:

### CHAPTER-8: MUSLIM REFORMERS & WESTERN

Background:

Modernization Reforms in the Ottoman Empire

Muslim Reformist Spirit:

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–97):

Muhammad Abduh:

Muhammad Rashid Rida [1865–1935]:

Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan:

Moulvi Cheragh Ali (1844-1895):

Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923):

### Muhammad Iqbal:

Reconstruction of Thought in Islam:

No Contradiction between Faith & Reason:

Abolition of Priesthood & Hereditary Kingship:

Rejects Mystic Experience as Exclusive Way:

Recreation of Vigor in Islamic Thought:

### Impact of early Islamic modernists:

Progress in Modernism:

Progressive Modernization in Turkey:

Criticism of Modernism:

### Oppression breeds Extremism:

Contemporary Islamic Philosophers & Scholars:

### CONCLUSION



**Knowledge - Classical to the Muslim world and back again to the West through Spain**



**PHILOSOPHY  
ISLAMIC THOUGHT REVIVALISTS &  
REFORMERS**

الفلسفة والحكمة

**Introduction:**

Generally the people consider philosophy to be a subject of little value and consider its study as waste of time. It should be known that 'Philosophy' not only strengthen the faith but is also the driving force behind any development, progress or descend be it a nation, community, group or civilization. The history is full of examples. It was the faith and philosophy of Islam which transformed the unknown, uncivilized, illiterate Arab tribes, in to the torch bearers of the great civilization with in 23 years, unmatched event in the history of mankind. While at its zenith, its followers failed to face the divine test of devastation they had to suffer in the hands of Mongol hordes and humiliating expulsion from Spain. They started to concentrate on rituals and ascetic practices,

abandoning their philosophy of rational thought, reason and scientific knowledge, the hall mark of their intellectual development. Their heritage of intellectual treasure was slowly allowed to pass on to the West. According to Encyclopedia Britannica: “The decline of Muslim scholarship coincided with the early phases of the European intellectual awakening that these translations were partly instrumental in bringing about. The translation into Latin of most Islamic works during the 12th and 13th centuries had a great impact upon the European Renaissance. As Islam was declining in scholarship and Europe was absorbing the fruits of Islam's centuries of creative productivity, signs of Latin Christian awakening were evident throughout the European continent. The 12th century was one of intensified traffic of Muslim learning into the Western world through many hundreds of translations of Muslim works, which helped Europe seize the initiative from Islam when political conditions in Islam brought about a decline in Muslim scholarship. By 1300 C.E

when all that was worthwhile in Muslim scientific, philosophical, and social learning had been transmitted to European schoolmen through Latin translations, European scholars stood once again on the solid ground of Hellenistic thought, enriched or modified through Muslim and Byzantine efforts.”

Unlike the earlier tradition of Islamic philosophy from al-Farabi to Averroës, which had consciously cultivated political science and investigated the political dimension of philosophy and religion and the relation between philosophy and the community at large, the new approach from its inception lacked genuine interest in these questions, had no appreciation for political philosophy, and had only a benign toleration for the affairs of the world. No worthwhile political philosopher or reformer came up with solution to real problems confronted by Islamic world. The divine guidance in the form of Qur'an and Sunnah of Prophet (peace be upon him) was available so that: “they may ponder its revelations, and that

men of understanding may learn lessons from it.”(Qur’an;38:29). But the ‘men of understanding’ were rare. Centuries have passed but Muslims have failed to correct the historic mistake, to set the priorities right. The result is frustration, extremism, disunity, loss of dignity, self esteem, poverty, deprivation, illiteracy, oppression, economic and political domination by West and others economic giants.

## CHAPTER-1: PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is the branch of knowledge dealing with the critical examination of the grounds for fundamental beliefs and an analysis of the basic concepts employed in the expression of such beliefs. The word Philosophy is derived from Greek **φιλοσοφία** by way of Latin, philosophia, "love of wisdom". Philosophical inquiry is a central element in the intellectual history of many historical civilizations. The Philosophy, Metaphysics & Theology are interlinked in the context of philosophical studies in religious perspective.

Etymologically the term Metaphysics is unenlightening, it means "what comes after physics". Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with critically examining basic philosophical assumptions and identifying what exists insofar as it exists. Metaphysics interacts with such other philosophical studies as logic, epistemology, aesthetics, and ethics. The metaphysical philosophy deals with the first principles of things, including such concepts as

being, substance, essence, time, space, cause, and identity. It also examines the nature of reality, including the relationship between mind and matter, substance and attribute, fact and value. Theology is the discipline of religious thought. The themes of theology are God, man, the world, salvation, and eschatology (the study of the final events in the history of mankind). The Philosophical Theology is devoted to the exploration of God and of the claims made about God in the various traditions and religious truth and rational inquiry into religious questions. Its range of topics typically includes what are known as the divine attributes.

## **Philosophical Traditions:**

### **The Western Philosophical Traditions:**

The western philosophical traditions are mostly based on the works of Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and others who followed. Socrates (470-399 B.C) a Greek philosopher initiated a question-and-answer

method of teaching as a means of achieving self-knowledge. His theories of virtue and justice have survived through the writings of Plato, his most important pupil. Socrates was tried for corrupting the minds of Athenian youth and subsequently put to death. Plato (427-347.B.C) was a follower of Socrates, he founded the Academy (386 B.C), where he taught and wrote for much of the rest of his life. Plato presented his ideas in the form of dramatic dialogues, in 'The Republic'. Aristotle (384-322. B.C) was a pupil of Plato, the tutor of Alexander the Great, and the author of works on logic, metaphysics, ethics, natural sciences, politics, and poetics, he profoundly influenced Western thought. In his philosophical system theory follows empirical observation and logic, based on the syllogism (a form of deductive reasoning consisting of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion; for example, All human beings are mortal, the major premise, I am a human being, the minor premise, therefore, I am mortal, the

conclusion), is the essential method of rational inquiry.

### **Philosophy and Judaism:**

Philosophy arose in Judaism under Greek influence; however, a kind of philosophical approach may be discerned in early Jewish religious works apparently subject to little or no Greek influence. The book of Proverbs introduces, in an apparently theological context, the concept of 'wisdom' (חכמה, Hokhma), which was to have a primordial significance for Jewish philosophical and theological thought, and presents it as the first and favorite of God's creations. It is sometimes equated with fearing God and keeping the Law; however, in other passages piety seems to be regarded as superior to Wisdom. The, Wisdom of Solomon, praises Wisdom, which is held to be an image of God's goodness and a reflection of the eternal light. God is said to have given the author knowledge of the composition of the world, of the powers, the elements, the nature of animals,



the divisions of time, and the positions of the stars. In its vocabulary and perhaps in some of its doctrines, the work shows the influence of Greek philosophical conceptions. It has had considerable influence on Christian theology.

### **The Hebrew Wisdom:**

The Hebrew wisdom, which was also influenced by its neighbors, appeared with the establishment of the monarchy and a royal court and found a patron in Solomon (peace be upon him). Through the following centuries the wise men were at times the object of rebuke by the prophets, who disliked their pragmatic realism. The exile, however, brought a change in Hebrew wisdom; it became deeply religious. The wise men were convinced that religion alone possessed the key to life's highest values. It was this mood that dominated the final shaping of the Hebrew wisdom literature. In the Hebrew Bible the book of 'Proverbs' offers the best example of practical wisdom, while 'Job' and 'Ecclesiastes' give expression to

speculative wisdom. There is a collection of epigrams and prudential wisdom (Proverbs) and a philosophic view of existence with pessimism and poise (Ecclesiastes). 'Psalms', 'Proverbs' and 'Job' constitute the principal poetic literature of the 'Hebrew Bible and, in many respects, represent the high point of the Hebrew Bible as literature; in fact, 'Job' must be considered one of the great literary products of man's creative spirit. The implication seems to be that for Proverbs; God's revelation of himself is given in the universal laws and patterns characteristic of nature, especially human nature, rather than in a special series of historical events; that is, the revelation of God is in the order of creation rather than in the order of redemption. Moreover, the meaning of this revelation is not immediately self-evident but must be discovered by men.

This discovery is an educational discipline that trusts human reason and employs research, classifying and interpreting the results and bequeathing them as a legacy to future

generations. The wise are those who systematically dedicate themselves to this discovery of the "way" of God. Unlike Job and Ecclesiastes, Proverbs (with the exception of the "words of Agur") is optimistic in that it assumes that wisdom is attainable by those who seek and follow it; that is, man can discover enough about God and his law to ensure the fulfillment of his personal life. This character of God is conceived almost entirely in terms of ethical laws, and the rewards for their observance are defined in terms of human values; e.g., health, long life, respect, possessions, security, and self-control.

### **Philosophy and Christianity:**

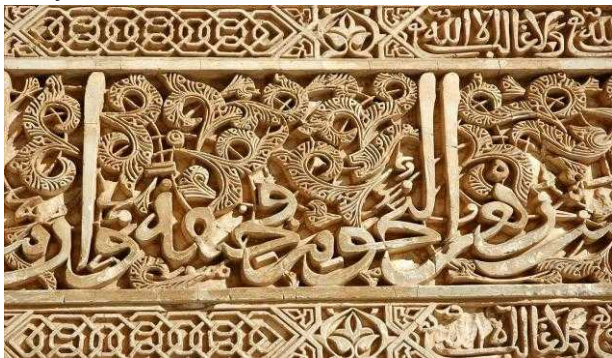
It has been debated whether there is anything that is properly called Christian philosophy. Christianity is not a system of ideas but a religion, based on a way of belief for salvation. But as a religion becomes a distinguishable strand of human history, it inevitably absorbs philosophical assumptions from its environment

and generates new philosophical constructions and arguments both in the formation of doctrines and in their defense against philosophical objections. These two topics cannot be kept entirely separate, however, for philosophical criticism from both within and without the Christian community has influenced the development of its beliefs.

## CHAPTER-2: ISLAM: PHILOSOPHY (FALSAFAH): WISDOM (HIKMAH)

### Islam – The Philosophic Interest:

Islamic philosophy is a branch of Islamic studies on the Quran. It is the continuous search for Hikma (حكمة), meaning wisdom, in the light of the Islamic view of life, the universe, ethics, society, and so on. Islamic philosophy, understood as a "project of independent philosophical inquiry" began in Baghdad in the middle of the eighth century.



The origin of philosophic interest in Islam is found prominently through the translation of Greek philosophic works. By the middle of the 9th century, there were enough translations of scientific and philosophic works from Greek, Pahlavi, and Sanskrit. This indicates that those who read them with care, understood that scientific and philosophic inquiry was something more than a series of disputations based on what the theologians had called sound reason. The scope of this tradition was broad: it included the study of logic, the sciences of nature (including psychology and biology), the mathematical sciences (including music and astronomy), metaphysics, ethics, and politics. Islamic philosophy emerged from its theological background when Muslim thinkers became competent students of the ancient philosophers and scientists, criticized and developed their doctrines, clarified their relevance for the questions raised by the theologians, and showed what light they threw on the

fundamental issues of revelation, prophecy, and the divine law.



Islam emphasize the seeking of knowledge, pondering, rational thinking and wisdom(Hikma), it is mentioned in Qur'an: "(This Qur'an is).. that they may ponder its revelations, and that men of understanding may reflect."(Qur'an;38:29). "Have they not then observed the sky above them, how We have constructed it and beautified it, and how there are no rifts therein? And the earth have We spread out, and have flung firm hills therein, and have caused of every lovely kind to grow thereon, A vision and a reminder for every penitent slave."(Qur'an; 50:6-

8).“Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way...”(Qur’an;16:125); “.. Thus clearly do We spell out Our signs un to people who think”(Qur’an;10:24)

In Qur’an at times the word **حكمة** Hikma is used as ‘Wisdom’, ‘Knowledge’ and at certain places as ‘Scripture’. The word Wisdom (Hikma) is mentioned repeatedly in Qur’an. : “A similar (favor have ye already received) in that We have sent among you an Apostle of your own rehearsing to you Our signs and sanctifying you and instructing you in Scripture and wisdom and in new Knowledge.”(Qur’an;2:151). “He grants wisdom to whom He pleases; and whoever is granted wisdom is indeed given a great wealth, yet none except people of understanding learn a lesson from it.” (Qur’an;2:269). “And He will impart him (Jesus) the revelation and wisdom, and teach the Torah and the Gospel.”(Qur’an;3:48). “It is He Who has raised among the unlettered people a Messenger (Muhammad) of their own, who recites to them



His revelations, purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom, though prior to this they were in gross error,”(Qur’an;62:2).

### **Non-Religious Sciences & Theology:**

The origin and inspiration of philosophy in Islam are quite different from those of Islamic theology. Philosophy developed out of and around the nonreligious practical and theoretical sciences; it recognized no theoretical limits other than those of human reason itself; and it assumed that the truth found by unaided reason does not disagree with the truth of Islam when both are properly understood. Islamic philosophy was not a handmaid of theology. The two disciplines were related, because both followed the path of rational inquiry and distinguished themselves from traditional religious disciplines and from mysticism, which sought knowledge through practical, spiritual purification.

## **Islamic theology was Islamic in the strict sense:**

It confined itself within the Islamic religious community, and it remained separate from the Christian and Jewish theologies that developed in the same cultural context and used Arabic as a linguistic medium. No such separation is observable in the philosophy developed in the Islamic cultural context and written in Arabic: Muslims, Christians, and Jews participated in it and separated themselves according to the philosophic rather than the religious doctrines they held.

## **Theology (kalam) and Philosophy (Falsafah):**

Islamic theology (kalam) and philosophy (Falsafah) are two traditions of learning developed by Muslim thinkers who were engaged, on the one hand, in the rational clarification and defense of the principles of the Islamic religion (mulakatlimim) and, on the other, in the pursuit of the ancient (Greek and Hellenistic, or Greco-Roman) sciences

(Falsafah). These thinkers took a position that was intermediate between the traditionalists, who remained attached to the literal expressions of the primary sources of Islamic doctrines (Qur'an & Hadith) and who abhorred reasoning, and those whose reasoning reinforced their faith to remain part of the Islamic community (the ummah) however those who fell astray had to be excluded, altogether. The status of the believer in Islam remained in practice a juridical question, not a matter for theologians or philosophers to decide. Except in regard to the fundamental questions of the existence of God, Islamic revelation, and future reward and punishment, the juridical conditions for declaring someone an unbeliever or beyond the pale of Islam were so demanding as to make it almost impossible to make a valid declaration of this sort about a professing Muslim. In the course of events in Islamic history, representatives of certain theological movements, who happened to be jurists and who succeeded in converting rulers to their cause, made those rulers declare

in favour of their movements and even encouraged them to persecute their opponents. Thus there arose in some localities and periods a semblance of an official, or orthodox, doctrine.

### **Works of Medieval Muslim Philosophers:**

The Muslim philosophers were theologians, well versed with knowledge of Qur'an and Sunnah. Al-Kindi (Alkindus, 800–873 CE) is recognized as the first Muslim Arab philosopher, Ibn Rushd (Averroes, 1128–1198 CE), a major Aristotelian Muslim and Spanish philosopher, stated that the study of philosophy is obligatory, although it is possible to misuse the science for other purposes. The God encourages mankind to use the wisdom to observe His signs as mentioned in Qur'an: "A vision and a reminder for every penitent slave." (Qur'an;50:8). At another place it states: "And how many Signs in the heavens and the earth do they pass by? Yet they turn (their faces) away from them!" (Qur'an;12:105).

## **Ibn Rushd (Averroes):**



### **Cordoba Mosque Mimbar**

He opined that Allah requires man to try to obtain demonstrative knowledge of His existence. But prior to having demonstrative knowledge, Man must be able to have dialectical (The art or practice of arriving at the truth by the exchange of logical arguments.), theoretical (restricted to theory; not practical) and logical (reasoning or capable of reasoning in a clear and consistent manner) knowledge. That is for man to learn he must know the basis

of reasoning, hence, philosophy is not only necessary but also commanded by the divine.

Sir Thomas Arnold in 'The Legacy of Islam' writes; 'those who accuse the Muslim scholars of lack of originality and of intellectual decadence, have never read Averroës or looked into about have adopted second hand judgments.'

### **Al-Ghazzali (1058–1111 CE):**

Ghazali was an extremely influential orthodox Muslim thinker who rebuffed many of the claims of the 'philosophers' who claimed that they could prove existence of God by reason alone. According to him the philosophers had abandoned all the obligatory Islamic religious duties and the kind of reasoning used by philosophers would never result in the proof of the existence of God. As Al-Kindi and most Muslim philosophers agree philosophy cannot reach as far as revelation can: Hence, the basis of actions should be based upon Islam, whereas philosophy ought to be considered as an

independent discipline. Ghazzali was concerned that the philosophers were drawing conclusions from their 'arguments' that are not valid.

### **Islamic Influence on Jewish Philosophy:**

Arabic-Islamic culture (7th-13<sup>th</sup> Century) influenced the Jewish philosophy especially the mystical development very significantly. A considerable part of Jewry, which had fallen under Muslim domination in the 7th and 8th centuries, participated in the new Arabic-Islamic civilization; the Jews of Asia, Africa, and Spain soon adopted Arabic, the prevailing language of culture and communication. By way of Arabic-language culture, elements of Greek philosophy and Islamic mysticism penetrated Judaism and contributed to the deepening of certain theological concepts that were Jewish in origin but had become the common property of the three religions of the Book: Affirming the Divine Unity, purging all anthropomorphism (attribution of human motivation, characteristics, or behavior to natural phenomena of God) from the

idea of God, and approaching the divine by progressing on a spiritual path that leads through an ascetic discipline (both physical and intellectual) to a detachment from this world and a freeing of the soul from all that distracts it from God.

Greek philosophy and Islamic mysticism, moreover, raised very serious questions that threatened many traditional beliefs, such as the creation of the world, the providential action of God, miracles, eschatology (doctrines about the resurrection of the body, rewards, and especially material punishments in the hereafter). Even in the Christian West, where cultural contacts between the majority society and the Jewish minority were far from reaching the breadth and intensity of the Judeo-Arab relations; Jewish intellectuals were unable to remain totally impervious to the incursions of the surrounding civilization. Moreover, at the beginning of the 12th century, if not earlier, European Judaism received part of the intellectual Arabic and Judeo-Arabic heritage through translations or adaptations into Hebrew, its only cultural language.



## **CHAPTER-3: PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS FOR EXISTENCE OF GOD**

The main issue which has remained in focus of philosophers is about the 'Existence of God' and the related issues i.e. the existence of 'Evil', 'Predestination and Free Will'. In philosophy there are three major, purely rational, arguments for the existence of God that have had a significant influence on the history of philosophy of religion; the Cosmological, Teleological and Ontological arguments. Other arguments put forth for the existence of God are the arguments from morality and probability. The three major arguments presented in modern philosophy may be compared with the arguments for the existence of God presented by ancient and modern Islamic philosophers. The main argument against the existence of God has been the problem of evil. This has posed many problems to the theist, and Islamic philosophy is only beginning to tackle the problem in western terms. Another stream of arguments for God's existence, recently proposed in contemporary

western philosophy are the proofs from religious experience. This is a theme also present in Islamic philosophy.

## **COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS:**

The cosmological argument was first introduced by Aristotle (384-322. B.C) and later refined in Western Europe by the celebrated Christian theologian, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274.CE). The cosmological argument uses as a technique for disclosure such questions as "Why is this thus?" or "Why is there anything at all?" In receiving replies to these questions in causal terms, the cosmological argument builds up an ever-increasing causal spread until a disclosure occurs, whereupon the phrase "first cause" specifies what is disclosed and advocates certain ways of talking.

### **The Basic First-Cause Argument:**

It states: "Every event must have a cause, and each cause must in turn have its own cause, and so forth. Hence, there must either be an

infinite regress of causes or there must be a starting point or first cause.” The conclusion thus follows that there must be an initial prime-mover, a mover that could cause motion without any other mover; the God.

### **Views of Muslim Philosophers:**

Among the Muslim Al-Kindi, and Averroës support it while Al-Ghazzali and Iqbal maybe seen as being in opposition to this sort of an argument. [Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938); the great modern Muslim philosopher & poet of Ido-Pak subcontinent] A second argument of Thomas Aquinas draws its inspiration from Islamic and Aristotelian sciences. He argues that only God is indivisible, and everything other than God is in some way composite or multiple. In Kindi's theory only God's oneness is necessary whereas that of all others is contingent upon God. Hence all other beings single or multiple must emanate from the ultimate essential being. In addition this first being must be uncaused, since it is the cause of

everything else. The world requires a creator, or rather a generator (mudhith) in Kindi's scheme, who could generate the world ex nihilo.

Ghazzali and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal rejects the argument, as per Iqbal; "Logically speaking, then, the movement from the finite to the infinite as embodied in the cosmological (the astrophysical study of the history, structure, and constituent dynamics of the universe.) argument is quite illegitimate; and the argument fails in toto." For Iqbal the concept of the first uncaused cause is absurd, it is, however, obvious that a finite effect can give only a finite cause, or at most an infinite series of such causes. To finish the series at a certain point, and to elevate one member of the series to the dignity of an 'Un-Caused First Cause', is to set at naught the very law of causation on which the whole argument proceeds. It is for these reasons that modern philosophers almost unanimously reject the cosmological argument as a legitimate proof for the existence of God. Kant for example also rejects any cosmological proof on the grounds

that it is nothing more than an ontological proof in disguise. He argued that any necessary object's essence must involve existence, hence reason alone can define such a being, and the argument becomes quite similar to the ontological one in form, devoid of any empirical premises.

## **TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS:**

Teleology is the use of ultimate 'Purpose' or 'Design' as a means of explaining natural phenomena. St. Paul, with many others in the Greco-Roman world, believed that the existence of God is evident from the appearances of nature: "Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made"(Romans;1:20). The most popular, because the most accessible, of the theistic arguments is that which identifies evidences of design in nature, inferring from them a 'Divine Designer'. The argument from design takes a story with acknowledged

disclosure possibilities--e.g., the interrelated parts of a clock --and uses this as a catalyst to evoke a disclosure around some ever-broadening purpose patterns of the universe, in relation to which one can speak of God in terms, for example, of eternal purpose. William Paley (1805 C.E) in his 'Natural Theology' presented it with an analogy of a 'clock' found in a remote desert which existed not be by pure chance, being complex machine it has to be a product of an intelligent designer. i.e. there must be a clockmaker. In the same way Paley argues that the universe is much more complex and manifestly designed. The extraordinary design is evident from planets and galaxies at the cosmic level to human cells and atoms at the quantum level. Therefore this world must have an intelligent creator. This form of the argument can be seen as an inference to the best explanation. That is given the remarkable phenomena of the universe, the best possible explanation for this, must be the existence of God. Paley next argues that if one accepts the

above reasoning one is then obliged to accept the reasoning he gives for the universe as a whole. The world is intricate and well-designed for the purpose of supporting life it is the product of an 'Intelligent Designer'. Else the world is the product of random physical processes. Sober later rejects the notion presented by Paley, and argues that the likelihood of an evolutionary hypothesis supersedes the likelihood of a creationist hypothesis (The position that the account of the creation of the universe given at the beginning of the Bible is literally true).

### **Views of Muslim Philosophers:**

Al-Kindi also attempts to make reference to the 'Teleological Proof' (dalil al-'indyah) for the existence of God. As he argues that "the orderly and wonderful phenomena of nature could not be purposeless and accidental". It is also supported by Iqbal. The two cases, the 'clock' and the 'universe', are however, different. Unlike the case of the clock, where its builder put the complex machine together given

pre-existing material, the universe and its material itself created by God also. That is, there is no point in finding it extra-ordinary that God would be able to organize pre-existing “intractable” (difficult to mold or manipulate) material in such an elegant fashion. The only reason we would have of thinking so, would be if it was a difficult task to design the universe. But then why would God, first create a difficult task for Himself and then go on resolve the difficulty by arranging into a sophisticated pattern? In addition, God would be limited in what He could create by this pre-existing material. This, to Iqbal, does not seem consistent with the Islamic concept of an omnipotent God. Iqbal writes, perhaps in response to Paley, “There is really no analogy between the work of the human artificer and the phenomena of Nature.” Both Iqbal and Russell point out that it is inappropriate for a person who believes in God to put forth an argument for His existence on teleological grounds. The British philosopher David Hume rejected the teleological argument,



for different reasons. For him the argument from the best explanation is an inductive argument (Marked by or involving inference), and Hume had argued that inductive knowledge and causation is not possible.

**Most Muslim philosophers** have attempted to get around this vexatious (persistently disturbing or worrisome) problem by simply recognizing the Qur'anic emphasis on the uniformity of nature, accepting it as such and thus avoiding this problem. The Qur'an says: "Not for (idle) sport did We create the heavens and the earth and all that is between!" (Qur'an;21:16). The Qur'an says: "Verily in the heavens and the earth are Signs for those who believe. (Qur'an;45:3). "And in the creation of yourselves and the fact that animals are scattered (through the earth) are Signs for those of assured Faith. And in the alternation of Night and Day and the fact that Allah sends down Sustenance from the sky and revives therewith the earth after its death and the change of the winds are Signs for those that are wise. (Qur'an;45:4-5). The above

problem of induction gave rise to modern skepticism (feeling of uncertainty about a situation : misgivings, doubtfulness,) and remains a fascinating unsolved puzzle.

### **Immanuel Kant: (1724-1804 C.E):**

He was the German idealist (an imaginative or idealistic but impractical person), philosopher. He was, one of the foremost thinkers of the Enlightenment. He argued that reason is the means by which the phenomena of experience are translated into understanding raises a powerful objection to any theory that claims to grasp knowledge of God. He claims that in terms of knowledge there can be no jump from the physical to the metaphysical. Kant distinguishes between 'noumenal' and 'phenomenal' objects. An object that can be intuited only by the intellect and not perceived by the senses. The noumenal are objects that lie beyond all possible experience, and the phenomena are the ones we directly experience. Hence, for him the metaphysical is

the noumenal realm. He argues that there can be no possible relation between two realms that have no connection between them. He questions that how can we prove that a certain noumenal object exists from phenomenal premises?.

### **Iqbal:**

Iqbal responds to Kant's criticism of metaphysical existence from empirical (experimental, pragmatic) experience: "Kant's verdict can be accepted only if we start with the assumption that all experience other than the normal level of experience is impossible. The only question, therefore, is whether the normal level is the only level of knowledge-yielding experience?" He argues that there are other levels of experience that can bear knowledge as well. It is pertinent to note that according to Qur'an the 'reason' properly used must lead man to cognition of God's existence and, thus of the fact that a definite plan underlines all His creation; reward for pious believers and

punishment for rebellious non believers and sinners: “And they (disbelievers) will add: “Had we but listened (to those warnings). Or (at least) used our own reason, we would not (now) be among those who are destined for the blazing flame!”(Qur’an; 67:10).

## **ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS:**

### **Anselm’s Argument:**

The modern form of the ontological argument in modern western philosophy was made famous by St.Anselm (1033-1109 C.E) and Descartes (1596-1650). The argument rests on the premise that existence is a predicate that a being could have or lack. Anselm’s argument can be summarized as: “God is a being than which nothing greater can be conceived, a being than which nothing greater can be conceived to exist in our thought. Either a being than which nothing greater can be conceived exists in thought alone and not in reality or a being than which nothing greater can be conceived exists

both in thought and in reality. If the greatest conceivable being existed in thought alone we could think of another being existing in both thought and reality. Existing in thought and reality is greater than existing in thought alone. Therefore: A being than which nothing greater can be conceived (God) exists in thought and in reality.” Simply by pure reason, without any reference to the world, Anselm argues for God. A key feature of these kinds of arguments is that they try to show not only that God exists, but that he necessarily exists. That is, He cannot, not exist. The existence of God is an essential feature of its being just like the angles of a triangle always add up to 180 degrees. It would be impossible to think of God without it existing. Descartes [French mathematician, scientist, and philosopher, considered as the father of modern philosophy] writes: “From the fact that I cannot think of a mountain without a valley, it does not follow that a mountain and a valley exist anywhere, but simply that a mountain and a valley, whether they exist or not are mutually

inseparable. But from the fact that I cannot think of God except as existing, it follows that existence is inseparable from God. Hence, the very essence of God, to even make the concept of God intelligible it must exist”.

### **Criticism:**

This argument has been widely criticized. Kant criticized the argument from two perspectives.

First he points out that, although, the concept that all three sides of the triangle add up to 180 is an analytical concept, there is still nothing that shows that it must exist. Similarly the idea that existence analytically belongs to the concept of God is an illegitimate inference. He writes: “To posit a triangle, and yet to reject its three angles, is self-contradictory; but there is no self-contradiction in rejecting the triangle together with its three angles. The same holds true of the concept of an absolutely necessary being”.

Secondly, he rejects Descartes argument on the grounds that existence is not a predicate that can be added or taken away from a concept. That is; existence is not like any of the other

properties that are associated with 'things.' To say that something exists, is simply to say that the concept is instantiated in the world. He claims this on the basis of his distinction between analytic and synthetic statements. An analytic statement is one of the kinds, "all bachelors are unmarried males," or "the sum of the angles of a triangle is 180." In these statements the predicates, "unmarried males" or "sum of angles is 180" does not add any new information to the concept of "bachelors" or "triangle." Analytic statements are true by virtue of their meaning alone.

### **Synthetic Statement:**

A synthetic statement is something that adds more information about the object in question. For example, "all ravens are black," is synthetic. The predicate "are black" tells us more information about the subject "ravens." Kant's claim is that statements of the sort, "X exists" are analytic. It does not add anything additional to the concept. Hence the inference that existing

in reality is greater than existence in thought alone is false. The reduction of absurdum from pure thought to God, of Anselm (1033-1109 C.E) and Descartes (1596-1650 C.E) thus fails according to Kant. The closest form of parallel thought to this can be found in the thought of Avicenna [Ibn Sīnā ;980-1037 C.E, philosopher and scientist] who proposed a somewhat similar ontological argument for the existence of God. Avicenna also propounded that God is a necessary being; however, his argument unlike Descartes is not a purely rational one. Avicenna believed that we possess a direct intuitive apprehension of the reality and existence of this necessary being. He believed that it would be impossible to think concretely without the existence of such a being. Averroës [Ibn Rushd-1126-1198 C.E; trained in law, medicine, and philosophy, rose to be chief judge of Córdoba. His series of commentaries on most of the works of Aristotle, written between 1169 and 1195, exerted considerable influence on both Jewish and Christian scholars in later centuries],



however, insists that there can be no rational proof for God's existence and it can only be grasped via the medium of intuition.

### **Thoughts of Muslim Philosophers on 'GOD':**

The God that Avicenna argues for is a Necessary Being. A being that necessarily exists, and everything else besides it is contingent and depends upon it for its existence. God has no other essence besides his existence. His essence (Mahiyah: Quidditas), just is His existence. Since, God is the only being in which the essence and existence are to be found together, the essence of all other beings precedes their existence. Thus He is absolutely simple, and has no further attributes. In his book 'al-Shifa' Avicenna explains that since the 'Necessary Being' has no genus or differentia it is both indefinable and indemonstrable. As such "neither its being or its actions can be an object of 'Discursive Thought' (proceeding to a conclusion through reason rather than intuition.), since it is without cause,

quality, position or time.” All other entities do not exist necessarily or essentially, rather they are merely contingent beings (per accidents).

The characteristics of God offered by Avicenna drew major criticisms from the contemporary Muslim orthodoxy, who found his definition incompatible with Islamic doctrine. “..If there be (but) the weight of a mustard-seed and it were (hidden) in a rock or (anywhere) in the heavens or on earth Allah will bring it forth: for Allah understands the finest mysteries (and) is well-acquainted (with them).”(Qur’an;31:16).How can God be omniscient if He has no attributes? He does try to explain, however, how his description would be compatible with God having knowledge of the world. In knowing Himself, God is capable of knowing everything that emanated from Him. Since God does not have sense-perceptual knowledge He cannot know the particulars, but rather only the essences or universal principles. But according to Avicenna this does not exclude him knowing the specifics of any given event. Knowing all the

antecedents and consequences in the causal chain, allows God to place the event temporally and differentiate it from all other events. Hence, his theory does not preclude God's knowledge of the specifics. Al-Ghazzali (1058-1111C.E) was not satisfied with this account and criticized Avicenna stating that the theory being presented would not allow for change in divine knowledge with the introduction of the time factor.

### **Criticism of 'Perpetual Universe':**

Another important characteristic of Avicenna's ontology was the fact that he believed that the universe is eternal. This was another belief, which was not acceptable to the Islamic orthodoxy. He thought the creative ability of God was linked to His intellectual nature and thus flowed eternally of rational necessity from Him. Although the universe exists as an independent body, its existence is still contingent upon God. God and the world are different, but the existence of the world depends upon God. This can be seen as refinement, or rather

'Islamisation' of the Aristotelian views that God and the universe were two distinct beings which did not interact with each other. What is, in different ways, implied by these arguments is that the word God is unique in its logic, that it works in discourse as no other word exactly works. Thus, one cannot say "God exists" but rather "God necessarily exists." This is sometimes expressed by remarking that the existence of God is not the existence of a physical object or even the existence of a person, though what can be said about persons is less misleading in speaking about God than in speaking about the logic of things. This point is sometimes made, albeit misleadingly by saying that God does not exist, but this is only a picturesque way of saying that he does not exist in the way that a table exists.

### **Verifiable Evidence:**

The Verifiable Evidence is the blend of all the three i.e. Cosmological, Teleological and Ontological Arguments.

## **Proof of Existence of God through Scientific Facts in Qur'an:**

Islam encourages reasoning, discussions and dialogues. The Qur'an contains more than 6000 verses (ayaats-'Signs') out of which more than thousand refer to various subjects of science, such as Astronomy, Physics, Geography, Geology, Oceanology, Biology, Botany, Zoology, Medicine, Physiology, Embryology as well as General Science, mostly un known to humanity fourteen centuries ago. It may be kept in view that Qur'an is not a book of 'science', but a book of 'signs' i.e. a book of Ayaats. It is found that the Qur'anic information on science does not conflict with the established scientific facts. It may go against certain scientific hypothesis or theories, which are not grounded in facts as many a times, the science retract its position.

Many facts mentioned in the Qur'an have been discovered in the last few centuries. But science has not advanced to a level where it can confirm every statement of the Qur'an concerning science. According to Dr.Zakir Naik; suppose

80% of all that is mentioned in the Qur'an has been proved 100% correct, while for the remaining 20%, science makes no categorical statement, since it has not advanced to a level, where it can either prove or disprove these statements. With the limited knowledge through science available today one cannot say for sure whether even a single percentage or a single verse of the Qur'an from this 20% portion is wrong. Thus when 80% of the Qur'an is 100% correct and the remaining 20% is not disproved, logic says that even the 20% portion is correct. The details of scientific facts mentioned in Qur'an are available in the book 'Qur'an and Science' by Dr. Zakir Naik & "The Bible, The Qur'an and Science" by Dr. Maurice Bucaille, details follows.

## **CHAPTER-4: THEORIES OF CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE**

The popular theories (not myths) discussed by the scientists and philosophers about creation of the universe are briefly mentioned here:

### **Accident Theory:**

The universe and this world is so well organized, working according to laws, it can not be outcome of an accident, it must be the work of a Creator. But the Creator can not be seen through the five senses. The universe is so big, so vast so wonderful, that human perceptions can not fully comprehend it despite the advancement in technology and knowledge. So its creator also has to very big very great that it is beyond the capabilities of physical human senses to fully comprehend Him, however the great gift of 'intellect' can be used to feel His existence. How to feel His existence? If one can not perceive some thing directly through the senses then the signs guide to the reality. If in the sea some one observes birds in some

particular direction, it indicates existence of some Island or land, although we do not see the island or land, but it is the intellect which tell us that the birds have to be closer to land, they can not survive in the sea for long. If one looks at him self, the human being is a very complex unique machine, it can not be product of an accident.

### **The Big Bang:**

The universe, the heaven, stars, sun, moon and earth, how it all came in to existence? The scientists have resolved this issue and say that the universe is the outcome of Big Bang. The big mass, exploded and there became stars, galaxies and solar system and earth. A Big Bang made this world, which is so well organized in definite pattern. Human have been navigating using patterns of stars from ages. The solar system follows some rules. There is fixed pattern of rotation and gravitational forces interacting, making days & nights, precisely in a fixed cycle spread over time, the result of a big



bang! If there is some huge heap of junk lying on ground and there comes a tornado, once the tornado is over, we find the heap of junk dispersed more haphazardly. If a tornado hits a city, we find all rubble once it is over; there is no definite new organized pattern. If we explode some dynamite in heap of rubbish it does not result in good products like car or a house. If Big Bang which produced the well organized galaxies, stars and solar system and earth why could not the tornado or an explosion produce some organized things? Because in case of the 'Big Bang' there is an all powerful all wise Creator, where as in case of tornado there is no creator or intelligent force operating with the intentions to create some thing out of it. Hence God exists, who is the Creator of the entire universe.

### **Creation by Design:**

This is a derivative form of 'Teleological Arguments'. The creation of the universe and humanity as per His 'Grand Design' has been

described by God through verses of Qur'an. The Qur'an speaks about hundreds of things that were not known fourteen hundred year ago once Qur'an was revealed; but they have been scientifically proved recently. God says: "Soon shall We show them Our signs in the universe and in their own selves, until it becomes clear to them that this Qur'an is indeed the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a witness over everything?"(Qur'an;41:53). "Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of Creation) before We clove them asunder? We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?"(Qur'an;21:30). "Moreover He Comprehended in His design the sky and it had been (as) smoke: He said to it and to the earth: "Come ye together willingly or unwillingly." They said: "We do come (together) in willing obedience." (Qur'an;41:11) "Who hath created and further given order and proportion" (Qur'an;87:2). The science has formulated a 'theory of evolution' to justify the creation of

human being; Some thing came from sea, gradually through evolution it developed in to a creature, then small monkey, bigger monkey, chimpanzee and then human. Who created monkeys through some creature from the sea? If some thing from sea became monkey why it could not directly become human being? If monkey became human then why there are still so many monkeys? The creation of humanity has been explained in Qur'an; "O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you might get to know one another. Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous. Allah is All-Knowledgeable, All-Aware."(Qur'an;49:13). "then placed him as a drop of semen in a firm resting place, then changed the semen into a leechlike mass, then leechlike mass into a fetus lump, then fetus lump into bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, and then We brought him forth as quite a different creature from the

embryo - so blessed is Allah, the best of all creators.”(Qur’an;23:13-14).

### **Astronomy:**

The creation of the universe by ‘The Big Bang’: (Qur’an;21:30,41:11). The shape of earth; “And the earth, moreover, hath He made egg shaped.” (Qur’an;79:30). Moon has reflected light and sun has its own light; "And (who) made the moon a light (nur, reflected light) in their midst and made the sun as a (Glorious)Lamp(siraja-own light).(Qur’an;71:16). The Sun Rotates:” It is He Who created the Night and the Day, and the sun and the moon: All (the celestial bodies) swim along, each in its rounded course.” (Qur’an;21:33). “It is not permitted to the sun to catch up the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day: Each (just) swims along in (its own) orbit (according to Law).” (Qur’an;36:40). The other examples are: The sun will extinguish;(Qur’an;36:38,13:2). The expanding nature of universe; (Qur’an;51:47).

### **Nuclear Science:**

Atoms can be divided;(Qur’an;10:61).

**Geology:**

Mountains are like tent pegs firmly fixed providing stability; (Qur'an;78:6-7,21:31,79:32).

**Oceanology:**

Darkness in depths of ocean; (Qur'an;24:40). General Science: The water cycle; (Qur'an;39:21, 30:24,23:18).

**Botany:**

Plants & Fruits have male and female; (Qur'an;20:53, 13:3).

**Zoology:**

The bee and its skills; (Qur'an;16:68-69). Lifestyle and communication of ants; (Qur'an;27:17-18). Honey has healing for humankind; (Qur'an;16:69).

**Biology:**

Creation of man from water; (Qur'an;25:54). Creation of living being;“ We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?” (Qur'an;21:30). Importance of fingerprints: (Qur'an;75:3-4) and the existence of pain receptors in the skin: (Qur'an;4:56).

## **Embryology:**

Embryological stages; (Qur'an;23:12-14, 75:37-39,82:7-8). Embryo partly formed and partly unformed; (Qur'an;22:5). First sense of hearing developed then sense of sight; (Qur'an;32:9,23:78). Sex determination factor for child; (Qur'an;53:45-46,75:37-39).

It is a historical fact that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was 'Ummi' i.e. unlettered (illiterate). Before the Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), he never claimed to proclaim a Message from Allah. He was not in the habit of preaching eloquent truths as from a Book, before he received his Revelation, nor was he able to write or transcribe with his own hand. If he possessed these worldly gifts, there would have been some plausibility in the charge of the talkers of vanities that he spoke not from inspiration but from other people's books, or that he composed the beautiful verses of the Qur'an himself and committed them to memory in order to recite them to people. The circumstances in which the

Qur'an came bear their own testimony to its truth as revelation from Allah. It is just illogical to assume that an illiterate person brought up in the primitive Arabian environments with no tradition of scientific studies and knowledge, could bring out so accurate scientific facts fourteen centuries ago. Moreover it is beyond human capacity to have all the guesses correct without a single mistake, which in itself is sufficient to prove to a logical person that the origin of the Qur'an is divine. It is the existence of 'The Creator'; only the God could have mentioned all these scientific facts 1400 years ago before they were discovered. Hence the logical conclusion: God exists, Qur'an is the word of God and Muhammad (peace be upon him), the messenger of Allah (God).

### **The Perceptions:**

There are certain things which exist in reality where as their opposite do not exist, but has just been named due to perception. The light exists, the main sources being sun, moon, fire,

electricity etc. Its intensity could be very high, moderate or low. The power of light varies, it is measurable through instruments. There some thing called as 'Darkness': Does the darkness exist? If it does, is there less or more darkness, which could be measured. In fact the darkness does not exist, we can not get a source of darkness like the source of Light. If there is no light there is darkness. It is the absence of light which is called 'darkness' says Mr.Yousuf Estates. The 'Darkness' is just a perception, a name given to the absence of light. Similarly the 'sound' exists; it could be low, medium, and high sound. There are different sources which generating sound, it is measurable, decibel is the unit of its measure. There is some thing called silence, it can not be measured, but we call more or less silence. Actually it is the more or less sound which creates more or less silence. We can not have a source of silence, it can not be said that bring so much silence. Silence is just a perception. Analogous is the case of heat which exists. There are various



sources of heat like, sun, fire, electricity etc. Heat is measurable, through BTU, Kelvin or Celsius units. There could be more, high heat, or less heat. What about cold? does it exist? The cold does not exist beyond  $-273\text{ C}^{\circ}$ , after this temperature there will not be more cold. Absence of heat is cold, just a perception. The God exists, non existence of God is just a perception.

### **Criticism on Existence of God:**

One of the major arguments proposed against the existence of God in contemporary western philosophy is the problem of evil. It is based upon the inability to reconcile the magnitude of evil in the world with the all-loving nature of God. John Hick describes the problem from the perspective of its proponent, "If God perfectly loves, God must wish to abolish all evil; and if God is all-powerful, God must be able to abolish all evil. But evil exists; therefore God cannot be both omnipotent and perfectly loving." This thus causes difficulty for the Judeo-Christian-Islamic

God who possess both qualities of being all-loving and omnipotent. David Hume(1711-1776 C.E, the British philosopher and historian who argued that human knowledge arises only from sense experience) is a proponent of this view and argues that the sheer amount of evil, which may outweigh the good, in the world makes dubious that a deity exists. The main response to this kind of an argument is known as the Free-Will Defense. It is based on the premise that for God to create self-directly and independent agents like humans, he had to grant a certain amount of freedom to them, and this freedom would inevitably result in human-to-human evil. It has been proposed that there need not be a contradiction between God creating morally free agents and making it the case that all their actions turn out to be good. But it can be argued that in that case, are the beings really as free as humans? If all our actions were predestined in this way, there would be a sense in which we would not be free and only an allusion be created thereof.

Although God could have created beings of this sort, they would have amounted to mere puppets and not vibrant beings as envisioned by God.

## **FREE WILL DEFENCE:**

The primary difficulty with the problem of evil is resolving the apparent conflict between the reality of evil in the world and the claim that God is: Omniscient-All knowing, Omnipotent-All powerful and Wholly Good. One version of the free will defense is to compare the current state of the world with a world in which all actions were good and no evil was possible. It is important here to point out that the good that is being referred to is 'moral good.' That is, it is good that is a result of the conscious actions of people. This is distinct from 'natural good' or 'natural evil' which maybe result from non-human causes. The free will defense (FWD) theorist points out that in order for man to be in a position to do 'moral good' he must be 'significantly free.' That is, he must be in a

position to make a choice between making a morally good or evil action. Given that in the current world (World-1) human agents are given this freedom, a certain level of moral evil is unavoidable. This world would still be more preferable to a possible World-2 in which there were no free actions (thus no freedom) but all actions performed were entirely good.

### **Critique:**

A critic of this defense will point out that if God is all-powerful (Omnipotent) then it ought to be in His capacity to create a World-3 in which humans had freedom, yet all their actions turned out to be good. Thus their actions would be predetermined to be good, yet they would still have the free option of choosing between morally good or bad actions. The agent would have the freedom to choose any action they like; it would just be that whatever choice they made it would turn out to be good. This would entirely be within God's power since He is omnipotent and is only limited by logical impossibilities.

The challenge for the FWD theorist is to show that Freedom and Causal Determinism are both mutually inconsistent. It can't both be the case that humans are free agents, and that their actions are causally predetermined. The crucial question is, can God create any world? Alvin Plantinga attempts to answer this question. First, he points out that Leibniz was mistaken in thinking that God would have to, and thus did, create the best possible world. Plantinga argues that there can be no such thing as the best possible world, since to any world one more unit of pleasure or goodness can be added to make it even better. Thus it seems implausible to think of the best possible world as existing. This then is one instance when God cannot create any world. Secondly, he argues that God cannot create a world in which Man is both significantly free, yet his actions are already determined. His proof on this premise has to do with a thought experiment. We can imagine a case in the present world in which we know given certain

conditions a person would hypothetically engage in a morally evil action. It would not be impossible for God to create a world that were almost identical the present world, except that the person would then not engage in the evil. Since, to do so would deny him the freedom of individuality and his personality. That is, for God to ensure that he not engage in the evil would deny his freedom. The only other solution is for God to not create the world at all. He argues that for any world God could create, which included freedom, there is at least one action on which Man would go wrong, or else he could not create any world at all, this phenomenon he calls 'Transworld Depravity'. Therefore, for God to create a world in which humans had moral freedom, the existence of both Good and Evil is necessary.

### **Free Will- Islamic Perspective:**

Basing on the basic doctrine of Islam, the Muslims scholars have deduced a balanced view about free will. According to the great

Spanish Muslim philosopher Averroës (Ibn Rushd); 'The human actions depend partly on his own free will and partly on causes outside his control. Man is free to wish and to act in a particular manner, but his will is always restrained and determined by exterior causes. These causes spring from the general laws of nature; God alone knows their sequence.'

### **Shah Wali Allah (1702-1762 C.E):**

Shah Wali Allah of Delhi reinterpreted the concept of Taqdir (Determinism: The philosophical doctrine that every event, act, and decision is the inevitable consequence of antecedents that are independent of the human will) and condemned its popularization, qismat (narrow fatalism, or absolute predetermination: The doctrine that all events are predetermined by fate and are therefore unalterable.). Shah Wali Allah held that man could achieve his full potential by his own exertion in a universe that was determined by God. God has granted power and limited free will to human by which

they can perform certain actions by use of their wisdom i.e. to choose between right and wrong. It is mentioned in Qur'an: "Say "The Truth is from your Lord": let him who will believe and let him who will reject (it): for the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire...(Qur'an;18:29). However it is not within the power of human to do whatever they desire, their choice of Free Will is limited.

**The limited Free-will** granted to human involves a corresponding personal responsibility. Although every action is already in the knowledge of Allah and nothing can happen unless He approves or desires but it does not necessarily imply that He is happy with whatever man does due to freedom provided. Every doer of actions feels that he does or does not do a thing without any coercion. He stands up and sits, comes in and goes out, travels and stays by his own free will without feeling anybody forcing him to do any of these actions. In fact, he clearly distinguishes between doing something of his own free will and someone else forcing him to do that action. The Islamic



law also wisely distinguishes between these states of affairs. It does not punish a wrongdoer for an action done under compulsion: It is mentioned in Qur'an: "Allah does not charge a soul beyond its capacity" (Qur'an;2:286). "There shall be no coercion in matters of faith. Distinct has now become the right way from the (way of ) error: hence, he who rejects the powers of evil and believes in God has indeed taken hold of support most unfailing, which shall never give way: for God is all-hearing, all-knowing."(Qur'an;2:256). "An so (O Prophet) exhort them, thy task is only to exhort: Thou canst not compel them to (believe). As for those who turn their backs and disbelieve, Allah will punish them with the mighty punishment."(Qur'an;88:21-24).

"Notwithstanding that no human being can ever attain to faith otherwise than by God's leave, and (that) it is He who lays the loathsome evil (of disbelief) upon those who will not use their reason?"(Qur'an;10:100);"to you be your religion (Din), and to me mine."(Qur'an;109:6). If the

action is not done by the individual's free will, then praising the virtuous is a joke and punishing the evildoer is an injustice, and Allah is, of course, far from joking and being unjust. Allah has sent messengers who are "bearing good tidings, and warning, so that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the messengers."(Qur'an;4:165);"Verily this (Qur'an) is no less than a Message to (all) the Worlds: (With profit) to whoever among you wills to go straight" (Qur'an;81:27-28). If the individual's action is not performed by his free will, his argument is not invalidated by the sending of messengers and scriptures. Qur'an says; "This is Paradise; you have inherited it by virtue of your past deeds."(Qur'an;43:72).

### **Existence of God Prerequisite in Islam:**

Islamic philosophers of the middle ages did not address the problem of existence of God in any direct fashion. This maybe because in the context of Muslim thought, the existence of God was a prerequisite. In fact, the aim of the

philosophers was to prove the existence of God using Aristotelian logic. So we do not find Muslim philosophers arguing against the existence of God, on the contrary they are attempting to justify the qualities of God from a philosophical perspective. The Muslim philosophers did, however, tackle a different but somewhat similar issue concerning the unity of God. The central problem facing them was how to reconcile the absolute unity and perfection of God with the fact that there exists in the world such great amounts of imperfections. If God is all perfect and the world is a result of divine will, we are then faced with the problem of duality between God and His will. Yet it is this very difference (i.e. the imperfection of the world) that sets it apart from God (who is perfect). How is this consistent with the absolute unity (Tawheed) of God which is so central to Islamic doctrine? This issue had been one of the major issues of Muslim thought, and was a subject of great debate between Al-Ghazzali, and other neo-platonic Muslim thinkers.

## CHAPTER-5: CONCEPT OF EVIL

### **Medieval Islamic Philosophy:**

It is, however, difficult to find any direct analogue to the problem of evil in medieval Islamic philosophy. However, some positions held by early Muslim thinkers may be relevant to the free will defense. Early Muslim Aristotelian thinkers like Ibn Sina held that God is a necessary being, who had no other attributes besides His existence, and that all other beings emanated from the divine by necessity. Despite holding this position, they attempted to reconcile it with Islamic doctrines. Ghazzali points out that this is not possible. That is, to say that whatever proceeds from God does so by necessity denies God agency, i.e. it denies Him Free Will. If God has no will, since he has no attributes, then God has no free choice to decide which world to create. It seems that Ghazzali's criticism can be equally applied to advocate of the problem of evil who states that God by necessity must always in a way that will ensure that its

consequences are wholly good. This would then break down the dilemma posed by trying to reconcile the divine attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, wholly goodness versus the reality of evil in the world. Since, now God would not be obliged to abide by the condition of wholly goodness. Another stream of thought in Islam, advocated by Ghazzali, Ibn Arabi, Al-Attas and Islamic mystical traditions, is to argue that the only true way to grasp the ultimate reality, and thus resolve this problem is through a “Direct Awareness of Reality,”(Religious Experience) unencumbered by intellectual interference.

### **Modern Attempts:**

The lack of intense debate on the problem of evil may be, because the problem was not formulated at the time or those Muslim thinkers were preoccupied by other issues. In modern times, the 20th century Muslim philosopher Iqbal did attempt to address this problem. He suggested that Goodness would not be possible

without the resistance of evil. The evil in the world is meant to be overcome. Whoever asks why must there be evil when God can remove it is missing the point. Iqbal insists that without evil there could be no moral or spiritual development. He cites a simile used by Kant in which he refers to birds who resent the resistance of air, yet it is the very air that allows them to fly high, they would be unable to do so in a vacuum. Likewise, a certain amount of evil is necessary for the inner growth of humans, so that they may be able to overcome it. As the Qur'an states, "And for trial will We test you with evil and with Good (Qur'an;21:35).

Iqbal could be subject to criticism, since he has ignored the victims of evil. What about those people who suffered so the rest of mankind could build itself? Iqbal's answer here would be consistent with his philosophy of self. Like Nietzsche (1844-1900 C.E, German philosopher who reasoned that Christianity's emphasis on the afterlife makes its believers less able to cope with earthly life), Iqbal believed that

ultimately the self, the individual is the only thing of utmost importance. That is we have no concrete knowledge of the external world and factors therein. What we can be sure of is only ourselves; hence, we must view happenings to beings other than ourselves only in the capacity in which they help to build ourselves. The fact that the suffering of an innocent victim serves to bolster our personality is sufficient. [Islamic concept of Divine justice and reward in hereafter takes care of sufferings here] The independent suffering of the external individual cannot be verified. Nietzsche has criticized Christian theology for placing mankind in a state of guilt for the original sin, Iqbal had pointed out that this concept of original sin is absent in Islam, and that the Qur'an encouraged a positive self image of the self or man. Many modern Christian theologians also adopt this view.

### **The Religious Experience:**

There have been arguments presented for the existence of God which are non-analytical, and

do not rely on purely logical or empirical premises. There is a strong strand within classical Islamic philosophy, beginning with Al-Ghazzali, to strongly put forth this view, and at the same time deny the legitimacy of the purely theoretical arguments for God's existence. Muhammad Iqbal also defend this view, however, he attempts to provide reconciliatory possibilities of reason with religious experience in concert with his organic world-view. The principles for an Islamic epistemology are laid out in the Qur'an as it defines three avenues for knowledge: Certainty by Sense-Perception (ain al-yaqin) or empirically derived knowledge, Cognitive Certainty (ilm al-yaqin) or knowledge by pure reason and Absolute Experienced Certainty (haqq al-yaqin) or knowledge by intuition. These are sometimes called modes of knowledge. A Muslim Sufi (mystic) philosopher explains, "The sensory mode is experienced through we eat and smell, the cognitive is through knowledge, whether self-evident or acquired, while the intuitive is similarly divided:



It can either be self-evident or acquired. However, he who has access to intuitive, which is to say divine knowledge, knows instinctively what other must acquire through the exercise of their cognitive faculties.” It is this last form of knowledge, the intuitive, that the arguments from religious experience aim at. There is some disagreement on the significance of intuitive knowledge and even if it is necessary, is it sufficient for an Islamic epistemology of metaphysics? Ghazzali argues in the affirmative, however modern philosophers Iqbal and Al-Attas assert that intuitive knowledge must work in concert with other ‘modes’ of knowledge as well.

## **CHAPTER-6: NEW WISDOM**

### **Synthesis of Theology, Philosophy & Mysticism**

#### **Personal Experience and Direct Vision:**

More important reason for the decline of the earlier philosophic tradition, however, was the renewed vitality and success of the program formulated by al-Ghazzali for the synthesis of theology, philosophy, and mysticism into a new kind of philosophy called New Wisdom (Hikma). It consisted of a critical review of the philosophy of Avicenna, preserving its main external features (its logical, physical, and, in part, metaphysical structure, and its terminology) and introducing principles of explanation for the universe and its relation to God based on personal experience and direct vision. If the popular theology preached by the philosophers from al-Farabi (Latin Alfarabius, or Avennasar, 878-950 C.E ), to Averroës (1126-1198 C.E) is disregarded, it is evident that philosophy proper

meant to them what al-Farabi called a state of mind dedicated to the quest and the love for the highest wisdom. None of them claimed, however, that he had achieved this highest wisdom. In contrast, every leading exponent of the new wisdom stated that he had achieved or received it through a private illumination, dream (at times inspired by the Prophet), or vision and on this basis proceeded to give an explanation of the inner structure of natural and divine things. In every case, this explanation incorporated Platonic or Aristotelian elements but was more akin to some version of a later Hellenistic philosophy, which had found its way earlier into one or another of the schools of Islamic theology. Though, because of the absence of an adequate philosophic education on the part of earlier theologians, it had not been either elaborated or integrated into a comprehensive view.

## **Mysticism- Overriding Theology:**

Exponents of the new wisdom, like their late-Hellenistic [Hellenistic: Period relating to postclassical Greek history and culture from the death of Alexander (323B.C) the Great to the accession of Augustus (27 B.C)] counterparts, proceeded through an examination of the positions of Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus. They also gave special attention to the insights of the pre-Socratic philosophers of ancient Greece and the myths and revelations of the ancient Near East, and they offered to resolve the fundamental questions that had puzzled earlier philosophers. In its basic movement and general direction, therefore, Islamic philosophy between the 9th and the 19th centuries followed a course parallel to that of Greek philosophy from the 5th century BC to the 6th century AC. Although it made use of such theological criticisms of philosophy, the New Wisdom took the position that theology did not offer a positive substitute for and was incapable of solving the difficulties of "Aristotelian" philosophy. It did not question

the need to have recourse to the Qur'an and the Hadith to find the right answers. It insisted (on the authority of a long-standing mystical tradition), however, that theology concerns itself only with the external expressions of this divine source of knowledge. The inner core was reserved for the adepts of the mystic path whose journey leads to the experience of the highest reality in dreams and visions. Only the mystical adepts are in possession of the one true wisdom, the ground of both the external expressions of the divine law and the phenomenal world of human experience and thought.

### **Wisdom of Illumination:**

The first master of the New Wisdom, As-Suhrawardi (12th century), called it the "Wisdom of Illumination." The account of the doctrines of Ibn al-'Arabi (12th-13th centuries) belongs properly to the history of Islamic mysticism. Yet his impact on the subsequent development of the new wisdom was in many ways far greater

than was that of as-Suhrawardi. The Andalusian mystic Ibn Masarrah (9th-10th centuries) is reported to have championed pseudo-Empedoclean doctrines, and Ibn al-'Arabi (who studied under some of his followers) quotes Ibn Masarrah on a number of occasions. This philosophic tradition is distinct from the one followed by the Isma'ili theologians, who explained the origination of Intelligence by the mediation of God's will. After Ibn al-'Arabi, the new wisdom developed rapidly in intellectual circles in eastern Islam. Commentators on the works of Avicenna, As-Suhrawardi, and Ibn al-'Arabi began the process of harmonizing and integrating the views of the masters. Mystical fraternities became the custodians of such works, spreading them into Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent and transmitting them from one generation to another. Following the Mongol Khan Hülagü's entry into Baghdad (1258 C.E), the Twelver Shi'a were encouraged by the Il Khanid Tatars and Nasir ad-Din at-Tusi (the philosopher and theologian who accompanied

Hülagü as his vizier) to abandon their hostility to mysticism. Mu'tazili doctrines were retained in their theology. Theology, however, was downgraded to "formal" learning that must be supplemented by higher things, the latter including philosophy and mysticism, both of earlier Shi'a (including Isma'ili) origin and of later Sunni provenance.

### **School of Esfahan:**

During the 17th century, Iran experienced a cultural and scientific renaissance that included a revival of philosophic studies. The new wisdom as expounded by the masters of the school of Esfahan radiated throughout eastern Islam and continued as a vital tradition until modern times. The major figures of the school of Esfahan were Mir Damad and his great disciple Sadr ad-Din ash-Shirazi, (1571-1640 C.E). Both were men of wide culture and prolific writers with a sharp sense for the history and development of philosophic ideas.

**Mir Damad**, (died, 1631 C.E) was a philosopher, teacher, and leader in the cultural renaissance of Iran during the Safavid dynasty. His major contribution to Islamic philosophy was his concept of time and nature. A major controversy as to whether the universe was created or eternal had engaged the attention of Western and Islamic philosophers; Mir Damad was the first to advance the notion of 'huduth-e dahri' ("eternal origination") as an explanation of creation. He argued that, with the exception of God, all things, including the Earth and other heavenly bodies, are of both eternal and temporal origin. He influenced the revival of al-Falsafah al-yamani ("philosophy of Yemen"), a philosophy based on revelation and the sayings of prophets rather than the rationalism of the Greeks. His work was continued by his pupil Mulla Sadra, who became a prominent Muslim philosopher of the 17th century.

**Mulla Sadra** (1571-1640 C.E) was a philosopher, who led the Iranian cultural renaissance in the 17th century. The foremost



representative of the illuminationist, or Ishraqi, school of philosopher-mystics, he is commonly regarded by Iranians as the greatest philosopher their country has produced. Expounding his theory of nature, Mulla Sadra argued that the entire universe, except God and his Knowledge, was originated both eternally as well as temporally. Nature, he asserted, is the substance of all things and is the cause for all movement. Thus, nature is permanent and furnishes the continuing link between the eternal and the originated. Ar-Razi also saw that it leads to the notion (attributed to Plato) that time is a self-subsistent substance, whose relation to God would further compromise his unity. Mulla Sadra superimposed Ibn al-'Arabi's (1165-1240 C.E) mystical thought (whose philosophic implications had already been exposed by a number of commentators) on the "Aristotelian"-Illuminationist synthesis developed by Mir Damad.

The new wisdom lived on during the 18th and 19th centuries, conserving much of its vitality

and strength but not cultivating new ground. It attracted able thinkers such as Shah Wali Allah of Delhi (1702- 1762 C.E) and Hadi Sabzevari (1797- 1878 C.E), the Iranian teacher and philosopher who advanced the Hikma (wisdom) school of Islamic philosophy. His doctrines composed of diverse elements of gnosis (esoteric spiritual knowledge), philosophy, and revelation are an exposition and clarification of the philosophical concepts of Mulla Sadra. But he differed to some extent by classifying knowledge as an essence, rather than an outward quality, of the human soul. The new wisdom thus became a regular part of the program of higher education in the cultural centers of the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and the Indian subcontinent, a status never achieved by the earlier tradition of Islamic philosophy. In collaboration with its close ally Persian mystical poetry, the new wisdom determined the intellectual outlook and spiritual mood of educated Muslims in the regions where Persian had become the dominant literary language.

## **Refutation of the New Wisdom:**

### **Medieval Reformers & Revivalists:**

The wholesale rejection of the new wisdom in the name of simple, robust, and more practical piety which had been initiated by Ibn Taymiyah [1263-1328 C.E. one of Islam's most forceful theologians who, as a member of the Pietist school founded by Ibn Hanbal, sought the return of the Islamic religion to its sources: the Qur'an and the Sunnah, revealed writing and the prophetic tradition. He is also the source of the Wahhabiyah, a mid-18th-century traditionalist movement of Islam]. It continued to find exponents among jurists, made little impression on its devotees. To be taken seriously, reform had to come from their own ranks and be espoused by such thinkers as the eminent theologian and mystic of Muslim India Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624 C.E) a reformer who spoke their language and attacked Ibn al-'Arabi's "unity of being" (wahdat ul wujud) only to defend an older, presumably more orthodox form of

mysticism (wahdat ul shahud) Unity of Witness. He reemphasized Qur'anic orthodoxy and tempering Hindu pantheistic influences and reasserting what he deemed the clear distinctions between God, man, and the world. Despite some impact, however, attempts of this kind remained isolated and were either ignored or reintegrated into the mainstream, until the coming of the modern reformers.

## **Modern Revivalists & Reformers**

The 19th and 20th-century reformers Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905), and Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) were initially educated in this tradition, but they rebelled against it and advocated radical reforms. Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), was a Muslim politician, political agitator, and journalist whose belief in the potency of a revived Islamic civilization in the face of European domination significantly influenced the development of Muslim thought in the 19th and early 20th centuries. He had profound influence

on Muhammad 'Abduh(1849-1905), a renowned Egyptian scholar. In theology 'Abduh sought to establish the harmony of reason and revelation, the freedom of the will, and the primacy of the ethical implications of religious faith over ritual and dogma. He deplored the blind acceptance of traditional doctrines and customs and asserted that a return to the pristine faith of the earliest age of Islam not only would restore the Muslims' spiritual vitality but would provide an enlightened criterion for the assimilation of modern scientific culture. In matters of Islamic law, which governed Muslim family relationships, ritual duties, and personal conduct, 'Abduh tried to break through the rigidities of scholastic interpretation and to promote considerations of equity, welfare, and common sense, even if this occasionally meant disregarding the literal texts of the Qur'an. From his death to the present day, 'Abduh has been widely revered as the chief architect of the modern reformation of Islam.

## **New Wisdom, Lack Political Philosophy:**

The modernists attacked the new wisdom at its weakest point; that is, its social and political norms, its individualistic ethics, and its inability to speak intelligently about social, cultural, and political problems generated by a long period of intellectual isolation that was further complicated by the domination of the European powers. Unlike the earlier tradition of Islamic philosophy from al-Farabi to Averroës, which had consciously cultivated political science and investigated the political dimension of philosophy and religion and the relation between philosophy and the community at large, the new wisdom from its inception lacked genuine interest in these questions, had no appreciation for political philosophy, and had only a benign toleration for the affairs of the world. None of the reformers was a great political philosopher. They were concerned with reviving their nations' latent energies, urging them to free themselves from foreign domination, and impressing on them the need to reform their social and

educational institutions. They also saw that all this required a total reorientation, which could not take place so long as the new wisdom remained not only the highest aim of a few solitary individuals but also a social and popular ideal as well. According to Dr.Saehau:”Were it not for al-Ashari and al-Ghazali, the Arabs would have been a nation of Galileos and Newtons.”



## **CHAPTER-7: ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHICAL MOVEMENTS**

Relative to Western philosophy, the field of Islamic philosophy has remained largely dormant for the past few hundred years. The rigor of intellectual thought in Islam has been lost and contemporary Muslim thinkers are faced with the enormous challenge of re-interpreting and integrating the tremendous intellectual achievements of the West with that of earlier Islamic thinkers and the Qur'an. Such endeavor is of crucial importance to any new Islamic intellectual renaissance. With the rise of Western science and philosophy, serious new challenges have been posed to the very fundamental principles of epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics, espoused by the classical thinkers of Islam.

### **Defence of Traditionalism by Ibn Taymiyah:**

Resurgent traditionalism found effective defenders in men such as Ibn Taymiyah (13th-14th centuries) who employed a massive battery



of philosophic, theological, and legal arguments against every shade of Bid'ah (deviation) and called for a return to the beliefs and practices of the pious ancestors. These attacks, however, did not deal a decisive blow to philosophy as such. It rather drove philosophy underground for a period, only to re-emerge in a new garb. The stagnation of Islamic culture after the medieval period led to a reemphasis on original thinking (Ijtehad) and to religious reform movements.

### **Philosophical Developments in India:**

Among the great Mughals, Akbar attempted, in 1581, to promulgate a new religion, Din-e Ilahi, which was to be based on reason and ethical teachings common to all religions and which was to be free from priestcraft. This effort, however, was short-lived, and a reaction of Muslim orthodoxy was led by Shaykh Ahmed Sirhindi, who rejected ontological monism in favour of orthodox Unitarianism and sought to channel mystical enthusiasm along Qur'anic lines. By the middle of the 17th century, the

tragic figure of Dara Shikoh, the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's son and disciple of the Qadiri sufis, translated Hindu scriptures, such as the Bhagavadgita and the Upanishads, into Persian and in his translation of the latter closely followed Shankara's commentaries. In his *Majma' al-bahrayn* he worked out correlations between Sufi and Upanisadic cosmologies, beliefs, and practices. Such thoughts were however opposed by the orthodox Muslim scholars as heretical practices.

## **Social and Moral Reforms:**

### **Wahabi Movement:**

Unlike the primarily doctrinal and philosophical movements of the middle Ages, the modern movements were chiefly concerned with social and moral reform. The first such movement was the Wahabi, named after its founder, Ibn Abd al-Wahabi, which emerged in Arabia in the 18th century and became a vast revivalist movement with offshoots throughout the Muslim world. The

Wahabi movement aimed at reviving Islam by purifying it of un-Islamic influences, particularly those that had compromised its original monotheism. They deny all acts implying polytheism, such as visiting tombs and venerating saints, and advocate a return to the original teachings of Islam as incorporated in the Qur'an and Hadith (Traditions of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him), with condemnation of all deviations (bid'ah). Wahabi theology and jurisprudence, based, respectively, on the teachings of Ibn Taymiyah and on the legal school of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, stress literal belief in the Qur'an and Hadith and the establishment of a Muslim state based only on Islamic law.

### **Deoband School:**

It was founded in 1867 in India. The theological position of Deoband has always been heavily influenced by the 18th-century Muslim reformer Shah Wali Allāh and the early 19th-century Indian Wahhābiyah, giving it a very puritanical

and orthodox outlook. They have considerable influence in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is generally perceived that the Taliban are influenced by them; but recently the Deoband has unanimously condemned and renounced all forms of terrorism declaring it to be un-Islamic.

### **Barelvi:**

Barevi is a term used for a movement of Sunni Islam originating in South Asia. The name derives from the north Indian town of Bareilly where its founder Ahmed Raza Khan (1856–1921) shaped the movement by his writings. The followers of movement often prefer to be known by the title of *Ahle Sunnat wal Jama'at*. The movement is much influenced by Sufism and defends the traditional Sufi practices from the criticisms of Islamic movements like the Deobandi, Wahhabi and Ahl al-Hadith. Like other Sunni Muslims, Barelvi base their beliefs on the Qur'an and Sunnah, and believe in monotheism and the prophethood of Muhammad. Barelvis follow the Ash'ari and Maturidi schools of

aqidah, any one of the four school of fiqh, and the Qadri, Chishti, Naqshbandi or Suhrawardi Sufi orders. The Bareilvi movement has taken a stance against Taliban movements in South Asia, organising rallies and protests in India and Pakistan, condemning what they perceive as unjustified sectarian violence. The Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), an amalgamation of eight Sunni organizations, launched the Save Pakistan Movement to stem the process of Talibanisation. Terming the Taliban a product of global anti-Islam conspiracies, the leaders of SUC charged the Taliban with playing into the hands of the United States to divide Muslims and bring a bad name to Islam.

### **Intellectual Stagnation:**

Though the efforts made by scholars like Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab (1703-1792 C.E) and Shah Wali Ullah (1703-1762 C.E) to revive the original sprit are noteworthy, however it must be kept in view that the main thrust of the efforts of Muslim scholars (Ulema) have been

mostly directed towards safeguarding and preserving the dogmatic, ritualistic and institutional structure of Islam writes Dr. Israr Ahmad: As regards fulfilling the requirements and demands of reviving Islam in the present Westernized milieu, and re-establishing the ascendancy of the politic-socio-economic system of Islam, they are often unaware of even the existence of such need. Therefore, the services of the Ulema can be seen as a continuation of the efforts – like the services of present day Ulema are mainly focused on preservation rather than renaissance.

The respectable ancestors were justified in narrowing down their fields of activity because the cultural and legal system of Islam was still very much intact in those days, and the predominant need of their time was merely to preserve the religious faith in its original form and defend it against alien influences. As a result, all the past reformers concentrated their energies in the academic fields or at most in the moral and spiritual purification of common

Muslims. None of them tried to launch any organized political or militant movement, as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had strict restrictions on such rebellion against Muslim rulers, as long as Shari'a was being enforced and no flagrant violation of Islam was being committed. It was not considered permissible to revolt even if the rulers are themselves wicked and oppressive.

However as soon as the situation was changed and non Muslims started to conquer and occupy Muslim lands the reformist efforts quickly turned in to armed struggles, prominent among them are the Mujahideen movement of Sayyed Ahmad Shaheed (1786-1831) in India, the Sanussi movement in Libya by Syyid Muhammad Ibn Ali As-Sanussi (1787-1859) and struggle against Italian occupation up to 1932, the Mahdist movement initiated by Muhammad Ahmad (1844-1885) to resist British invasion in Sudan. Imam Shāmil (1797-1871) struggled against Russians occupation of Dagestan-Chechnya lasting for 25 years (1834-1859),

which was again revived recently and goes on. The Afghan Jihad started in nineties, initially against Russians occupation, has turned against their benefactor USA and its Western allies. The armed struggle in Palestine and Iraq against occupation forces has also been colored by religious fervor. The misadventure by Israelis in Lebanon in 2008 was thwarted by Hizb-Allah, a militant outfit with religious spur.

It is obvious that even today the traditional Ulema are following in the footsteps of earlier reformers who had worked under completely different conditions. In other words traditional Muslim scholars have in general restricted themselves and their abilities within a rather narrow circle of activity which is essentially defensive rather than revivalist. Moreover even the task of defending Islamic doctrines is not being properly done by the Ulema as they are more often than not completely out of touch with developments in contemporary philosophical, social, and scientific thought.



Similarly in order to deal with the modern ideologies that are seeking to destroy the foundations of Islamic faith one needs to first clearly discriminate between what is and what is not against the spirit of the Qur'an. Afterwards one can refute that part of the invading ideologies which are in conflict with the Qur'anic spirit and to accept and incorporate after reconciling that part which is in accordance with its spirit in to a new and contemporary exposition of Islam without compromising on the fundamentals of Islam. Unfortunately this is not being done by the traditional scholars (Ulema).

Dr.Israr Ahmed has rightly pointed out that; the role of Ulema today, instead of being that of an engine capable of propelling the ship of Islam forward, is actually nothing more than that of a heavy anchor which prevents the ship from drifting away in any wrong direction. Although, under the present circumstances, even this is a commendable and substantial service, the fact remains that this is by no means enough. Another aspect of the activity of Ulema that

needs correction is their usually strong emphasis on sectarian matters. A serious stagnation of thought along with dogmatism has set in, ever since the practice of Ijتهاد ('independent reasoning' as opposed to 'taqlid'-imitation) was done away with. The religious seminaries and Ulema of every sect are therefore spending most of their time and energies in defending and propagating their particular brands of dogma and rituals, often insisting that any variation in such matters is nothing short of apostasy.

Recently after 9/11 the concept of Takfir has gained popularity among the extremist operating in Afghanistan, tribal areas of Pakistan, Middle East (Iraq) and elsewhere to justify the killing of fellow innocent Muslims not very religious in outlook and practice. Takfir is the pronouncement that some one is an unbeliever (kafir), no more Muslim, infidel (murta'd) hence liable to be killed. It has its roots in Egypt, which reflect the twisted ideas of Sayyid Qutab, Mawdudi, IbnTymiyya, and Ibn Kathir.

Mainstream Muslims and Islamist groups reject the concept as a doctrinal deviation. Leaders such as Hassan al-Hudayabi (died 1977) and Yusuf al-Qaradawi refutes Takfir as un-Islamic and marked by bigotry and zealotry. This is the outcome of stagnation in thought process.

The 19th and 20th-century reformers include Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905), but Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), is the first modern Muslim philosopher to deal with the intellectual challenges faced by Muslim Ummah in any comprehensive manner. He made an effort to address the real issues, by saying: "With the reawakening of Islam, therefore, it is necessary to examine, in an independent spirit, what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached there can help us in the revision and if necessary, reconstruction, of theological thought in Islam." Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958) initiated struggle for Islamic revival in India, but was discouraged due to opposition by some traditional Ulema, he got disillusioned

and gave up the struggle to join nationalist politics of India.

The twentieth century revivalist movement of Jama'at-e-Islami by Abul A'la Moududi (1903-1979) in India, later in Pakistan and Ikhwan al Muslimun in Egypt by Hassan Al-Banna in 1928 have left lasting impact. Some organization operating in Algeria, Palestine, Lebanon, Chechnya, Philippines, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics and elsewhere getting inspiration from these movements have developed radical out look, despite differences and disagreement in their approach, their significance can not be ignored. The Iranian revolution has its own importance and long term implications.

Due to lack of interest in religion by the Muslims in general and the rulers in particular, and later colonization of large part of Muslim world, the responsibility to acquire even basic knowledge of Islam was left to the religious scholars only. The Madaris which produced the scholars like Jabir ibn Hayyan, Abu Musa Al-Khwarizmi

(Algorizm), Ibn Ishaq Al-Kindi (Alkindus), Ar-Razi, Al-Farabi, Alhazen, Al-Biruni, Avicenna, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and many more, by teaching all branches of knowledge including mathematic, algebra, astronomy, science and technology, medicine and social sciences along with religious sciences, philosophy and logic, teaching in Madaris was restricted to religious sciences only. This void created a new class of semiliterate religious scholars (mullah) devoid of knowledge of science, political, economic, social and other fields, so important for the smooth management of Muslim societies. They are main contributor of sectarianism, intolerance and militancy, though there are some exceptionally knowledgeable and tolerant among them as well. T

The Russian occupation of Afghanistan resulted in creation of Mujahideen by USA. After Russians defeat, they started fighting among themselves for power, using the name of Islam. This resulted in emergence of Taliban, the students of seminaries (madaris) which produce

Mullah, a sort of professional priest. However it would be a great fallacy to brand all the seminaries (madaris) as source of trouble, most of them are doing good job. The taste of power has now made Taliban to continue fighting whosoever oppose them be it Russians, Americans or Muslim brothers. Talibanization has affected the tribal areas of Pakistan as well, they are using suicide bombers as tool for killing of innocent fellow Muslims in violation of Islamic principles. This menace can not be tackled by more violence. The reforms of religious seminaries (madaris), are overdue to include modern and technical education to the students along with the religious education.

A class of genuine religious scholars well versed in the theology and comparative religions should always be an asset for Ijtihad, guidance and education of the masses in their religious obligations. The massive religious mobilization by Tablighi Jama't, by and large is playing an important role in educating the Muslims in the practice of basic tenets of Islam. The efforts of

non traditional scholars due to their rational appeal for the educated people is highly commendable. Many modern educated Muslims have been encouraged to come closer to Islam.

## **CHAPTER-8: MUSLIM REVIVALISTS & WESTERN THOUGHT:**

### **Background:**

Muslims required reformation in intellectual, political, social, economic and education fields to regain their lost ascendancy. Some Islamic reformers have been influenced by Western ideas. In the 18th century Europe was undergoing major transformations as the new ideas of the Enlightenment, which stressed the importance of science, rationality, and human reason, and the new technologies of the Industrial Revolution were sweeping through much of Europe. This proved to be a turning point in world history as Europe began to gain power and influence. In the last quarter of the 18th century “the gap between the technical skills of some western and northern European countries and those of the rest of the world grew wider.”



The rise of modern Europe coincided with what many scholars refer to as the decline of the Ottoman Empire, which by the 18th century was facing political, military, and economic breakdown. While prior to the 18th century the Ottomans had regarded themselves to be either of superior or, by the mid-18th century, of equal strength to Europe, by the end of the 18th century the power relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Europe began to shift in Europe's favor.

In 1798 the army of Napoleon Bonaparte occupied the Ottoman province of Egypt. Although the occupation lasted only three years, it exposed the people of Egypt to the ideas of the Enlightenment and the new technology of Europe. The values of the European Enlightenment, which challenged the authority of religion, were alien to the local Muslim population. Al-Jabarti, a Muslim intellectual and theologian who witnessed the occupation, wrote critically of the French calling them "materialists, who deny all God's attributes." Nevertheless,

the exposure to European power and ideas would later inspire the new governor of Egypt, Muhammad Ali Pasha, to draw on European ideas and technology in order to modernize Egypt setting an example for the rest of the Ottoman Empire. From the end of the 18th century the Ottoman Empire began to open embassies and send officials to study in Europe. This created conditions for the “gradual formation of a group of reformers with a certain knowledge of the modern world and a conviction that the empire must belong to it or perish.”

One of the scholars sent by Muhammad Ali Pasha to Europe in 1826 was Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi. The five years he spent in Paris left a permanent mark on him. After his return to Egypt he wrote about his impressions of France and translated numerous European works into Arabic. Tahtawi was impressed with Europe's technological and scientific advancement and political philosophy. Having studied Islamic law, he argued that “it was necessary to adapt the Sharia to new circumstances” and that there

was not much difference between “the principles of Islamic law and those principles of ‘natural law’ on which the codes of modern Europe were based.” Like Tahtawi, Khayr al- Din was also sent to Paris where he spent four years. After his return from Europe he wrote a book, in which he argued that the only way to strengthen the Muslim States was by borrowing ideas and institutions from Europe [which they had earlier borrowed from Muslims of Spain & Middle East ] and that this did not contradict the spirit of the Sharia.

## **Modernization Reforms in the Ottoman Empire**

In the period between 1839 and 1876 the Ottoman government began instituting large-scale reforms as a way to modernize and strengthen the empire. Known as the Tanzimat, many of these reforms involved adopting successful European practices. In addition to military and administrative reforms, Ottoman rulers implemented reforms in the sphere of

education, law, and the economy: "New universities and curricula were created and modern curricula were introduced to allow students to acquire the knowledge necessary to modernize. European legal codes became the basis for legal reforms, and Islamic law was restricted to personal status or family law (marriage, divorce, inheritance). Modern economic systems and institutions were established."

In 1834, Ishak Efendi published *Mecmua-i Ulum-i Riyaziye*, a four volume text introducing many modern scientific concepts to the Muslim world. Kudsi Efendi also published *Asrar al-Malakut* in 1846 in an attempt to reconcile Copernican astronomy with Islam. The first modern Turkish chemistry text was published in 1848, and the first modern Biology text in 1865. Eventually, the Turks adopted the metric system in 1869. These shifts in scientific thought coincided with *Tanzimat*, a reform policy undertaken by the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire that was inspired by French civil law.

This reform confined sharia to family law. The key figure in the Turkish modernist movement was Namik Kemal, the editor of a journal called Freedom. His goal was to promote freedom of the press, the separation of powers, equality before the law, scientific freedom, and a reconciliation between parliamentary democracy and the Qur'an. Some conservative Muslims denounced the Tanzimat reforms for "introducing un-Islamic innovations into state and society."

The aftermath of World War I resulted in the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the domination of the Middle East by European powers such as Britain and France. Intellectual historians such as Peter Watson suggest that World War I marks the end of the main Islamic modernist movements, and that this is the point where many Muslims "lost faith with the culture of science and materialism". He goes on to note that several parallel streams emerged after this historical moment.

## **Muslim Reformist Spirit:**

The reformist spirit of the times was especially evident in the emergence from Egypt to Southeast Asia of an Islamic modernist movement that called for a “reformation” or reinterpretation (ijtihad) viz Taqlid [blind following]. Islamic modernism was both an attempt to provide an Islamic response to the challenges presented by European colonial expansion and an effort to reinvigorate and reform Islam from within as a way to counter the perceived weakness and decline of Muslim societies in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Islamic modernists argued that Islam and modernity were compatible and “asserted the need to reinterpret and reapply the principles and ideals of Islam to formulate new responses to the political, scientific, and cultural challenges of the West and of modern life.” The reforms they proposed challenged the status quo maintained by the conservative Muslims scholars (ulama), who saw the established law

as the ideal order that had to be followed and upheld the doctrine of taqlid (imitation / blind following). Islamic modernists saw the resistance to change on the part of the conservative ulama as a major cause for the problems the Muslim community was facing as well as its inability to counter western hegemony. Most prominent reformers include; Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–97), Sayyid Ahmad Khan (India,1817–98), Muhammad Abduh (Egypt,1849–1905), Rashid Rida (1869–1935), and and Muhammad Iqbal (India, 1877–1938). Qasim Amin was another reformer in Egypt heavily concerned with the rights of women. Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi was similarly educated in Paris around the same time. He surveyed the political systems of 21 European countries in an effort to reform Tunisia. Other major Islamic modernists included Mahmud Tarzi of Afghanistan, Chiragh Ali of India, Achmad Dachlan of Java, and Wang Jingshai of China.

Although Islamic modernists were subject to the criticism that the reforms they promoted amounted to westernizing Islam, their legacy was significant and their thought influenced future generations of reformers.

### **Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–97):**

An ethnic Persian, brought up in Afghanistan, he was a political activist and Islamic ideologist in the Muslim world during the late 19th century, particularly in the Middle East, South Asia and Europe. One of the founders of Islamic Modernism and an advocate of Pan-Islamic unity. Afghani has been described as "less interested in theology than he was in organizing a Muslim response to Western pressure. Al-Afghani's ideology has been described as a welding of "traditional" religious antipathy toward non-Muslims "to a modern critique of Western imperialism and an appeal for the unity of Islam", urging the adoption of Western sciences and institutions that might strengthen Islam. He believed that Islam and its revealed law were



compatible with rationality and, thus, Muslims could become politically unified while still maintaining their faith based on a religious social morality. These beliefs had a profound effect on Muhammad Abduh, who went on to expand on the notion of using rationality in the human relations aspect of Islam (mu'amalat)

### **Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905):**

The most influential reformist of the 19th century was the Egyptian Muhammad Abduh believed that reason and modern Western thought would confirm the truth of Islam rather than undermine it, and that Islamic doctrine could be reformulated in modern terms. A liberal reformer, regarded as the founder of Islamic Modernism sometimes called Neo-Mu'tazilism after the Medieval Islamic Mu'tazilites. After his return from visit to Europe he said: " I went to the West and saw Islam, but no Muslims; I got back to the East and saw Muslims, but not Islam."

Muhammad Abduh argued that Muslims could not simply rely on the interpretations of texts provided by medieval clerics, they needed to use reason to keep up with changing times. He said that in Islam man was not created to be led by a bridle, man was given intelligence so that he could be guided by knowledge. According to Abduh, a teacher's role was to direct men towards study. He believed that Islam encouraged men to detach from the world of their ancestors and that Islam reproved the slavish imitation of tradition. He said that the two greatest possessions relating to religion that man was graced with were independence of will and independence of thought and opinion. It was with the help of these tools that he could attain happiness. He believed that the growth of western civilization in Europe was based on these two principles. He thought that Europeans were roused to act after a large number of them were able to exercise their choice and to seek out facts with their minds. Muhammad Abduh became a leading judge in Egypt, after political

activities and studies in Paris. He pushed for secular law, religious reform, and education for girls. He hoped that Egypt would ultimately become a free republic, much like how France had transformed from an absolute monarchy

His Muslim opponents refer to him as an infidel; however, his followers called him a sage, a reviver of religion and a reforming leader. He is conventionally graced with the epithets “al-Ustādh al-Imām” and “al-Shaykh al-Muftī”. In his works, he portrays God as educating humanity from its childhood through its youth and then on to adulthood. According to him, Islam is the only religion whose dogmas can be proven by reasoning. Abduh does not advocate returning to the early stages of Islam. He was against polygamy and thought that it was an archaic custom. He believed in a form of Islam that would liberate men from enslavement, provide equal rights for all human beings, abolish the religious scholar’s monopoly on exegesis and abolish racial discrimination and religious compulsion.

Mohammad Abduh made great efforts to preach harmony between Sunnis and Shias. Broadly speaking, he preached brotherhood between all schools of thought in Islam. However, he criticized what he perceived as errors such as superstitions coming from popular Sufism.

Abduh regularly called for better friendship between religious communities. As Christianity was the second biggest religion in Egypt, he devoted an special efforts toward friendship between Muslims and Christians. He had many Christian friends and many a time he stood up to defend Christian Copts.during the Urabi revolt, some Muslim mobs had misguidedly attacked a number of Copts resulting from their anger against European colonialism.

### **Muhammad Rashid Rida [1865–1935]:**

Rashid Rida is said to have been "one of the most influential scholars and jurists of his generation" and the "most prominent disciple of Muhammad Abduh". His early education

consisted of training in "traditional Islamic subjects". In 1884-5 he was first exposed to al-`Urwa al-wuthqa, the journal of the Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh. In 1897 he left Syria for Cairo to collaborate with Abduh and the following year they launched al-Manar, a weekly and then monthly journal comprising Quranic commentary at which Rida worked until his death in 1935. Rida was an early Islamic reformer, whose ideas would later influence 20th-century Islamist thinkers in developing a political philosophy of an "Islamic state".

Like his predecessors, Rida focused on the relative weakness of Muslim societies vis-à-vis Western colonialism, blaming Sufi excesses, the blind imitation of the past (taqlid), the stagnation of the ulama, and the resulting failure to achieve progress in science and technology. He held that these flaws could be alleviated by a return to what he saw as the true principles of Islam - salafiyya Islam which was purged of impurities and Western influences — albeit interpreted (ijtihad) to suit modern realities. This alone

could, he believed, save Muslims from subordination to the colonial powers.

The corruption and tyranny of Muslim rulers ("caliphs") throughout history was a central theme in Rida's criticisms. Rida, however, celebrated the rule of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and leveled his attacks at subsequent rulers who could not maintain Mohammad's (pbuh) example. He also criticized the clergy ("ulama") for compromising their integrity - and the integrity of the Islamic law ("sharia") they were meant to uphold - by associating with worldly corrupt powers.

Towards the end of his life, Rida became a staunch defender of the Saudi regime and an advocate of Wahhabism, saluting 'Abd al-Wahhab as the "renewer of the XII century (of the Hijra)". In fact, he died on his way back to Cairo from Suez, where he had gone to see Ibn Sa'ud off.

Rida's ideas were foundational to the development of the modern "Islamic state". He "was an important link between classical theories of the caliphate, such as al-Mawardi's, and 20th-century notions of the Islamic state". Rida promoted a restoration or rejuvenation of the Caliphate for Islamic unity, and "democratic consultation on the part of the government, which he called "shura"." In theology, his reformist ideas, like those of Abduh, were "based on the argument that: "shari'a consists of `ibadat (worship) and mu'amalat (social relations). Human reason has little scope in the former and Muslims should adhere to the dictates of the Qur'an and hadith. The laws governing mu'amalat should conform to Islamic ethics but on specific points may be continually reassessed according to changing conditions of different generations and societies.

Although he did not call for the revolutionary establishment of an "Islamic state" itself, rather advocating only gradual reform of the existing Ottoman government, Rida preceded Abul Ala

Maududi, Sayyid Qutb, and later Islamists in declaring adherence to Sharia law as essential for Islam and Muslims, saying; `those Muslim [rulers] who introduce novel laws today and forsake the Shari'a enjoined upon them by God ... They thus abolish supposed distasteful penalties such as cutting off the hands of thieves or stoning adulterers and prostitutes. They replace them with man-made laws and penalties. He who does that has undeniably become an infidel.`

### **Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan: (1817-1898)**

Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, (India) was the main motivating force behind the revival of Islam in India, through modern and scientific education in the late 19th century. He was a Muslim educator, jurist, and author who wrote several volumes of a modernist commentary on the Qur'an and began a sympathetic interpretation of the Bible. In these works he sought to harmonize the Islamic faith with the scientific and politically progressive ideas of his time. He



wrote extensively about social reforms and the uplift of the Muslim. A Muslim school was established at Aligarh in May 1875, which ultimately became the principal national centre of Indian Islam, to provide educated Muslims leadership in political and other fields. This ultimately resulted in establishment of Pakistan on the basis of faith.

### **Moulví Cherágh Ali (1844-1895):**

An Indian Muslim scholar of the late 19th century. As a colleague of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan He made a contribution to the school of Muslim Modernists and presented reformative thinking about the Qur'an. He contributed numerous works to the school of Muslim Modernists such as; 'A Critical Exposition of the Popular Jihad and Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms Under Moslem Rule'. His interactions with Christians in British India also marked him as a Muslim apologist with a particular focus on the wars of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). His goal in the interpretation

of the Qur'an as well as the Shari'a is to justify contemporary Western ideals through the Qur'an.

In his writings, Cherágh Ali sought to correct what he perceived to be misperceptions of Islam and jihad. These misunderstandings, he argued, came from the historical development of Hadith and the activities of Muslim jurists. He believed the jurists had taken justice into their own hands and in doing so ignored the Qur'an. In following these beliefs, Cherágh Ali was committed to offering a fresh interpretation of the Qur'an and a moderated version of jihad.

In making a point of redefining the meaning of jihad, Cherágh Ali described the wars of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as strictly defensive. He argued that all of Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) wars were local and temporary, making them defensive because in his view, the Qur'an does not teach a war of aggression. He argued that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) only engaged in battle in response to acts that contradicted the

Qur'ān's teachings. Cherágh's belief that Islam is misunderstood by the majority of the world motivated his re-interpretation of the Qur'ān.

### **Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923):**

He was an Indonesian Islamic revivalist who established Muhammadiyah in 1912 as an educational organisation as a means of realising his reformist ideals. He conceived a common interest against the Dutch colonial masters of Indonesia and the need to purify and renew Islam in Indonesia.

### **Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938):**

Muhammad Iqbal is the first modern Muslim philosopher to deal with the intellectual challenges faced by Muslim Ummah in any comprehensive manner. He made an effort to address the real issues, by saying: "With the reawakening of Islam, therefore, it is necessary to examine, in an independent spirit, what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached by her can help us in the revision and if necessary, reconstruction, of theological thought

in Islam.” Many of the classic works of Islamic philosophy were translated into Latin from Arabic at the beginning of the European renaissance. These along with translated Greek manuscripts greatly impacted the development of western thought. This influence is best seen in the works of the likes of, Descartes and Aquinas.



The Qur'an teaches the principle of "rule by consultation," (Qur'an;42:38) which in modern times, they argued, can best be realized by

representative government rather than monarchy. They pointed out that the Qur'an encourages the study and exploitation of nature, but Muslims, after a few centuries of brilliant scientific work, had passed it on to Europe and abandoned it. The influence of Islamic learning on the West has been summarized in Encyclopedia Britannica: "The decline of Muslim scholarship coincided with the early phases of the European intellectual awakening that these translations were partly instrumental in bringing about. The translation into Latin of most Islamic works during the 12th and 13th centuries had a great impact upon the European Renaissance. As Islam was declining in scholarship and Europe was absorbing the fruits of Islam's centuries of creative productivity, signs of Latin Christian awakening were evident throughout the European continent. The 12th century was one of intensified traffic of Muslim learning into the Western world through many hundreds of translations of Muslim works, which helped Europe seize the initiative from Islam when

political conditions in Islam brought about a decline in Muslim scholarship. By 1300 C.E when all that was worthwhile in Muslim scientific, philosophical, and social learning had been transmitted to European schoolmen through Latin translations, European scholars stood once again on the solid ground of Hellenistic thought, enriched or modified through Muslim and Byzantine efforts.”

Besides Iqbal, the other intellectuals in Egypt, Turkey, and India attempted to reconcile with the teachings of the Qur’an such ideas as those raised by constitutional democracy, science, and the emancipation of women. The modern Muslims intellectuals argued that the Qur’an had given women equal rights, but these had been usurped by men, who had grossly abused polygamy. Although the modernist ideas were based on plausible interpretations of the Qur’an, they were bitterly opposed by Islamic fundamentalists, especially after the 1930s. The reaction against modernism has been gathering momentum since that time for several reasons.

The fundamentalists do not oppose modern education, science, and technology, but they accuse the modernists of being purveyors of Western morality. Moreover, modernist leaders and officials in some Muslim countries have failed to improve significantly the condition of the mostly poor and rapidly increasing populations of those countries. Finally, and perhaps most important, the bitter resentment Muslims feel toward Western colonialism has made many of them regard everything Western as evil.

## **Reconstruction of Thought in Islam:**

### **No Contradiction between Faith & Reason:**

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938 CE, India, the renowned 20<sup>th</sup> century Muslim poet-philosopher) is the only known modern Muslim philosopher who attempted the reinterpretation of Islamic doctrines in the present age through 'Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' without compromising on the fundamentals. He

studied in Europe from 1905 to 1908; he earned his degree in philosophy from the University of Cambridge, qualified as a barrister in London, and received a doctorate from the University of Munich, Germany. His thesis, 'The Development of Metaphysics in Persia', revealed some aspects of Islamic mysticism formerly unknown in Europe. His works have been extremely influential in the revival of Islamic thought. He did not see any contradiction between faith and reason. Iqbal found that "the present-day Muslim prefers to roam about aimlessly in the valley of Hellenic-Persian mysticism, which teaches us to shut our eyes to the hard reality around, and to fix our gaze on what is described as illumination.' In viewing the scientific and philosophic tradition of eastern and western Islam prior to the Tatar and Mongol invasions, there is an irrefutable proof that true Islam stands for the liberation of man's spirit, promotes critical thought, and provides both the impetus to grapple with the temporal and the demonstration of how to set it in order.



**The philosophical position of Iqbal was articulated in 'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' (1934 C.E), a volume based on six lectures delivered at Madras, Hyderabad, and Aligarh India, in 1928-29, Iqbal writes; "The Qur'an is a book which emphasizes 'deed' rather than 'idea'. There are, however, men to whom it is not possible organically to assimilate an alien universe by re-living, as a vital process that special type of inner experience on which religious faith ultimately rests. Moreover, the modern man, by developing habits of concrete thought —habits which Islam itself fostered at least in the earlier stages of its cultural career-has rendered himself less capable of that experience which he further suspects because of its liability to illusion. The more genuine schools of Sufism have, no doubt, done good work in shaping and directing the evolution of religious experience in Islam; but their latter-day representatives, owing to their ignorance of the modern mind, have become absolutely incapable of receiving any**

fresh inspiration from modern thought and experience. They are perpetuating methods which were created for generations possessing a cultural outlook differing, in important respects, from our own. "Your creation and resurrection," says the Qur'an, "are like the creation and resurrection of a single soul" (Qur'an;31:28). A living experience of the kind of biological unity, embodied in this verse, requires to-day a method physiologically less violent and psychologically more suitable to a concrete type of mind. In the absence of such a method the demand for a scientific form of religious knowledge is only natural. I have tried to meet, even though partially, this urgent demand by attempting to reconstruct Muslim religious philosophy with due regard to the philosophical traditions of Islam and the more recent developments in the various domains of human knowledge. And the present moment is quite favorable for such an undertaking. Classical Physics has learned to criticize its own foundations. As a result of this criticism the kind

of materialism, which it originally necessitated, is rapidly disappearing; and the day is not far off when Religion and Science may discover hitherto unsuspected mutual harmonies. It must, however, be remembered that there is no such thing as finality in philosophical thinking. As knowledge advances and fresh avenues of thought, are opened, other views, and probably sounder views than those set forth in these lectures, are possible. Our duty is carefully to watch the progress of human thought and to maintain an independent critical attitude towards it”.

### **Abolition of Priesthood & Hereditary Kingship:**

He argued that a rightly focused man should unceasingly generate vitality through interaction with the purposes of the living God. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had returned from his unitary experience of God to let loose on the earth a new type of manhood and a cultural world characterized by the abolition of

priesthood and hereditary kingship and by an emphasis on the study of history and nature.

### **Rejects Mystic Experience as Exclusive Way:**

Muhammad Iqbal is critical of Ghazzali's characterization of knowledge. He thought that Ghazzali was mistaken in giving up reason and thought and embracing mystic experience as the only exclusive way the totally infinite could be revealed to an individual. Iqbal tried to point out that, intellectual reason and intuition are inseparable, and that in the act of comprehending something by intuition, the intellect plays an indispensable role, which cannot be discounted. He writes: "It may be that what we call the external world is only an intellectual construction, and that there are other levels of human experience capable of being systematized by other orders of space and time—levels in which concept and analysis does not play the same role as they do in the case of our normal experience." As Iqbal explains, that

the higher level of experience is not at the sensational or representational level, rather it is better described as a feeling rather than concepts. He writes, It is rather a mode of dealing with Reality in which sensation, in the physiological sense of the word, does not play any part. This for Iqbal is the mystic experience that leads to ultimate certain knowledge. The individual may access the ultimate; he draws his inspiration from Einstein and Nietzsche”.

### **Recreation of Vigor in Islamic Thought:**

Einstein’s theory of relativity gave him hope, that his theory about the way the finite and the infinite are related is possible. Relativity shattered traditional notions of space, time and thus matter. In the modern context it is important, for Islamic thought at least, to reassert itself clearly and define its parameters upon which a modern Islamic epistemology can be built [Epistemology: The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its

extent and validity].The work of European and American philosophers cannot be ignored, and their criticism should be used to recreate the vigor of Islamic philosophy, which has been lost over the past few centuries. The foundation of basic parameters has already been laid by Muhammad Iqbal.

### **Impact of early Islamic modernists:**

The influence of modernism in the Islamic world resulted in a cultural revival. Dramatic plays became more common, as did newspapers. Notable European works were analyzed and translated. Legal reform was attempted in Egypt, Tunisia, the Ottoman Empire, and Iran, and in some cases these reforms were adopted. Efforts were made to restrict the power of government. Polygamy was restricted in India. Azerbaijan granted suffrage to women in 1918 (before several European countries).

At the recommendations of reform-minded Islamic scholars, western sciences were taught in new schools. Much of this had to do with the intellectual appeal of social Darwinism, since

some thought that an old-fashioned Muslim society could not compete in the modern world, though its not the case.

### **Progress in Modernism:**

In some parts of the world, the project of Islamic modernity continued from the same trajectory before World War I. This was especially the case in the new Republic of Turkey, under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. In Egypt, Hassan al-Banna founded the Muslim Brotherhood. On the other hand, Arab socialism of Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party and Nasserite movement emerged as a stream of thought that played down the role of religion. In India the efforts of Sir Syed Ahmad & Muhammad Iqbal bore fruit in the form of creation of Pakistan, an independent Muslim country on the basis of two nation theory.

The Six-Day War between Israel and its neighbours ended in a decisive loss for the Muslim side. Many in the Islamic world saw this as the failure of socialism. It was at this point

that "fundamental and militant Islam began to fill the political vacuum created".

### **Progressive Modernization in Turkey:**

Turkey has continued to be at the forefront of modernizing Islam in the spirit of its original teachings. In 2008 its Department of Religious Affairs launched a review of all the Hadith, the sayings of Mohammed upon which most of Islamic law is based. The School of Theology at Ankara University undertook this forensic examination with the intent of removing centuries of often conservative cultural baggage and rediscovering the spirit of reason in the original message of Islam. One expert at London's Chatham House compared these revisions to the Christian Protestant Reformation. Turkey has also trained hundreds of women as theologians, and sent them senior imams known as vaizes all over the country, away from the relatively liberal capital and coastal cities, to explain these re-interpretations at town hall meetings. The present government



with Islamic inclination has established that Islam is compatible with democracy and can lead to progress like any other nation.

### **Criticism of Modernism:**

Criticism of Islamic modernism comes mainly from supporters of Islamism who argue modernist thought is little more than the fusion of Western Secularism with spiritual aspects of Islam. Other critics have described the modernist positions on politics in Islam as ideological stances.

Critics argue politics is inherently embedded in Islam, a rejection of the secular principle, "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's". They claim that there is a consensus in Muslim political jurisprudence, philosophy and practice with regard to the Caliphate form of government with a clear structure comprising a Caliph, assistants (mu'awinoon), governors (wulaat), judges (qudaat) and administrators (mudeeroon).

It is argued that Muslim jurists have tended to work with the governments of their times. Notable examples are Abu Yusuf, Mohammed Ibn al-Hasan, Shafi'i, Yahya bin Said, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Ismail bin Yasa, Ibn Tulun, Abu Zura, Abu Hasan al-Mawardi and Tabari. Prominent theologians would counsel the Caliph in discharging his Islamic duties, often on the request of the incumbent Caliph. Many rulers provided patronage to scholars across all disciplines, the most famous being the Abassids who funded extensive translation programmes and the building of libraries.

## **A list of some alleged Islamic Modernists:**

- Jamal al-Din al-Afghani
- Muhammad Abduh
- Rashid Rida
- Abu Aala Maududi
- Agus Salim
- Hassan al Banna
- Mohammad Natsir
- Sayyed Qutb
- Syed Ahmed Khan
- Mahmoud Shaltout
- Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah
- Ali Shariati
- Muhammad Iqbal
- Ghulam Ahmed Pervez
- Javed Ahmad Ghamidi
- Syed Ameer Ali
- Hamiduddin Farahi
- Amin Ahsan Islahi
- Mahmoud Mohammed Taha(Neomodernist)
- Farag Fawda(Neomodernist)
- Yasir Qadhi

## **Oppression breeds Extremism:**

Reaction to colonization of Muslim lands by Europeans was obviously resisted with arms for independence. Armed struggle against oppression, occupation and expulsion is permissible as per normal norms as well as in Islam. Allah says:

“Permission to fight back (Qital) is hereby granted to the believers against whom war is waged and because they are oppressed; certainly Allah has power to grant them victory” (Qur’an;22:39). “And Fight in God's cause against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression - for, verily, God does not love aggressors.”(Qur’an;2:190). “As for such ([of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your] faith), and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for, verily, God loves the equitable.(Qur’an;60:8)

Imam Shamil (1797–1871) fought Russians in Northern Caucasus. Indians fought British imperialists in 1857, Mehdi in Sudan resisted

British occupation, Omar Mukhtar (1858 – 1931) of Libya in 1912, organized and, for nearly twenty years, led native resistance to Italian colonization of Libya, till captured and hanged in 1931. Algerians fought against French occupation till independence from 1954-1962.

During 20<sup>th</sup> century while most of Western colonies gained independence, over 6 million Palestinians were expelled from their homes to create the Jewish state of Israel in 1948, with full patronage of USA & West, which is expanding at the cost of Palestinians. Their resistance is termed as terrorism.

In 80s USA used the concept of Jihad to defeat USSR in Afghanistan. The Mujahdeen were brought from all over the Muslim world, they were financed, equipped and trained under patronage of USA. They were treated with honor and respect at White House.

## RONALD REAGAN MEETS WITH THE TALIBAN



“THESE GENTLEMEN ARE THE MORAL  
EQUIVALENTS OF AMERICA’S FOUNDING  
FATHERS.” – RONALD REAGAN, 1985

After the defeat of USSR they were abandoned, the civil war in Afghanistan provided persons like Osama bin Ladin to work on their own agenda. They declared war against USA and Muslims not supporting their world view.

Oppression of people of Kashmir by Indian occupation forces is resisted by people. Muslims in Chechnya, Philippines and even in China are oppressed and persecuted. Massacre of 7000 Muslims by Serbs in Srebrenica is unforgettable. Lack of will to resolve these conflicts through peaceful means has created a vacuum. It was at this point that "fundamental and militant Islam began to fill the political vacuum created".

## **Proliferation of Islamic fundamentalism**

Since the late 20th century due to above mentioned reasons, Islamic extremist groups have proliferated worldwide. This is most noticeable in the Middle East, where such groups have voiced their displeasure of concepts such as imperialism, democracy and modernity, which are most commonly associated with accepting Western secular beliefs and values. The spread of secularism has caused great concerns among many Islamic political groups. It has been the reasoning for the Islamization of politics and protest, due to the large Muslim majority in the Middle East as well as the region's imperial past, which still persist in the form of Israel. For Islamic countries in the Middle East, there is not necessarily a problem as such with modernity, however, "the problem is when modernity comes wrapped with westernization, with absolutely and utterly rampant materialism and economic imperialism".

The three main concerns of Islamic political movements and extremist groups in the Middle East; 1) the Western belief in a bureaucratic state and 2) the secular values and beliefs associated with concepts such as modernity 3) Neocolonialism to control oil and other resources. These concerns were exemplified in an interview with the Islamic fundamentalist, Osama Bin Laden who stated, after being asked about the message he wanted to send to the West:

“Their presence [in the Middle East] has no meaning save one and that is to offer support to the Jews an Palestine who are in need of their Christian brothers to achieve full control over the Arab peninsula, which they intend to make an important part of the so called Greater Israel...They rip us of our wealth and of our resources and of our oil. Our religion is under attack. They kill and murder our brothers. They compromise our honor and our dignity and if we dare to utter a



single word of protest against the injustice, we are called terrorists.”

After the September 11 attacks, the Western media seemed to focus on personalities such as Osama bin Laden for condemnation, and publicize the activities of unknown terrorists into forerunners of "Islamic jihad." This appeared to create the stereotype of Muslims in the Middle East. This appear to result in the grants of prominence to Islamic fundamentalists who might otherwise have been insignificant political characters. Such publicity appeared to legitimise extremist opinions and views which might otherwise have been shunned by mainstream Muslims. However, as John Esposito notes:

‘The tendency to judge the actions of Muslims in splendid isolation, to generalize from the actions of the few to the many, to disregard similar excesses committed in the name of other religions and ideologies...is not new. Yet the number of militant Islamic movements

‘calling for an Islamic state and the end of Western influence is relatively small’

Nevertheless, these groups are causing great fear among people in the Middle East and in the West. According to various polls, the majority of world's Muslim want to be governed by Islamic Law (Sharia). It is the will of people, why West make every effort to resist and support puppet rulers who do not enjoy popular support. The fate of Zain Abedeen of Tunisia and Husni Mubarak of Egypt should be an eye opener.

### **Extremism against Civilians, Muslims:**

Today the Muslim society finds itself at the crossroads. There are divergent views on conduct of Jihad. One group feels that due to suppression and exploitation of Muslims by neocolonialist powers (Western) on one hand and politico-military suppression of Muslims at Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir, Philippines and military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, on the other hand, there is no other option but to resort to Jihad with arms [Jihad is broad term, means

striving, even against evil desires of self]. Due to ineptness of world and Muslim powers, the extremist non government armed groups are resorting to violence and extremism. Being weak in the modern weaponry, they follow the old dictum. “Every thing is fair in love and war”. The terms Jihad is being used by such groups of desperate people who are at times are involved in suicide bombing and violence against innocent civilians including women and children. Such heinous crimes against humanity by few zealots are having disastrous consequences for the entire Muslim community (Ummah).

### **Doctrine of Takfir:**

The doctrine of Takfir; is being used by extremists groups in sanctioning violence against leaders and simple Muslims who are deemed insufficiently religious. Takfir is a pronouncement to declare any (non practicing Muslim), to be an unbeliever (Takfir), apostate, (Murtad) hence liable to be killed. It has become

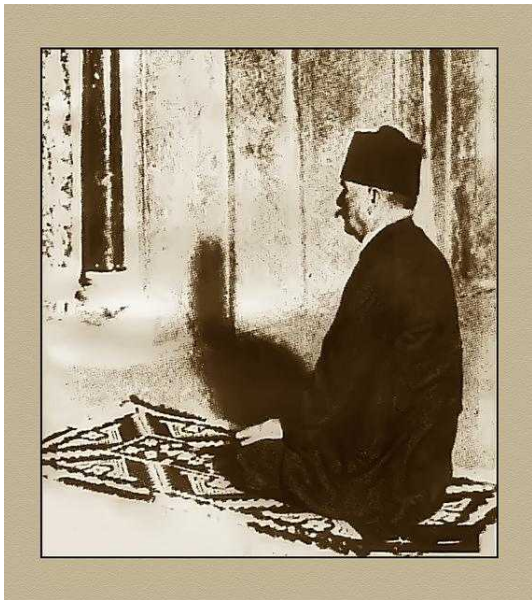
a central ideology of militant groups such as those in Egypt, Iraq and across the world including so called 'Taliban', now also in Afghanistan and adjoining tribal areas of Pakistan. The doctrine of Takfir is claimed to be derived from the ideas of Sayyid Qutab, Maududi, Ibn Tymiyyah and Ibn Kathir. Mainstream Muslims and Islamic groups reject the pseudo concept of 'Takfir' as a doctrinal deviation [bid'at], heresy. Leaders such as Hassan al-Hudaybi (died, 1977) and Yousf al-Qaradawi reject 'Takfir' as un-Islamic and marked by bigotry and zealotry. The Takfiri doctrine is not based upon any direct clear commandment or ayah of Qur'an, it is derivative, based upon analogy (taweel), which can have more than one opinions. "The fact is that most of them follow nothing but mere conjecture and conjecture is in no way a substitute for the truth. Surely Allah is well aware of all that they do." (Qur'an; 10:36). However through their violent terrorist acts, Taliban are violating the clear verses (Ayahs)

and Hadiths. No Muslim worth the name will ever dare to even think of rejecting or violating the unambiguous commandments of Allah, clearly mentioned in Qur'an and Hadith. Such narrow mindedness has exacerbated the evil of sectarianism and the resulting intolerance among the masses has led to a dangerous trend towards sectarian militancy. Recently the Saudi scholars also condemned and strongly rejected the 'Takfir' doctrine.

### **Contemporary Islamic Philosophers & Revivalists :**

Contemporary Islamic philosophy revives some of the trends of medieval Islamic philosophy, notably the tension between Mutazilite and Asharite views of ethics in science and law, and the duty of Muslims and role of Islam in the sociology of knowledge and in forming ethical codes and legal codes, especially the fiqh (or "jurisprudence") and rules of jihad (or "just war"). The key figures representing important trends include following philosophers and scholars, though this list is not wholesome:

## Muhammad Iqbal (1877 – 1938)



Dr ALLAMA MUHAMMAD IQBAL IN SPAIN-1933

He sought an Islamic revival based on social justice ideals and emphasized traditional rules, e.g. against usury. He argued strongly that dogma, territorial nationalism and outright

racism, all of which were profoundly rejected in early Islam and especially by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself, were splitting Muslims into warring factions, encouraging materialism and nihilism. His thought was influential in the emergence of a movement for independence of Pakistan, where he was revered as the national poet. Indirectly this strain of Islam also influenced Malcolm X and other figures who sought a global ethic through the Five Pillars of Islam. Iqbal can be credited with at least trying to reconstruct Islamic thought from the base, though some of his philosophical and scientific ideas would appear dated to us now. His basic ideas concentrated on free-will, which would allow Muslims to become active agents in their own history. His interest in Nietzsche (who he called 'the Wise Man of Europe') has led later Muslim scholars to criticize him for advocating dangerous ideals that, according to them, have eventually formed in certain strains of pan-Islamism. Some claim

that the Four Pillars of the Green Party honor Iqbal and Islamic traditions.

### **Syed Abul A'la Maududi (1903–979):**

Maududi was a journalist, theologian, Muslim revivalist leader and political philosopher, and a controversial 20th century Islamist thinker in British India, and later Pakistan. He was also a political figure in Pakistan and was the first recipient of King Faisal International Award for his services 1979. He was also the founder of Jamaat-e-Islami, the Islamic revivalist party.

Maududi wrote over 120 books and pamphlets and made over 1000 speeches and press statements. His magnum opus was the 30 years in progress translation (tafsir) in Urdu of the Qur'an, Tafhim ul-Qur'an (The Meaning of the Qur'an), intended to give the Qur'an a self claim interpretation. It became widely read throughout the subcontinent and has been translated into several languages.

Maududi's influence was widespread. According to historian Philip Jenkins, Egyptians Hassan al-



Banna and Sayyid Qutb read him. Qutb "borrowed and expanded" Maududi's concept for being a modern as well as pre-Islamic phenomenon, and of the need for an Islamist revolutionary vanguard movement. His ideas influenced Abdullah Azzam, the Palestinian Islamist jurist. The South Asian diaspora, including "significant numbers" in Britain, were "hugely influenced" by Maududi's work. Maududi even had a major impact on Shia Iran, where Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini is reputed to have met Maududi as early as 1963 and later translated his works into Persian. "To the present day, Iran's revolutionary rhetoric often draws on his themes.

### **Amin Ahsan Islahi (1904–1997):**

Islahi was a Pakistani Muslim scholar, famous for his Urdu exegeses of Qur'an, *Tadabbur-i-Qur'an*—an exegesis that he based on Hamiduddin Farahi's (1863–1930) idea of thematic and structural coherence in the Qur'an. He was close associate of Maududi, but parted

on political differences. Some of the notable students in Pakistan are Khalid Masud, Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, Mahbub Subhani, Mahmud Ahmad Lodhi, Majid Khawar, Abullah Ghulam Ahmad, Saeed Ahmad and Muhammad Da'ud. After his death Khalid Masud was made responsible for his school of thought as his successor. Being in charge of Idara Taddabur e Quran-o-Hadith, Khalid Masud made a remarkable job in converting and presenting Islahi's school of thought to general public.

### **Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002):**

He belonged to a family of scholars, jurists, writers and sufis. He was a world-renowned scholar of Islam and International Law from India, who was known for contributions to the research of the history of Hadith, translations of the Qur'an, the advancement of Islamic learning, and to the dissemination of Islamic teachings in the Western world.

## **Muhammad Ilyas Qadri:**

A Pakistan born scholar of the Sunni and Sufi sect in Islam. He is the author of numerous books on Islamic topics, published by Dawat-e-Islami. Honorary titles bestowed upon him include Ameer e Ahle Sunnat ("Leader of the People of the Sunnah").

## **Ayatullah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902-1989):**

The founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was a famous teacher of the philosophical school of Hikmat-ul-Mutaliya. Before the victory of the Islamic Revolution, he was one of the few who formally taught philosophy at the Religious Seminary at Qum.

## **Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas:**

A prominent contemporary Muslim philosopher and thinker from Malaysia. He claims to be one of the few contemporary scholars who is thoroughly rooted in the traditional Islamic sciences and who is equally competent in theology, philosophy, metaphysics, history, and

literature. He considers himself to be the pioneer in proposing the idea of Islamization of knowledge. Al-Attas' philosophy and methodology of education have one goal: Islamization of the mind, body and soul and its effects on the personal and collective life on Muslims as well as others, including the spiritual and physical non-human environment. He is the author of twenty-seven authoritative works on various aspects of Islamic thought and civilization, particularly on Sufism, cosmology, metaphysics, philosophy and Malay language and literature.

### **Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (1935–1980):**

He was an Iraqi Shi'a cleric, a philosopher, and ideological founder of Islamic Dawa Party born in al-Kazimiya, Iraq. Mohammad Baqir Al-Sadr's political philosophy, known as Wilayat Al-Umma (Governance of the people), set out his view of a modern day Islamic state. His most famous philosophical works include: Falsafatuna (Our Philosophy), in which he refutes modern

Western philosophical schools and asserts an Islamic view, *Iqtisaduna* (Our Economy), consisting of an exegesis of Islamic economics coupled with a critique of Western political economy as manifested in the Soviet Union on one hand and the United States on the other, and *Al-Usus al-Mantiqiyyah lil-Istiqra'* (The Logical Basis of Induction) in which he develops a theory which allows one to reach certainty through inductive methods.

### **Morteza Motahhari:**

He was a lecturer at Tehran University. Motahhari is considered important for developing the ideologies of the Islamic Republic. He wrote on exegesis of the Qur'an, philosophy, ethics, sociology, history and many other subjects. In all his writings the real object he had in view was to give replies to the objections raised by others against Islam, to prove the shortcomings of other schools of thought and to manifest the greatness of Islam. He believed that in order to prove the falsity of

Marxism and other ideologies like it, it was necessary not only to comment on them in a scholarly manner but also to present the real image of Islam.

### **Ali Shariati:**

He was a sociologist and a professor of Mashhad University. He was one of the most influential figures in the Islamic world in the 20th century. He attempted to explain and provide solutions for the problems faced by Muslim societies through traditional Islamic principles interwoven with and understood from the point of view of modern sociology and philosophy. Shariati was also deeply influenced by Mowlana and Muhammad Iqbal.

### **Musa al-Sadr:**

He was a prominent Shi'a Muslim intellectual and one of the most influential Muslim philosophers of 20th century. He is most famous for his political role, but he was also a philosopher who had been trained by Allameh

Tabatabaei. As Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr said: "his great political influence and fame was enough for people to not consider his philosophical attitude, although he was a well-trained follower of long living intellectual tradition of Islamic Philosophy". One of his famous writings is a long introduction for the Arabic translation of Henry Corbin's History of Islamic Philosophy.

### **Syed Zafarul Hasan:**

He was a prominent twentieth-century Muslim philosopher. From 1924 to 1945 he was professor of philosophy at the Muslim University, Aligarh - where he also served as Chairman of the Department of Philosophy and Dean of the Faculty of Arts. There, in 1939, he put forward the 'Aligarh Scheme'. From 1945 until the partition of the sub-continent, Dr Hasan was Emeritus Professor at Aligarh. Dr. Zafarul Hasan was born on February 14, 1885. He died on June 19, 1949.

## **Allama Ghulam Ahmad Parwez (1903–1985)**

Allama Parwez was a prominent Quranist Islamic scholar, famous in the area around Lahore. He urged the Muslims to ponder deeply over the Message of the Quran. He considered Islam a din (way of life), a form of government, a system of government like democracy, autocracy, or socialism. He proclaimed that according to Islam all authority rests with "the law of God" as given in the Quran, whereby food and wealth are to be distributed equally to everybody. He preached that Islam was not a typical religion of rituals and superstitious beliefs but was a challenge to the very institution of organized religion.

His writings describe how Islam was treacherously transformed into a religion by kings who had perverted Islam for their vested interests. "The kings sponsored the creation and fabrication of Hadith," he declared. Pervez denounced the Hadith which described Ayesha, the prophet's (pbuh) wife, as a nine-year-old girl. "These are fabricated stories written by the



enemies of Islam," he said. He attempted to prove from historical record that Ayesha was much older when she married the Prophet (pbuh). Some contemporary Hadith Scholars declared Pervez a heretic for denying the authority and authenticity of the Hadiths. Pervez himself condemned the Mullahs for "always serving as agents of the rich people" and being "promoters of uncontrolled Capitalism." In 1951, Parvez criticized Jamaat-e-Islami through several articles in Tolu-e-Islam. "The mullahs have hijacked Islam," he said. Pervez was the right hand man of Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, and was one of the leading activists of the Pakistan movement.

### **Ismail al-Faruqi:**

He looked more closely at the ethics and sociology of knowledge, concluding that no scientific method or philosophy could exist that was wholly ignorant of a theory of conduct or the consequences a given path of inquiry and technology. His "Islamization of knowledge"

program sought to converge early Muslim philosophy with modern sciences, resulting in, for example, Islamic economics and Islamic sociology.

### **Hossein Nasr:**

A political ecologist, argues that the concept of the Khilafah (Islamic caliphate) is fundamentally compatible with ideals of the ecology movement and peace movement, more so than expressed through conventional interpretations of Islam. He argues for an ecology-based ecumenism that would seek unity among the faiths by concentrating on their common respect for life as a Creation, i.e. the Earth's biosphere, Gaia, or whatever name. Pope John Paul II has made similar suggestions that "mankind must be reconciled to the Creation", and there is a Parliament of World Religions seeking a "global ethic" on similar grounds.

### **M. A. Muqtedar Khan:**

A Professor of Islam and International Relations at the University of Delaware. He is a prominent Muslim intellectual and philosopher and commentator on Islamic Thought and Global Politics. He organized the first contemporary Islamic Philosophers conference at Georgetown University in 1998. His work is on the subject of the philosophy of identity and rationality, Ijtihad, Islam and democracy and Islamic reform.

### **Akbar S. Ahmed:**

Ahmad is an anthropologist, filmmaker and an outstanding scholar on Islam, International Relations/Politics and Contemporary Islamic philosophy from Pakistan. He is Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at the American University in Washington DC and was the High Commissioner of Pakistan to UK. He has advised Prince Charles and met with President George W. Bush on Islam. His numerous books, films and documentaries have won awards. His books have been translated into many

languages including Chinese and Indonesian. Ahmed is “the world’s leading authority on contemporary Islam” according to the BBC.

### **Javed Ahmad Ghamidi:**

Ghamidi is a well-known Pakistani Islamic scholar, exegete, and educator. A former member of the Jamaat-e-Islami, who extended the work of his tutor, Amin Ahsan Islahi. He is frequently labeled a modernist for his insistence on the historical contextualization of Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) revelation in order to grasp its true moral import.

Ghamidi’s understanding of Islamic law has been presented concisely in his book Mizan. Ghamidi's inspiration from his mentor, Amin Ahsan Islahi and non-traditionalist approach to the religion has parted him from traditionalist understanding on a number of issues, but he never goes out of the traditional framework.

**Jihad** : Ghamidi believes that there are certain directives of the Qur’an pertaining to war which were specific only to the Prophet Muhammad

and certain specified peoples of his times (particularly the progeny of Abraham: the Ishmaelites, the Israelites, and the Nazarites). Thus, the Prophet and his designated followers waged a war against Divinely specified peoples of their time (the polytheists and the Israelites and Nazarites of Arabia and some other Jews, Christians) as a form of Divine punishment and asked the polytheists of Arabia for submission to Islam as a condition for exoneration and the others for jizya and submission to the political authority of the Muslims for exemption from death punishment and for military protection as the *dhimmis* of the Muslims. Therefore, after the Prophet and his companions, there is no concept in Islam obliging Muslims to wage war for propagation or implementation of Islam. The only valid basis for jihad through arms is to end oppression when all other measures have failed. According to him Jihad can only be waged by an organized Islamic state. No person, party or group can take arms into their hands (for the purpose of waging Jihad) under any

circumstances. Another corollary, in his opinion, is that death punishment for apostasy was also specifically for the recipients of the same Divine punishment during the Prophet's times—for they had persistently denied the truth of the Prophet's mission even after it had been made conclusively evident to them by God through the Prophet.

**Islamic State:** The formation of an Islamic state is not a religious obligation per se upon the Muslims. However, he believes that if and when Muslims form a state of their own, Islam does impose certain religious obligations on its rulers as establishment of the institution of Salah (obligatory prayer), *akah* (mandatory charity), and *'amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa nahi 'ani'l-munkar* (preservation and promotion of society's good conventions and customs and eradication of social vices; this, in Ghamidi's opinion, should be done in modern times through courts, police, etc. in accordance with the law of the land which, as the government itself, must be based on the opinion of the majority).

Ghamidi is one of the Pakistani religious scholars who, from the beginning, has been opposing this kind of Islamism. One of his recent essays on this subject Islam and the Taliban [Muslim militants]:

“The Taliban says that democracy is a concept alien to Islam. The ideal way of setting up an Islamic government in our times is the one that it adopted for Mullah Omar’s government in Afghanistan. The constitution, the parliament, and elections are nothing but modern day shams...I can say with full confidence on the basis of my study of Islam that this viewpoint and this strategy (of Taliban) are not acceptable to the Qur’ān. It prescribes democracy as the way to run the affairs of the state. The Qur’ān (42:38) says: *amruhum shūrā baynahum* (the affairs of the Muslims are run on the basis of their consultation). ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “Whosoever pledges allegiance to anyone without the collective consent of the Muslims presents himself for the death sentence.” It is true that, in Muslim history, monarchy and dictatorship have often

been accepted forms of government. Some people also believe that the head of government should be a nominee of God Himself. However, the principle the Qur'ān spells out is very clear.

### **Feisal Abdul Rauf:**

Feisal is a well-known proponent of cultural reconciliation between the Muslim World and the West, basing his views on Classical Islamic governance's similarity to Western governance models in terms of religious freedoms and democratic inclination. Abdul Rauf is a highly visible American-Egyptian Imam at New York's Masjid al-Farah in addition to being Founder and Chairman of Cordoba Initiative, a non-profit organization seeking to bridge the divide between the Muslim world and the West.

### **Nader El-Bizri:**

Nader is a British-Lebanese philosopher, historian of science, and architectural theorist. He taught at the University of Cambridge, the



University of Nottingham, and the University of Lincoln. He is also affiliated with the French CNRS in Paris, and the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London. He published and lectured widely on Ibn al-Haytham, Ibn Sina, Ikhwan al-Safa', and also on Heidegger and on phenomenology. He served on various editorial boards with academic publishers like Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Springer, Brill, I. B. Tauris. He acted as consultant to the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in Geneva, the Science Museum in London, and the Guggenheim Museum in New York. He contributed also to various BBC radio and TV programs on Islamic philosophy and the history of the exact sciences in Islam. His approach to Islamic philosophy is historical and at the same time informed at the interpretive levels by readings from contemporary Continental Thought and Anglo-American Analytic Philosophy.

## **Dr.Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri:**

A Pakistani born Sufi scholar and former professor of international constitutional law at the University of the Punjab. Qadri was recently described by the CNN-IBN as the 'International Peace Ambassador'. Qadri founded a Sufism-based organisation Minhaj-ul-Quran International in October 1981 and spent the next decade expanding it nationally and internationally. The goal of the organisation is fairly broad, namely to promote religious moderation, effective and sound education, inter-faith dialogue and harmony, and a moderate interpretation of Islam employing methods of Sufism. Over the past 30 years, the organisation has reportedly expanded to over 90 countries. During the March 2011 session the United Nations Economic and Social Council granted special consultative status to Qadri's organisation Minhaj-ul-Quran International. . Qadri spoke at the World Economic Forum in January 2011. He also takes part in politics intermittently.

## **Mohammad Azadpur:**

He is an associate professor of philosophy at San Francisco State University. He teaches courses on Islamic philosophy, mysticism, and political philosophy. His research focuses on Alfarabi and Avicenna, and he does comparative work between Islamic and Heideggerian thought as well.

## **Ahmed Deedat:**

Ahmed Hoosen Deedat (1918–2005) was a South African writer and public speaker of Indian descent. He was best known as a Muslim missionary who held numerous inter-religious public debates with evangelical Christians, as well as video lectures, most of which centred around Islam, Christianity and the Bible. He also established the IPCI, an international Islamic missionary organisation, and wrote several booklets on Islam and Christianity which were widely distributed by the organisation. He was awarded the prestigious King Faisal International Prize in 1986 for his 50 years of

missionary work. One focus of his work was providing Muslims with theological tools for defending themselves against active proselytising by Christian missionaries. He used English to get his message across to Muslims and non-Muslims in the western world.

### **Dr.Zakir Naik:**

Zakir Abdul Karim Naik inspired by Ahmed Deedat, is an Indian public speaker on the subject of Islam and comparative religion. He is the founder and president of the Islamic Research Foundation (IRF), a non-profit organisation that owns the Peace TV channel based in Dubai, UAE. He is sometimes referred to as a televangelist. Before becoming a public speaker, he trained as a doctor. He has written books on Islam and comparative religion. Through logic and references from Bible and scriptures of other religions he proves the truthfulness of Islamic monotheism and advent of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Proving the scientific evidence of truthfulness of Quran is an

other specialty. He is considered to be closer to the Salafi ideology.

### **Harun Yahya:**

Adnan Oktar (born Turkey 1956), also known as Harun Yahya, is "the biggest propagator of ijaz literature" and an Islamic creationist. In 2007, he sent thousands of unsolicited copies of his book, *Atlas of Creation*, which advocates Islamic creationism, to American scientists, members of Congress, and science museums. In 1990, he founded the Science Research Foundation (SRF, or, in Turkish, Bilim Araştırma Vakfı, or BAV). Oktar founded the Science Research Foundation to hold conferences and seminars for scientific activities "that target mass awareness concerning what the real underlying causes of social and political conflicts are", which he describes to be materialism and Darwinism.

He has organized hundreds of conferences on creationism in Turkey and worldwide. He built a large publishing enterprise with publications sold through Islamic bookstore worldwide. He is

considered "one of the most widely distributed authors in the Muslim world". His television show is viewed by many in the Arab world. Oktar has been preaching about the "Turkish-Islamic Union", which would bring peace to the entire Muslim world under the leadership of Turkey. In 2010, Oktar was selected as one of the top fifty of The 500 Most Influential Muslims in the World by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre of Jordan for his dissemination of creationism in an Islamic context, and other extensively distributed publications on Islamic topics.

### **Dr. Israr Ahmed:**

Israr Ahmed (1932–2010) was an Indian born Pakistani physician turned Islamic theologian, Mufassir of Quran and a very great Islamic Scholar and Revolutionary followed particularly in South Asia and also among the South Asian diaspora in the Middle East, Western Europe, and North America. He is the founder of the Tanzeem-e-Islami, an off-shoot of the Jamaat-e-Islami. He has spent more than 50

years of his life teaching Quraan and preaching Islam. He hosted a shows on TV including Peace TV, a 24 hours Islamic channel broadcast internationally. Supporters describe his vision of Islam as having been synthesised from the diverse sources. He has also acknowledged the "deep influence" of Shah Waliullah Dehlavi, the 18th century Indian Islamic leader, anti-colonial activist, jurist, and scholar.[4] Ahmed followed the thinking of Maulana Hamiduddin Farahi and Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi, concerning what his followers believe is the "internal coherence of and the principles of deep reflection in the Qur'an". Furthermore, Ahmed followed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi in regards to what he believes is the "dynamic and revolutionary conception of Islam."

Ahmed believed in what he called "Islamic revolutionary thought," which consists of the idea that Islam – the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah – must be implemented in the

social, cultural, juristic, political, and economic spheres of life. In this he is said to follow Mohammad Rafiuddin and Muhammad Iqbal. The first attempt towards the actualisation of this concept was reportedly made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad through his short-lived party, the Hizbullah. Another attempt was made by Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi through his Jamaat-e-Islami party. Although the Jamaat-e-Islami has reached some influence, Ahmed resigned from the party in 1956 when it entered the electoral process and believed that such an involvement led to "degeneration from a pure Islamic revolutionary party to a mere political one".

He believed that; "the spiritual and intellectual center of the Muslim world has shifted from the Arab world to the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent" and "conditions are much more congenial for the establishment of Khilafah in Pakistan" than in other Muslim countries. While both Hizb ut-Tahrir and Tanzeem-e-Islami share belief in reviving the Caliphate as a means of



implementing Islam in all spheres of life, Tanzeem-e-Islami does not believe in involvement in electoral politics, armed struggle, coup d'état to establish a caliphate, and has no set plan of detailed workings for the future Caliphate. Tanzeem-e-Islami emphasises that iman (faith) among Muslims must be revived in "a significant portion of the Muslim society" before there can be an Islamic revival. Thus there is a lot of difference in ideas, beliefs and methodology between the two.

### **Tariq Ramadan:**

Tariq Ramadan is a Swiss academic and writer [grandson of Hasan al Banna, founder of Akhwan-ul-Muslemeen]. He is also a Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Oxford University. He advocates the study and re-interpretation of Islamic texts, and emphasizes the heterogeneous nature of Western Muslims. Ramadan was named one of the world's top 100 innovators of the 21st Century (one of the

world's top 7th religious leaders) by Time Magazine in 2000, and one of the world's top 100 most influential intellectuals in the world by Time Magazine in 2004. Ramadan was named by Foreign Policy magazine on its list of 100 top global thinkers in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2012.

Ramadan works primarily on Islamic theology and the position of Muslims in the West and within Muslim majority countries. In general, he believes it necessary to interpret the Qur'an, not simply to read the Arabic text, in order to understand its meaning and to practice Islamic philosophy. He also emphasizes the difference between religion and culture, which he believes are too often confused, arguing that citizenship and religion are separate concepts which should not be mixed. He claims that there is no conflict between being both a Muslim and a European; a Muslim must accept the laws of his country. But he is opposed to some politicians or people who try to circumvent or to give a new sense of their own laws.

He believes that Western Muslims must create a "Western Islam" just as there is a separate "Asian Islam" and an "African Islam", which take into account cultural differences. By this he means that European Muslims must re-examine the fundamental texts of Islam (primarily the Qur'an) and interpret them in light of their own cultural background, influenced by European society.

He rejects a binary division of the world into *dar al-Islam* (the abode of Islam) and *dar al-harb* (the abode of war), on the grounds that such a division is not mentioned in the Qur'an. He has been also known to cite favourably the Dar al-Da'wa (Abode of Information Dissemination). However, Ramadan has articulated both the "ideological geography" of the West and the duty of da'wa in an original fashion and one that is starkly more pro-integration than the more conservative "loyal resident alienage" articulated by such jurists as al-Qaradawi. For Ramadan, the West is neither the Abode of War nor the Abode of da'wa but "dar al-shahada," the

"Abode of Testimony" [to the Islamic Message]. He argues that Muslims are "witnesses before mankind"; they must continue to review the fundamental principles of Islam and take responsibility for their faith.

Importantly, for him the "Islamic message" to which Muslims are expected to bear witness is not primarily the particularist, socially conservative code of traditionalist jurists, but a commitment to universalism and the welfare of non-Muslims; it is also an injunction not merely to make demands on un-Islamic societies but to express solidarity with them.

"... the European environment is a space of responsibility for Muslims. This is exactly the meaning of the notion of "space of testimony" [dar al-shahada] that we propose here, a notion that totally reverses perspectives: whereas Muslims have, for years, been wondering whether and how they would be accepted, the in-depth study and evaluation of the Western environment entrusts them, in light of their Islamic frame of reference, with a most important mission... Muslims now attain, in the space of testimony, the meaning of an essential duty and of an exacting

responsibility: to contribute, wherever they are, to promoting good and equity within and through human brotherhood. Muslims' outlook must now change from the reality of "protection" alone to that of an authentic "contribution."

He emphasizes a Muslim's responsibility to his community, whether it be Islamic or not. He criticizes the 'us vs. them' mentality that some Muslims advocate against the West. He also advocates having Muslim scholars in the West who are versed in Western mores, and not relying on religious studies that come only from the Islamic world. He wants more Islamic philosophy written in European languages. He thinks that European Muslims' reliance on an "external" Islam, leaves them feeling inadequate and impure, which is one of the main causes of alienation from European culture.

He believes that most Muslims in the West are quietly and successfully integrating into society. The main problems for the community come from those who are ignorant of Western society. He also worries about Western perceptions of Islam. He says the Muslim community has been

bad at representing itself, and that this has allowed westerners to confuse Islam with cultural traits, as well as political problems. For example, he believes that many notionally Islamic countries have governments which betray the principles of Islam.

He believes that the Muslim leadership in Europe is partially responsible for the sometimes shaky relations between Muslims and the rest of society. He believes that they have been overly defensive, and have not properly explained the philosophy of Islam, nor have they engaged sufficiently with non-Muslim society.

He stresses that a Muslim's freedom of religion is very extensive in the West, and that permission for "un-Islamic" activities, such as drinking, or pre-marital sex, does not compel Muslims to do anything. Only a few situations warrant the invocation of the "clause of conscience" which allows a Muslim to make it clear that certain actions or behaviours are in contradiction of their faith. These are,

participating in a war whose sole desire is for power or control; fighting or killing a fellow Muslim, unless their attitude is unjust or wrong; participating in an unlawful transaction (such as purchasing insurance, burial, incorrect slaughter). He stresses that in such cases the situation should be carefully analysed, and the degree of compulsion considered. Only non-violence and negotiation are acceptable in these cases.

Ramadan has voiced his opposition to all forms of capital punishment but believes the Muslim world should remove such laws from within, without any Western pressure, as such would only further alienate Muslims, and instead bolster the position of those who support *hudud* punishments.

He has said "Muslim populations are convincing themselves of the Islamic character of these practices through a rejection of the west, on the basis of a simplistic reasoning that stipulates that 'the less western, the more Islamic'."

## **CONCLUSION**

Man has wielded immense power through increased knowledge. But, paradoxically, he has failed to gear this vast body of knowledge to human values and purposes. Moreover, advances in science and technology coupled with the decline of moral and human values have made life rich in mechanisms but poor in purpose. Many thinkers glumly believe that this is where the seeds of the destruction of modern civilization lie. The repository of specialized knowledge has a limited horizon; his vision is piecemeal. Bertrand Russell, in his essay Knowledge and Wisdom, distinguishes between the two. Knowledge is a collection of facts, while wisdom comes by relating facts with one another. It is in this sense that fragmentation of knowledge has led to a loss of perspective. Knowledge without wisdom, concluded Russell, is dangerous. Islam incorporates the spiritual aspects with the knowledge and philosophy to make it useful for the humanity in both lives.



Philosophy is the branch of knowledge, dealing with the critical examination of the basis for fundamental beliefs and an analysis of the basic concepts employed in the expression of such beliefs. It was the faith and philosophy of Islam which transformed the unknown, uncivilized, illiterate Arab tribes, in to the torch bearers of the great civilization with in 23 years, unmatched event in the history of mankind. Philosophical traditions exist in Judaism and Christianity under Greek influence. Islam emphasizes the seeking of knowledge, pondering, rational thinking and wisdom (Hikma). The origin of philosophic interest in Islam is found prominently through the translation of Greek philosophic works.

Philosophy in Islam developed out of and around the nonreligious practical and theoretical sciences; it recognized no theoretical limits other than those of human reason itself; and it assumed that the truth found by unaided reason does not disagree with the truth of Islam when both are properly understood. Islamic theology

(kalam) and philosophy (Falsafah) are two traditions of learning developed by Muslim thinkers. The Muslim philosophers were theologians, well versed with knowledge of Qur'an and Sunnah. Al-Kindi (Alkindus, 800–873 CE) is recognized as the first Muslim Arab philosopher, Ibn Rushd (Averroes, 1128–1198 CE), a major Aristotelian Muslim and Spanish philosopher, stated that the study of philosophy is obligatory, although it is possible to misuse the science for other purposes. The main issue which has remained in focus of philosophers is about the existence of God, and the related issues i.e. the existence of Evil, Predestination and Free Will. In philosophy there are three major, purely rational, arguments for the existence of God that have had a significant influence on the history of philosophy of religion; the Cosmological, Teleological and Ontological arguments. The issue of free will was confronted by philosophers.

The Muslims scholars have deduced a balanced view about free will. Shah Wali Allah of Delhi

(1702-1762 C.E) reinterpreted the concept of *taqdir* (Determinism). Shah Wali Allah held that man could achieve his full potential by his own exertion in a universe that was determined by God. Allah has granted power and limited free will to human by which they can perform certain actions by use of their wisdom i.e. to choose between right and wrong. Islamic philosophers of the middle ages did not address the problem of existence of God in any direct fashion. This may be because in the context of Muslim thought, the existence of God was a prerequisite. More important reason for the decline of the earlier Islamic philosophic tradition was the renewed vitality and success of the program formulated by al-Ghazzali for the synthesis of theology, philosophy, and mysticism into a new kind of philosophy called New Wisdom (Hikma). According to Dr.Saehau: “Were it not for al-Ashari and al-Ghazali, the Arabs would have been a nation of Galileos and Newtons.”

The wholesale rejection of the new wisdom in the name of simple, robust, and more practical piety which had been initiated by Ibn Taymiyah (1263-1328 C.E) who sought the return of the Islamic religion to its sources: the Qur'an and the Sunnah, revealed writing and the prophetic tradition. He is also the source of the Wahhabi movement in mid-18th-century. Among the modern reformers of the 19th and 20th-century are reformers Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-897 C.E), Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905 C.E), and Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938 C.E). They were initially educated in this tradition, but they rebelled against it and advocated radical reforms. The modernists attacked the New Wisdom at its weakest point; that is, its social and political norms, its individualistic ethics, and its inability to speak intelligently about social, cultural, and political problems generated by a long period of intellectual isolation that was further complicated by the domination of the European powers.

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938 CE, India) is the renowned 20<sup>th</sup> century Muslim poet-philosopher. He is the first modern Muslim philosopher to deal with the intellectual challenges faced by Muslim Ummah in any comprehensive manner. He made an effort to address the real issues, by saying: “With the reawakening of Islam, therefore, it is necessary to examine, in an independent spirit, what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached by her can help us in the revision and if necessary, reconstruction, of theological thought in Islam”. Iqbal is the only known modern Muslim philosopher who attempted the reinterpretation of Islamic doctrines in the present age through ‘Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam’ without compromising on the fundamentals. He argued that a rightly focused man should unceasingly generate vitality through interaction with the purposes of the living God. Muhammad Iqbal is critical of Ghazzali’s characterization of knowledge. He thought that Ghazzali was

mistaken in giving up reason and thought and embracing mystic experience as the only exclusive way the totally infinite could be revealed to an individual. Iqbal tried to point out that, intellectual reason and intuition are inseparable, and that in the act of comprehending something by intuition, the intellect plays an indispensable role, which cannot be discounted.

In this modern period, due to the natural appeal and realistic nature of Islamic doctrine even after 9/11, Islam has continued to win new converts among in all races and colours, especially among Africans and Americans. The tradition of dialogue with representatives of other religions could not gain strength although medieval Islamic scholars wrote fairly objective works about other faiths. Recently, there have been engagements though dialogues with representatives of Christianity and Judaism, recognized in Islam as the two other “religions of the book” (based on revelation). God says in Qur’an: “Say: "O people of the Book! Let us get

together on what is common between us and you.”(Qur’an;3:64). Nonetheless, memories of Crusades, Western colonialism and the present geopolitical confrontation have generated suspicion and impeded ecumenical efforts.

The term ‘Reformation’ is used for 16th-century movement in Western Europe that aimed at reforming some doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church and resulted in the establishment of the Protestant churches. As far as Islam is concerned there is no scope for ‘reformation’ of its basic doctrines and practices, since Qur’an declared Islam as complete way of life: *“This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.”* [Qur’an;5:3]. However there is provision of *Ijtehad* by competent scholars to cater for changing new situations, with in the basic parameters of Islam. Hence the basic thrust of Muslim scholars (revivalists or reformers) and intellectuals is on revival of original spirit of Islam, in the contemporary environments.

It is the nature of Islamic thought that as new challenges develop; it tends to re orient itself through interpretation the data of history and nature in the light of eternal truths of its religion. In modern times the most formidable example that testifies the fact is Iqbal, who through his poetic experience developed a perception of history and thought which is unique and immensely relevant. Besides his general impact on the history of ideas in modern times his thought formed the basis of the creation of new Muslim state; Pakistan. He attempted the reinterpretation of Islamic doctrines in the present age and encouraged Ijtehad the principle of legal advancement to devise new social and political institutions. He also advocated a theory of ijma (consensus). Iqbal tended to be progressive in adumbrating general principles of change but conservative in initiating actual change. He highlighted as to why it is necessary for Muslims to engage themselves in the study and science of philosophy in order to redefine Islamic culture,



which is now confronted with a more advanced western civilization. In the modern context it is important, for Islamic thought at least, to reassert itself clearly and define its parameters upon which a modern Islamic epistemology can be built. If this is not done then the words of Iqbal Ahmad remain true, who said: "We are chasing an Islamic order 'stripped of its humanism, aesthetics, intellectual quests and spiritual devotions.... concerned with power not with the soul, with the mobilization of people for political purposes rather than with sharing and alleviating their sufferings and aspirations."

The work of European and American philosophers cannot be ignored, and their criticism should be used to recreate the vigor of Islamic philosophy, which has been lost over the past few centuries. If Muslim thinkers fail in this challenge, then Muslim thought may be absorbed by Western philosophy, as the two cultures begin to integrate further. The 'Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' proposed by Iqbal over seventy five year ago

need to be given a serious thought for consideration by Muslim intellectuals and scholars.

“Our Sustainer! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake.” (Qur’an;2:286)

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## **A REMINDER**

### **What Islam Expects From The Muslims?**

- To inhere in their best civilization and matchless culture in a manner that they surpass all the civilized nations of the world. They should be the most prosperous of all as far as the different branches of knowledge are concerned.
- Invite the humanity towards Islam, by conveying the message with wisdom, peacefully, in a logical and convincing way. They should argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious.
- Not to kill the innocent people of any faith (including own self, through suicide) except by law, they don't have to create mischief on earth by creating anarchy or disturbing the peaceful coexistence. Warfare against injustice and oppression and self defence is permissible, to be declared by the Islamic State but the rules lay down for its conduct by Shari'a (Islamic Law) be strictly adhered to. Those who surrender or do not fight or remain neutral are not to be

disturbed. The prisoners are to protected and provided peace and security.

- To use the right of retaliation to any injustice or oppression with equality, not exceeding the limits forgiveness and patience is however preferable.
- To fulfill all bilateral and international accords (like UN Charter) for peace and stability of humanity. To treat all members of society with equality fairness and justice.
- Non Muslims in the Islamic society enjoy complete protections and freedom to practice their faith. The places of worship of other religions are to be protected.

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