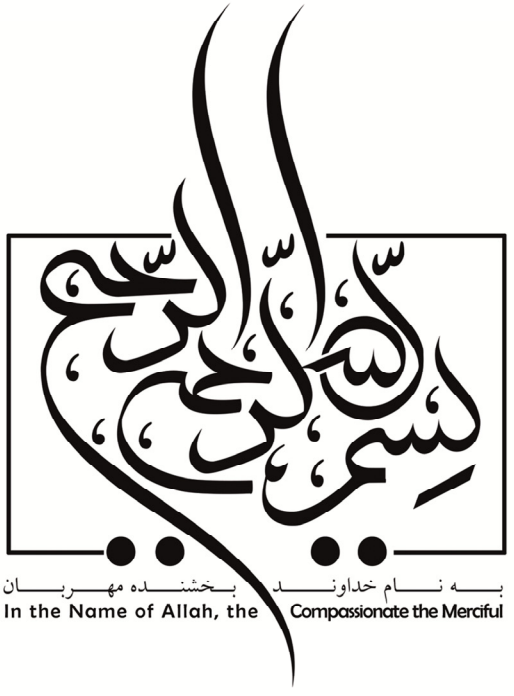
بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم
به نام خداوند بخشنده مهربان
In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful

RELIGION BASED KNOWLEDGE
VIEWS AND REMARKS

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Translated by:
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Publisher's Forword

To begin and execute a research is like walking in the path of development and evolvement. When the seeds of the "questions" are planted, in the soil of the mind of the researcher, this phase initiates, and its end is culminated when the result and the outcome of knowledge and wisdom is gained.

Evidently, this end is a new chapter in itself, for growth, and announces beforehand this good news to humans. For the result of all those mental efforts will not only bring the blooming and flowering of talent and all kinds of Blessings to humans, but it also makes the mind of the researcher to ponder and shape new, more questions.

This will produce a great collection of growing plants and flowers for the seeking mind… Those "questions" are in fact, the seeds, which according to the necessities of Time and the strength of the researchers will grow and bloom by themselves. They will make Culture and Civilization to move forward.

In like manner, the increasing rate of transferring oneself from one place to another place and the decrease of the distances will make those seeds travel miles and miles, to faraway places, in order to install them inside the curious mind of other seekers. This will bring an amazing diversity and a novelty for another civilization…

It is true then, that the presence of knowledge and a good, capable management will help this project to develop itself and one has to admit indeed, that it has always played an important role…

Al-Mustafa International Publication and Translation Center, because of its global mission, and its special position among the Religious Schools and the colorful human diversity that it has developed inside itself, sees it as a moral duty to procure all the appropriate conditions for any research works, and takes its role in this matter, most seriously. To procure all kinds of necessary grounds, with an excellent management of all the existing possibilities and talents, and to care and protect all its researchers in religious fields; these are the most crucial responsibilities of the Department of Research in this International center.

We dearly hope that by being attentive to all these autonomous scientific movements, and by fortifying all the existing motives, we shall be able to witness the blooming of the Religious Culture in every part of this wide world!

Al-Mustafa International
Publication and Translation Center

Content

Preface

Considering necessity of preparing appropriate Islamic texts in English for the modern world and aiming at satisfying that need, Al-Mustafa International Research Institute (M.I.R.I.) was established in 2009. This centre has accomplished that duty in the best way by producing, translating, and reprinting tens of such appropriate texts. The present book entitled Religion Based Knowledge: Views and Remarks, which is published in Farsi by the Research institute of Hawzeh & University, is among works translated by these two Institutes.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to "Islam and West Research Centre Ltd" for publishing this book and hope that the latter should form a link showing the way for those who seek advancement.

Al-Mustafa International Research Institute (M.I.R.I.)

Foreword

Research in the social science and humanities [in order to know, plan, record and control human phenomena] in line with the true happiness of humankind is an undeniable necessity.

The basic requirement for such dynamism is the application of reason and the divine teachings along with experimental data and taking into account the objective realities, the true values and culture of societies.

Effective research in the Islamic society of Iran depends on knowing the realities of the society on the one hand and Islam as the most certain divine teachings and the most basic element of the Iranian culture on the other hand. Therefore, special attention should be paid to gaining a precise and deep knowledge of Islamic teachings and employing them in research, review and indigenization of the foundations and problems of the human sciences.

Having in mind this strategic reality, Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, prepared the ground for the formation of the Hawzeh & Universities Cooperation Office in 1982 .This scientific institution was formed with his guidance and attention by hawzeh & universities' scholars. The successful experience of this center prepared the ground for the expansion of its activities until in 2004 the Research Institute of Hawzeh and Universities was founded.

Professors and experts are requested to share their comments with this research institute for the purpose of improving this and other academic works.

Finally, the Research Institute of Hawzeh and Universities would like to acknowledge the contribution of academicians and experts in this work as well as the actual executors of the plan Seyyed Hamid-Rezā Hassani, Mahdi Alipour and Seyyed Mohammad-Taqi Movahhed-Abtahi.

The Research Institute of Hawzeh and Universities

Introduction

Since old times, thinkers have studied the relationship between various beliefs among people. An example in the West is what history shows of the discussions on the relations of mythology and philosophy in ancient Greece when philosophy was being born. Mythology, which was very old in Greek culture, does not hold a high position in Aristotle's philosophical thought. He writes in *Metaphysics*: "But into the subtleties of the mythologists it is not worth our while to inquire seriously." [1]

Another example of this discussion can be found in the exchanges between religious beliefs and philosophical point of views. The philosophical views of Plato and Aristotle about the being, human identity, ethics, politics, etc., had been expressed and spread centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ. After the expansion of Judaism and Christianity and the spread and institutionalization of their teachings, thinkers and devout people began to think of the relations between religious teachings and philosophical thoughts, as a result of which a variety of views were set forth on the relation of religion and philosophy. Philosophers and thinkers tried to identify the relation of beliefs resulting from rational reflections on the one hand and beliefs

1. Aristotle*, Metaphysics,* Book III, 1000a5 12.

based on divine revelation on the other hand. Those religious philosophers who intended to respect man's rational achievements while at the same time respecting the divinely revealed knowledge, attempted to adopt a middle path between the two groups of beliefs and to create compatibility between them. The coordination of these two groups of beliefs was carried out in various ways. After the Renaissance and while the new schools of philosophy were being formed, the discussion of relations of religion and philosophy acquired more extensive and newer dimensions.

Another example of these transactions in the conflict of scientific beliefs and religious beliefs appeared in the Medieval West.[1] Galileo's correspondence and conflicts with priests and bishops and the theological, philosophical and scientific discussions in the second decade of the 17th century are perhaps an example of the most important and at the same time most prominent discussions in this regard. The Church authorities had admitted that the belief in the 'Heliocentrism' cannot be said to be irrelevant to religion because this had been mentioned in the Bible and they believed that the Bible could not be against reality. As to what Galileo's telescope showed, they suggested that it would be better for the Copernican system to be considered merely as a mathematical model to describe and explain astronomical phenomena more simply rather than claiming to conform to reality. The followers of the Copernican model such as Galileo, however, could not accept this decision. Copernicus himself held the view that his proposed system was the only true one. In several letters and theses, Galileo expressed his view on the way the Bible was interpreted regarding the solar system and explicitly

1. cf. Gilson, Etienne, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy.*

stated that the Bible does not contain a mistake if it is properly understood.[1] Although Galileo's attempts did not yield a result and the Church judged against him and, in general, against the Copernican system and this situation continued up to 1758 (the year when the Pope took books with Heliocentrism approach out of the list of the forbidden books), yet the dialog between the current understandings of nature and religion and the evaluation of the claims in these two epistemological domains were always kept open. Rather, with the formation of other sciences such as biology, psychology, sociology, etc., and their new claims, the dialog acquired new dimensions.

It is noteworthy that the common belief is that Christianity has a long history of conflicting with and opposing science. This common belief dates back to two books written about a century ago. Andrew Dickson White (1876-1918) in his books *A history of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*[2] and *The Warfare of Science*[3] and John William Draper (1811-1882) in his book *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*[4] set forth the theory that was publicly accepted in the twentieth century and became known as the Draper-White theory. This theory, which is well-known as the Conflict Theory, has an optimistic look at science and a pessimistic look at religion, believing that religion is inherently in conflict with the current

1. cf. Sharratt, Michael, *Galileo: Decisive Innovator*
2. White, Andrew Dickson, *A History of Science with Theology in Christendom.* 2 vols. New York: Appleton, 1897.
3. White, Andrew Dickson, *The Warfare of Science.* New York: Appleton, 1876.
4. Draper, John William, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, 1874. Reprint. New York: Appleton, 1928.

understandings of nature (science) and this conflict is essential and fundamental.

Despite its reputation and widespread acceptance, this view has opponents as well. One of the most important opponents is John Hadley Brooke, who expresses his view in the book *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives.*[1] While considering the conflict theory as simplistic, he proposes the complexity thesis on the multidimensional relation between religion teachings and scientific beliefs. From this point of view, one should evaluate the relation of science and the Christian faith in a complex multidimensional process that has been determined due to specific historical situations. According to Brooke, this relation, with exceptions such as Galileo's trial and the like, has always been a good, dynamic and peaceful one while in numerous cases Christianity has contributed to the development and promotion of science. This view was widely welcomed among historians of science although the essential conflict of science and the Christian faith is too deep to be wiped out with such views.[2]

In the Islamic world, the interaction of divinely revealed knowledge and human findings was manifested in the form of the quarrel between philosophy, mysticism and theology. The philosophical method that entered the Islamic world in the Translation Era through Greece was seriously considered and consolidated. In line with this, the quarrel between literalism and rationalism was formed in early second century A.H. This quarrel

1. Brooke, John Hadley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991.
2. cf. Wilson, David B. *The Historiography of Science and Religion. The history of science and religion in the western tradition, an encyclopedia.*

culminated in the time of Ghazzāli and Ibn Rushd (Averrhoës).

Despite the long history of the discussion of theology, philosophy, mysticism and religion in the Islamic world, the discussion of the conflict between science and religion is a fresh discussion that dates back to the creation of modern relations between European countries and the Islamic world.

In Islamic countries, including Iran (prior to the formation of the *Dārolfonun* School (the first modern school in Iran) and its expansion and later the establishment of universities) and Egypt (prior to the formation of the new educational system), Hawzehes[1] dealt with scientific problems in addition to carrying out research on religion based sciences. Mathematics, astronomy, medicine, chemistry, physiology, etc. were taught in Hawzehes by instructors who had been educated in the religious educational system. Naturally, a peaceful relationship was established between science and religion through religious scholars.[2]

1. Islamic seminaries
2. In Iran, with the formation of the *Dārolfonun* (polytechnics) and teaching western sciences and technology by employing foreign teachers on the one hand and sending students to European countries on the other hand, the problem of relation of the Western culture and the Islamic culture was set forth. From the very beginning of establishment of the *Dārolfonun*, certain people were employed for teaching and leading noon and evening prayers and responding to religious problems. Even students who were sent to Paris in 1896 were not much influenced by the French culture because, firstly, they were of a small age and were taught the national and religious customs and were strongly influenced by the spirit of chastity and the national religion and, secondly, a smart devout person, i.e. Amir Nezām Garusi, supervised them who, because of the requirements at that time, was controlled them very

In general, approximately two hundred years ago, when Western science entered the Islamic world, there were various reactions in the Islamic world against modern science. Some views deemed modern science as incompatible with Islam and rejected it. According to the proponents of this view, the only solution to make up for the backwardness of the Islamic world was to follow the Islamic teachings. Another group openly embraced modern science and worked hard to accept it. According to these individuals, the solution to the backwardness of Islamic societies was merely dominating modern science and replacing the religious world view with a scientific world view. This thought considers modern science as the only source of true enlightenment. Even some believers in this idea claimed that theology should follow the methodology of the Western sciences and that the only way to know God is through the study of nature with modern scientific methodology. According to this idea, arguments in the Quran based on natural phenomena constitute a reason why experimental science is sufficient. Some even made a correspondence between Qur'anic reason and the positivist philosophy.[1]

Some have merely sought to show that Islam's compatibility with modern science. These can be divided into three major groups:

One group seeks to justify the need to learn modern science in a religious background. According to these, modern science should

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much and protected them morally. (cf. Mahbubi-Ardakāni, Hosseyn, *History of Modern Civilized Institutions in Iran*; Hāeri, Abdolhādi, *The First Encounters of Iran's Thinkers with the Two Faces of the Western Bourgeois Civilization.*)

1. Tabbarah, Afif Abdolfattah, *Ruh al-Din al-Islami, p. 270.*

be learned in order to fulfill the needs of the Islamic society or to avoid criticisms by Orientalists and thinkers.

Another group has attempted to show that all important findings of modern science can be found in the Quran and the Hadith and that, by resorting to such sciences, one can understand the wisdom behind some religious orders. Some individuals in this group believe that experimental science has reached the same results that prophets had told centuries ago.

The third group is in the search of a new expression of Islam dominated by a modern discourse so as to bridge the gap between modern science and Islam. For example, Sir Ahmad Khan, the Indian scientist, sought natural theology with which to explain the basic principles of Islam in light of the findings of modern science.

Some other Islamic scholars support the idea that the findings of modern science should be separated from their philosophical attachments. While praising Western scholars in their hard work to discover the secrets of nature, they warn Muslims against the materialistic requirements of modern science. According to this group, modern science can explain only some of the characteristics of the physical world but cannot claim all knowledge. Modern science should be put in the context of Islamic world view, where higher levels of knowledge are recognized and the role of science is fulfilled as a means to take us closer to God.

There has been a wide variety of reactions in the Islamic world to the West and Western science in the last century. In the early 70s, the elite began the Islamization of universities in Pakistan and Malaysia, which is still continued by some institutes. Iqbal Lahuri was an influential figure in this respect. Seyyed Abul A'la Maududi in Pakistan is among the thinkers who criticized the indifference of universities to religion and emphasized the need to change universities.

In the 70s, Professor Seyyed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas in Malaysia wrote a book entitled *Islamic Education*, in which he discussed the Islamization of science and universities.

Egypt was among the other Islamic countries that worked for this purpose. With a history of teachings by such thinkers as Seyyed Jamaleddin Asadābādi and Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, it witnessed the strongest clashes against the secularization of universities in the struggle led by the Al-Azhar University and other religious circles against secularism.

In Iran, prior to the victory of the Islamic Revolution (1979), there were criticisms by religious scholars and intellectuals against the dependence of the higher education system on foreigners and the secularization of Iran's academia. In the decades preceding the Islamic Revolution, teachings and ideas of individuals such as Allāmé Tabātabāyi, Ayatollah Motahari, Ayatollah Sadr, Ayatollah Mesbāh Yazdi, Mr. Bāzargān and Mr. Sahābi besides the discussion relating to Marxism and the claim of its being scientific and the related sociological and economic discussions should be considered as a turning point in the relations of science and religion in Iran.[1] In these years, there were discussions on the scientific or non-scientific nature of Marxism on the one hand and, on the other hand, on the relations of the Islamic economic school and system as opposed to the two economic systems of the Eastern bloc and the Western bloc.[2]

The argument based on the order in nature and the use of scientific achievements in the issue of order in the world to prove God (such as views in natural theology in the Middle Ages) and

1. Sobhāni, Mohammad-Taqi, *"Ray of Religion in Separation of Reason"*.
2. cf. Sadr, Seyyed Mohammad-Baqir, *Economic System in Islam* (*Iqtisaduna*).

Darwin's theory and Islam's stance on it are among the other discussions of interactions of science and religion in those days.

One of the most important and controversial discussions on the relations of science and religion is the discussion of the models to explain religion based science, which has aroused numerous statements and views by Muslim thinkers. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the Cultural Revolution, higher education centers became the main targets of the Cultural Revolution in Iran, for which the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution of Iran took many actions. The existence of such a current naturally caused agreement and disagreement among intellectual currents as to the idea of religion based science, its need and possibility and how it could be fulfilled.

This book is the outcome of some of the most important views that have been stated regarding religion based science in Iran. In this book, attempt will be made to present and examine both the views disagreeing with the possibility of having religion based science as well as a variety of agreeing views. It is noteworthy that those who hold these views on religion based science do not necessary share the same understanding of it.

A summary of views discussed in this book include Mustafa Malekiān and Abdolkarim Sorush who neither deem religion based science possible nor necessary, stating that religion based science is a logically paradoxical concept. As opposed to these, some think of religion based science as necessary, possible and even already realized.

Among those who believe in the possibility and need of religion based science, some believe that all concepts, methods, methodologies and even rules of logic and mathematics may be religious or non-religious while Muslim thinkers should consider making all epistemological domains religious. In other words,

according to Mahdi Golshani, having a religion based belief in interpreting scientific achievements is deemed sufficient for naming science religious.

From another angle, Seyyed Hossein Nasr believes that sciences that Muslims produced during the Islamic civilization were religious and sacred, while Seyyed Mahdi Mir-Bāqeri believes that sciences were never religious.

Saeid Zibākalām, from another point of view, seeks only to prove the possibility of having religion based science while some others, including Khosrow Bāqeri, have shown the ways in which religious beliefs can interfere in the making of the sciences and attempted to achieve religion based science.

From another point of view, in some views, including that of Mustafa Malekiān and Abdolkarim Sorush, a discussion of definition of science and religion has begun in response to the question of the possibility of theistic science. According to these definitions, a position has been adopted as to the need and possibility of theistic science. On the other hand, some others, including Zibākalām and Golshani have discussed the possibility of religion based science by referring to the history of science and scientific theories.

Perhaps the most natural view on religion based science is the one that is common in Islamic Hawzehes as to the inference of religious teachings. This method, which is known as the Ijtehadic method, is well explained in the writings of Ali Ābedi Shāhrudi.

While respecting and thanking all professors and experts who have paid attention to the carrying out of this work, the Social Science and Humanities' Philosophy department of the Research Institute of Hawzeh & University (RIHU) has made a few comments on these views, although briefly and within the possible limits, so as to prepare the ground for the growth and

development of important discussions on religion based science.

It is hoped that researchers in hawzehes and universities will contribute their valuable comments to the present discussions, thus enriching the scientific atmosphere in the country.

Finally, we would like to thank the honorable head of the Research Institute and all researchers who assisted and cooperated with us in this work.