

# Transcending Paradigm: Bridging Spirituality and Modern Science in the Thoughts of Nasr, Al-Attas, and Al-Faruqi

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**Abstract:** The research examines the transcending paradigm as a crucial intellectual approach, with scholars like Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi proposing a synthesis of Islamic spiritual principles with modern scientific inquiry. This paradigm aims to bridge the gap between science and spirituality, advocating for a unified model that respects Islamic metaphysical traditions while embracing empirical scientific advancements. Through a systematic comparative and analytical approach, the research thoroughly examines and critiques the philosophical foundations and theoretical frameworks presented by Nasr, al-Attas, and al-Faruqi. This study's synthesis of these scholars' perspectives makes it unique, providing insights into their efforts to move beyond traditional academic paradigms. Their contributions argue for a coherent framework harmonizing divine unity and cosmic understanding. They assert that true knowledge encompasses both the material and the transcendent, offering a holistic and spiritually enriched scientific perspective. This article contributes to enhancing the Islamic intellectual tradition by presenting a model deeply rooted in cultural values and responsive to the complexities of the modern scientific era.

**Keywords:** transcend, spirituality, modern science, Nasr, Al-Attas, Al-Faruqi

## A. Introduction

The endeavour to reconcile Islamic spirituality with modern science often leads to polarization. One perspective seeks to uphold the depth of Islamic spiritual traditions, while the other leans towards adopting the dominant scientific methods of the Western world. This study delves into the contributions of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, who have endeavoured to integrate these two perspectives. Their work has synthesized these aspects, forming a comprehensive and integrated

framework of thought. Their ideas pave the way for a new model of understanding that integrates the metaphysical essence of Islam with the empirical needs of contemporary science, providing a suitable response to the challenges of an era filled with scientific advancements, coherently and rooted in cultural values.

This article fills research gap in Islam and modern science integration studies by comparing and analyzing the methodologies and philosophical perspectives of Nasr<sup>12</sup>, Al-Attas<sup>3</sup>, and Al-Faruqi<sup>4</sup>. While existing research like Guessoum<sup>5</sup> touch on the theoretical aspects of Islam and science. It stands out by offering a collective examination of how these thinkers propose to integrate Islamic spirituality with scientific rigor, a synthesis not widely covered in available literature. This approach deepens theoretical discourse and has practical implications for contemporary Islamic society, addressing the need for a holistic framework that aligns empirical scientific practice with spiritual insights, thereby contributing to a more mature understanding of the interaction between modern science and Islamic thought.

This study addresses one of the biggest challenges in the dialogue between science and spirituality today: bridging the gap between modern scientific empirical methods and the metaphysical depth in Islamic knowledge. In the context of Islam, there's often a conflict between rich spiritual values and the secular scientific approach characteristic of modern scientific inquiry. This study explores the approaches developed by three prominent Islamic thinkers, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, each

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<sup>1</sup> Asfa Widiyanto, "Traditional Science and Scientia Sacra: Origin and Dimensions of Seyyed Hossein Nasr's Concept of Science," *Intellectual Discourse* 25, no. 1 (2017): 249–74.

<sup>2</sup> Fadhilah Khunaeni, "Spirituality in the Philosophical Thought of Seyyed Hossein Nasr," *Ulumuna* 20, no. 2 (December 29, 2016): 373–94, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujs.v20i2.812>.

<sup>3</sup> Nabila Huringiin, "Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas' Critics toward Secularism," *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 27, no. 1 (September 15, 2022): 89, <https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v27i1.4801>.

<sup>4</sup> Rodliyah Khuza'i, Irfan Safrudin, and Hendi Suhendi, "Islamization of Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi's Knowledge (Study of Contemporary Epistemology)," in *Proceedings of the Social and Humaniora Research Symposium (SoRes 2018)* (Proceedings of the Social and Humaniora Research Symposium (SoRes 2018), Bandung, Indonesia: Atlantis Press, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.2991/sores-18.2019.61>.

<sup>5</sup> Nidhal Guessoum, "Issues and Agenda of Islam and Science," *Zygon*® 47, no. 2 (June 2012): 367–87, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9744.2012.01261.x>.

offering solutions to integrate these fundamentally different fields. They advocate for a harmonious synthesis between scientific rigor and spiritual insights by proposing a new paradigm, paving the way for a broader and integrated understanding.

In analyzing these works, the study emphasizes the relevance and application of their ideas in contemporary discussions. Seyyed Hossein Nasr's "Scientia Sacra" concept offers a holistic view that unites the physical and metaphysical worlds. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasizes the importance of knowledge rooted in Islamic metaphysical principles, establishing a solid foundation for the Islamization of knowledge. Meanwhile, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi proposes integrating the principle of Tauḥīd into all knowledge domains to maintain Islamic identity amidst modernity. In this way, they enrich the discussion between science and religion by presenting a knowledge model that considers scientific advancements and maintains spiritual and cultural values.

The analytical and comparative methodology used in this study allows for a thorough evaluation of the writings and thoughts of these three scholars. From extensive literature reviews to critical analyses of their ideas and propositions, this study assesses their approaches' consistency, practicality, and impact on forming a new paradigm. The study concludes with a synthesis of key findings that offer a new perspective on the interaction between science and Islamic spirituality and significantly contribute to global efforts to achieve a more holistic and dynamic scientific understanding amid rapid technological advancements.

The article argues that the "transcending paradigm" is an important approach to address the differences between Islamic spirituality and modern science—a process that goes beyond traditional frameworks to form a cohesive understanding. Defined by the efforts of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, this paradigm is not merely a merger but a profound synthesis that respects the depth of Islamic metaphysics while embracing the advancements of modern empirical science. Nasr's vision of "sacred science" blends Islamic metaphysical tradition with scientific inquiry, al-Attas advocates for an Islamic epistemology as the foundation of all knowledge against secular assumptions, and al-Faruqi emphasizes the importance of Tauḥīd in unifying various branches of knowledge in the Islamic worldview. Thus, the article highlights the importance of a holistic approach that recognizes the interconnection between the physical and metaphysical, proposing an ethical and

comprehensive knowledge model—highly relevant in addressing the complexities and challenges of a rapidly advancing scientific era in the context of Islamic thought.

## **B. Literatur Review**

Modern science operates within empirical evidence and methodological naturalism, emphasizing a strict separation from spiritual considerations in its investigations. In contrast, Islamic tradition fosters a unique relationship between science and spirituality. Within this tradition, scientific endeavors, including observation, are viewed as acts of worship, bridging the realms of religion and science. Islamic science incorporates metaphysical aspects, such as the concept of absolute truth known as *Al-ḥaqq*. Islamic science seeks to unveil the universe's origins by grounding scientific pursuits in metaphysical principles, often symbolically representing them<sup>6</sup>. However, reconciling religion and science presents challenges, as values and boundaries influence both domains. Various theological, philosophical, and methodological perspectives exist within religious traditions, leading Christian scientists and theologians to interpret science through a Christian lens. At the same time, Muslim counterparts do so through an Islamic perspective.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr says that some Muslims criticizing modern science are not grounded in Islamic science's philosophical foundations and values. Nasr categorizes Muslim groups that respond to modern science into two categories: modernists and ethicists. The modernists saw science as a means of gaining power and strengthening a state's authority and saw nothing seriously wrong with Western science. They see Western science as an extension of Islamic civilization: Jamaluddin Al-Afghni, Muhammad 'Abduh, and Muhammad Abdus Salam are prominent figures in this group. The ethicists criticize various ethical flaws in Western science and advocate for science's Islamization. Isma'il Raj Al-Faruqi and Ziauddin Sardar are their names. This assumption supports Nasr's

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<sup>6</sup> Zainal Abidin Bagir, "Sains Dan Islam Dan Upaya Perluasan Panggung 'Sains Dan Agama,'" in *Dunia, Manusia Dan Tuhan* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2008), 54–56.

hypothesis that contemporary Muslim thinkers are unaware of Western science's metaphysical and methodological foundations<sup>7</sup>.

Zainal Abidin Bagir<sup>8</sup> categorizes Muslim groups that respond to modern science into four categories. First, there are the instrumentalists, who include conventional scientists such as Abdus Salam; second, there is the flow of Islamic science, which includes several different variants such as Nasr, Al-Faruqi, Golshani, and al-Attas; third, there is the I'jz school; and fourth, there is the creationist school founded by Harun Yahya. The above classifications appear to be similar. However, from a philosophical standpoint, Islamic science organizations emphasize the importance of developing modern science by critiquing it using Islamic traditions and sources. In this section, I will concentrate on the dynamics of Islamic science as seen by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi.

The intersection of modern science and religion has elicited diverse responses among Muslim intellectuals, primarily from paradigm shifts, ethical dilemmas, spiritual challenges, ecological concerns, and Westernization and secularization of knowledge<sup>9</sup>. Initially, Western empirical science was heavily influenced by the Judeo-Christian notion of creation, sparking conflicts between science and religion. Still, over time, as scientists secularized their field, the separation of science and religion led to a more harmonious coexistence, albeit pushing religion into the private sphere and dividing knowledge into religious and scientific domains<sup>10</sup>. The shift in the Western paradigm of knowledge has had implications for Islamic education, particularly in science<sup>11</sup>. In the West, knowledge is often separate from the sacred, while in Islam, it's a means to submit to Allah and draw closer to Him, involving three aspects: submitting to divine will,

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<sup>7</sup> Nidhal Guessoum, *Islam's Quantum Question: Reconciling Muslim Tradition and Modern Science* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 108.

<sup>8</sup> 15/04/2024 08:19:00

<sup>9</sup> Misbah Khoiruddin Zuhri, "Spiritualitas Sains Modern: Pembacaan Terhadap Relasi Agama Dan Sains," *Jurnal Penelitian* 14, no. 2 (December 13, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.28918/jupei.v14i2.1015>.

<sup>10</sup> Audrey R. Chapman, "Sains, Agama, dan Lingkungan," in *Bumi Yang Terdesak: Perspektif Ilmu dan Agama Mengenai Konsumsi, Populasi, dan Keberlanjutan*, ed. Rodney L. Petersen and Barbara Smith-Moran, trans. Dian Basuki and Gunawan Admiranto (Bandung: Mizan Pustaka, 2007), 23–24.

<sup>11</sup> Mishbah Khoiruddin Zuhri, *Teologi Sainifik Integrasi Spiritualitas, Etika Dan Sains Modern* (Semarang: Walisongo Press, 2017).

divine rule, and conscious surrender (*ma'rifah* or gnosis)<sup>12</sup>. Modern science is centered around empirical observations and sensory-based investigations (*maḥsūsāt*), focusing on tangible entities, living organisms, human thoughts, natural phenomena, and historical events<sup>13</sup>.

Meanwhile, Islamic scholars emphasize the significance of exploring spiritual dimensions beyond sensory perception<sup>14</sup>. The Westernization and secularization of knowledge, driven by philosophical contemplation and rationality, have created a gap between Western science and Islamic values, with science influenced by Western culture's intellectual and psychological perspectives<sup>15</sup>. In education, the Islamic world grapples with a division between Islamic and secular Western systems, where Islamic education prioritizes ethics and morality<sup>16</sup>. A faith-oriented and culturally grounded approach that upholds traditions alongside modern knowledge is essential to address these challenges effectively.

### C. Method

This study uses a thorough analytical and comparative method to explore the ideologies of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi on merging Islamic principles with contemporary scientific knowledge. The methodology involves a deep dive into their scholarly contributions, aiming to grasp their thoughts' individual and collective impacts on the confluence of Islamic spirituality and modern science. This research primarily examines these scholars' views, scrutinizing their methods of integrating Islamic metaphysical concepts with scientific research, their varied approaches to understanding knowledge, and their visions for the evolution of Islamic education.

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<sup>12</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Sains dan Peradaban di dalam Islam* (Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka, 1986), 3.

<sup>13</sup> Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Mengislamkan Nalar: Sebuah respon Terhadap Modernitas* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007), 3–5.

<sup>14</sup> Kartanegara, 6.

<sup>15</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: Art Printing Works Sdn. Bhd., 1978), 133–135, 38–43.

<sup>16</sup> Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, *Islamisasi Pengetahuan* (Bandung: Penerbit Pustaka, 1984), 13.

The study situates the ideas of these intellectuals within the larger scope of historical and philosophical developments in Islamic thought, considering the challenges modern science brings to traditional Islamic viewpoints. This context is essential for understanding the relevance and impact of their contributions in both Islamic societies and the broader scientific community. This evaluation leads to a nuanced comprehension of their perspectives and potential effects on Islamic worldviews and educational practices.

Additionally, the study synthesizes these insights to form a more profound understanding of the proposed amalgamation of Islamic spiritual principles with modern scientific paradigms. This synthesis uncovers common threads and differences among the thinkers, shedding light on forming a new paradigm that intertwines Islamic and scientific viewpoints. Lastly, the research delves into the broader consequences of these scholars' philosophies on modernity, the role of science in current Islamic societies, and the future direction of Islamic education. It assesses how their philosophies might shape ongoing debates about the intersection of religion with science and the development of Islamic perspectives on modern scientific challenges. Through this extensive methodological approach, the study aims to make a meaningful contribution to the discourse on transcending traditional paradigms in the intersection of spirituality and modern sciences within Islamic philosophy.

## **D. Result**

### **1. Nasr and *Scientia Sacra*: Restoring Science to its Traditional Form**

Nasr promotes *Sophia Perennis*, a philosophy that blends natural and human principles, emphasizing the uniqueness of existence and the unity of truth and knowledge. This perspective underscores fundamental principles in describing nature and Reality. Firstly, it highlights the uniqueness of existence, asserting that all phenomena somehow reflect this singularity. The concept of *Tauhīd* symbolizes the unity of truth and knowledge and the interconnectedness of creation, life, and humanity. Nasr contends that all Islamic sciences, from mathematics to medicine, aim to unveil monotheism and the interconnected nature of all existence. Secondly, the philosophy posits that the physical world, or phenomena, is not the sole reality; another spiritual realm is accessible through alternative means, such as *tarīqah*, rather than relying on reason or senses. This

spiritual reality is dismissed by Western knowledge and science. Thirdly, humans serve as the most conspicuous manifestation of the coexistence of these two distinct yet inseparable realities. The material aspect of humanity, the body, adheres to and is constrained by natural laws. At the same time, the spiritual and intellectual dimension—the soul—remains free from such constraints, possessing its autonomy. Lastly, humans can utilize their spiritual and intellectual dimensions to pursue the highest truth beyond the confines of conventional scientific methods. According to Nasr, this quest's ultimate aim is the divine, as recognized in monotheistic religions<sup>17</sup>.

There are two kinds of knowledge (*'ilm*). First, absolute and perfect knowledge and certainty (*yaqīn*) come directly from God. Second, rational methods are used to obtain presumptive knowledge (*zhann*). Nasr says that the human mind can achieve these two types of knowledge because it comprises a partial rational mind (*'aql juz'ī*) and a universal intuitive mind (*'aql kullī*). First, knowledge can only see things that are external (*zhāhir*). Simultaneously, the second knowledge can delve deeper and reach internal aspects or esoteric Reality (inner). The divine Spirit generates and empowers the second component, which can be attained through *tarīqah* practice.

In this philosophy, a perceptive and intuitive mind is believed to be crucial in gaining insights about the world, including scientific truths. Nasr contends that genuine Islamic science should derive from divine intelligence rather than human reason. According to him, the heart, not the brain in the head, is the center of intelligence, and reason merely reflects the heart on material things.<sup>18</sup> Kalin<sup>19</sup> describes Nasr's view in the following words:

"If reason (reason) naturally can analyze and break everything into fragments so that it can function properly, then the intellect functions to synthesize and integrate what has been broken up by reason....Just as the

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<sup>17</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam* (Islamic Texts Society, 2003), 22.

<sup>18</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam and Contemporary Society* (London: Longman, 1982).

<sup>19</sup> Ibrahim Kalin, "The Sacred Versus the Secular: Nasr on Science," in *Contemporary Issues in Islam and Science* (Routledge, 2012), 445–62.



Reality of God is not limited to His creation, so is the Reality of nature not limited to the analysis and classification of the natural sciences."<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, Nasr endeavors to reconcile these two dimensions by blending science's logical and empirical traits with the intuitive elements of religious faith despite placing the rational mind under the priority of the "heart" or intuitive mind. In his view, science constitutes just a part of human knowledge and should be integrated with more elevated forms of understanding.

Nasr endeavored to return science to its conventional state, viewing modern secular science as an aberration in history. He believed Western civilization had diminished the value of science, knowledge, and a holistic understanding of the universe. Nasr posited a cause-and-effect relationship between this devaluation and the resulting problems, particularly those arising from technological applications. In a critical stance, Nasr attributed societal ills, ranging from environmental degradation to human debasement, to modern science. He boldly advocated for the defense and resurgence of traditional sciences, which focused on God, sacred elements, and humanity.

Nasr<sup>21</sup> explains that humans do not sufficiently recognize themselves from an external horizon. Humans need to identify the internal horizon to get the nature of the description of themselves as a whole. Explanation of the outer horizon does have a relationship with the external horizon, which is causal and substantial. However, efforts to limit it to one external horizon will only get partial and incomplete information.

Nasr<sup>22</sup> illustrates the tendency of modern humans to recognize themselves. The sea and the waves are both interconnected. The sea is an internal horizon. The waves are an external horizon. An essential and essential understanding of the sea will be obtained by knowing the sea from its inner horizon. Essential knowledge about the sea will not be gained by studying the external horizon but by studying the waves.

Modern socio-humanities studies examine human behavior partially. Behavioristic studies are seen from purely accidental matters. Nasr describes how

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<sup>20</sup> Kalin, "The Sacred Versus the Secular."

<sup>21</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam Dan Nestapa Manusia Modern* (Bandung: Pustaka, 1983), 6.

<sup>22</sup> Hossein Nasr, 7.

behaviorist researchers research the paranormal in Africa. Modern anthropologists collect accidentals and external facts. They did not find the substance and essence of the object under study. Nasr further criticized modern anthropologists. Nasr says:

"The classic mistake of modern civilization, which equates the quantitative accumulation of information with qualitative penetration into the true meaning of things, also applies in other fields.<sup>23</sup>"

Nasr gives an interesting illustration of the tendency of Western social researchers. They see the external side. They have not realized the importance of looking at the internal side of the object of social humanities studies. It illustrates a circle and a center.

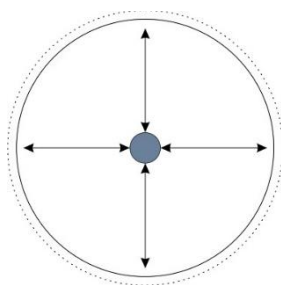


Figure 1. External and internal knowledge units

In Islam, knowledge has extrinsic and intrinsic dimensions. Like a circle, it has a center and edges, which are connected by the radius of the ring. The two are inseparable units. Allah calls Himself the Most Outward and Most Inner.

"He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inner; and He is All-Knowing of all things." (Al-Ĥadīd: 3)

God, as the ultimate Reality, has an outward and inward dimension. The man also has physical and metaphysical or spiritual dimensions. Human knowledge is essentially an abundance of transcendent knowledge. Someone limited to physical knowledge will not be connected with a more comprehensive

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<sup>23</sup> Hossein Nasr, 8.

knowledge of the universe. Knowledge in Islam is based on the connectedness of the physical dimension and transcendence<sup>24</sup>.

Nasr observes the tendency of modern science to abandon the inner dimension of knowledge. He rarely met people whose consciousness approached the center of existence. Their knowledge revolves around the edge of the circle. In comparison, the circle's edge has no relationship with the circle's center. When one can connect the two dimensions, one can connect external knowledge to the center of existence. From the edge of the circle, he could see the reflection of the center of existence. Even one's understanding of nature reflects itself<sup>25</sup>. From here, nature, humans, and God are intertwined.

## **2. Al-Attas and Islamization Knowledge: De-westernization of Knowledge**

The Islamization of knowledge is a response to the negative impact of modern Western science. Western modern science was born from the fusion of several cultures and civilizations. According to al-Attas<sup>26</sup>, the amalgamation of the civilizations, values, philosophies, and aspirations of the enlightenment of the Greek, ancient Roman, Jewish, and Christian traditions. The Latin, Germanic, Celtic, and Nordic peoples developed fusion. They derive philosophical, epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic concepts from Greek civilization. Roman civilization contributed to the foundations of law and state administration. The Jewish and Christian traditions provide theological concepts.

Meanwhile, the experience and practice of the life of the Latin, Germanic, Celtic, and Nordic communities taught about the values of free Spirit traditionalism, and nationalism. In the next phase, the combination of civilizations, traditions, and community practices met with Islamic rationalism. However, this tradition of rationalism was adapted to Western culture<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Frithjof Schuon, *Dimensions of Islam*, trans. P. N. Townsend (London: Allen & Unwin, 1970), 36–37.

<sup>25</sup> Hossein Nasr, *Islam Dan Nestapa Manusia Modern*, 9.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 134.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Attas, 135.

Al-Attas<sup>28</sup> says knowledge is not neutral. The non-neutrality of knowledge is because knowledge is an interpretation through world views, philosophical views, and psychological perceptions of civilization, which encompasses the formulation and spread of society. The situation formulated and disseminated is the result of knowledge formed from the character and personality of culture. Modern knowledge produced by the West is not neutral; the dualistic Western civilization constructs knowledge. The dualistic concept in modern Western knowledge is not formulated from transcendental knowledge. Dualism is formed from philosophical opinions and musings centered on humans as physical and rational beings. Religious truths are seen as theories<sup>29</sup>.

Western epistemology emphasizes skepticism<sup>30</sup>. This skepticism causes inner tension and awakens the desire to seek and achieve discoveries. This search is never satisfied because doubt leads to faith. It cannot lead to truth. Doubt leads to truth covered in endless debate and strife. Al-Attas<sup>31</sup> criticizes Western epistemology, that truth can only be achieved through *hidāyah* (divine guidance), no doubt. Doubt is a movement between two contradictory things without any tendency towards one of them. This state is called conjecture if the heart inclines to one thing, not another, while not rejecting another. However, if the heart rejects the other, it enters the stage of certainty. This rejection of the heart towards others is not a sign of doubting its truth but is a positive recognition of its errors or falsehoods, which is meant by guidance (*hidāyah*).

Al-Attas<sup>32</sup> emphasizes that the Islamization of knowledge is necessary for Muslim society to respond to the problem of dualism in the Western knowledge system. The Islamization of knowledge aims to recognize, separate, and isolate the dualistic, secularistic, and evolutionistic elements of Western civilization, which are relativistic and nihilistic, from knowledge. According to al-Attas<sup>33</sup>, these elements do not describe true knowledge. Still, they only determine the form and character in which knowledge is conceptualized, evaluated, and interpreted

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<sup>28</sup> Al-Attas, 131.

<sup>29</sup> Al-Attas, 136.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Attas, 136–37.

<sup>31</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), 31.

<sup>32</sup> Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 20.

<sup>33</sup> Al-Attas, 138.

according to the Western worldview. Al-Attas<sup>34</sup> argues Islam views Reality as something that exists, not something that becomes, as understood by the West. Its epistemological object becomes fixed, clear, and certain, not relative and skeptical. If the concept of Reality is 'becoming', then Western thought does not recognize objectivity but emphasizes relativity, leading to skepticism. So, there is no knowledge but opinions or opinions that are subjective. However, subjectivism is the root of a relative conclusion.

Al-Attas posits that humans apprehend knowledge from Allah by leveraging their faculties, encompassing external senses, reason, and intuition<sup>35</sup>. The external senses, involving body sensation, smell, taste, sight, and hearing, facilitate the perception of specific elements in the external world. In conjunction with these five external senses, internal senses process sensory images, conceptualize ideas, and store the outcomes of interactions. These internal senses include general senses, representation, estimation, recall, and imagination. Importantly, what is perceived pertains to the form of the external object, representing Reality or the senses, rather than the Reality itself. The external object is abstracted by the senses, denoted as form, as opposed to the actual Reality, referred to as meaning. The distinction lies in that the form is initially perceived by the external senses and subsequently by the internal senses. In contrast, the internal senses directly apprehend meaning without prior external sensory perception<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Al-Attas, 86.

<sup>35</sup> Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains*, 34.

<sup>36</sup> Al-Attas, 35.

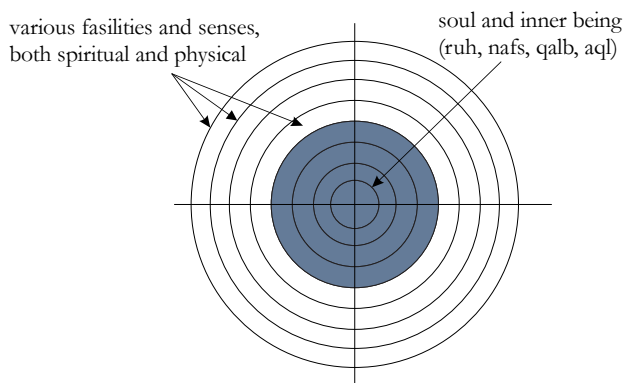


Figure 2: Physical and spiritual means of perceiving truth

The mind is not merely the sensory elements or mental faculties that logically systematize and interpret the facts of sensory experience, transform experiential sensory data into intelligible intellectual images, or carry out the work of abstracting facts and sensory data and their relations. More than that, the reason here is a spiritual substance inherent in a spiritual organ of understanding called the heart (*qalb*), where intuition occurs<sup>37</sup>. So, what is mentioned above is only part of the rational aspect.

The Islamization of knowledge aims to correct Western worldviews (metaphysics) and epistemologies inconsistent with Islamic values. According to al-Attas<sup>38</sup>, it can be started from the “Islamization of language”, namely by changing the perspective and understanding of the content of the meaning of a language, terms, or words based on a worldview explored from the beliefs and values of Islamic teachings. Al-Attas set an example, said *karīm*. During the *Jahiliyya* period, this word meant noble lineage with generosity, the opposite of *bukhl*, stingy. The Qur’an replaces the semantic field of *karāmah* with a glory based on *taqwa* (Al-Hujurat: 13), thus producing an unknown new semantic meaning. The Qur’an radically changes the basic conceptual structure of the *Jahiliyah* term, resulting in an overhaul of all the semantic fields of *Jahiliyah*. This

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<sup>37</sup> Al-Attas, 37.

<sup>38</sup> Al-Attas, 11.

Islamization of language is essential for Al-Attas<sup>39</sup> amid the destruction of Islamic languages in the Islamic world due to secularization or modernization. Therefore, returning the language and terms to their original meaning is significant.

Furthermore, there are seven fundamental concepts in Islamic education. Religion (*dīn*); knowledge (*‘ilm wa ma’rifah*); human (*insān*); right action (*‘amal as adab*); wisdom (*hikmah*); justice (*‘adl*); and university (*kulliyah-jami’ah*) are the seven concepts defined by Al-Attas<sup>40</sup>. These seven ideas have a symbiotic relationship. The term religion (*dīn*) refers to the pursuit of knowledge. Religion (*dīn*) denotes the pursuit of knowledge. Humans (*insān*) are subjects searching for knowledge (*‘ilm*), which become objects. Wisdom (*hikmah*) becomes a criterion in the relationship between humans and knowledge. Justice (*‘adl*) is development concerning wisdom. Right action (*‘amal as adab*) describes the method of upholding justice. At the same time, the university concept becomes a framework for all elements.

### **3. Al-Faruqi and Islamization of Knowledge: Integrating *Tauhīd* in Modern Academia**

Al-Faruqi delineates the Islamization of knowledge, examining ummah-related issues and the repercussions of colonialism on education. He underscores Western knowledge’s secular nature and its incongruence with Islamic culture, driven by the realization that modern Muslim reformers failed to instigate a genuine civilizational reawakening and “postmodernist” critics of Western civilization couldn’t avert societal challenges like the erosion of religion, meaning, and purpose<sup>41</sup>. This process seeks to harmonize modern science and Islamic wisdom, finding creative ways to integrate them and guide intellectual frameworks within an Islamic perspective. It places the Quran as the foundational source to rejuvenate Muslim civilization, with Thāhā Jābir Al-Alwānī and ‘Imād al-Dīn Khalīl expanding on the definition, encompassing the analysis, condensation,

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<sup>39</sup> Al-Attas, 14.

<sup>40</sup> Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 91.

<sup>41</sup> al-Faruqi, *Islamisasi Pengetahuan*, 98.

integration, and dissemination of information through the lens of Islamic views on life, humanity, and the cosmos<sup>42</sup>.

Abū al Qāsim Ḥajj Ḥammad <sup>43</sup>, the Islamization of knowledge entails disconnecting scientific achievements from speculative philosophies and promoting their integration within a methodological framework grounded in religious principles. This process extends to applied science, emphasizing alignment with natural principles and removing speculative elements from scientific theories. Through this “Islamization,” philosophical aspects are reinterpreted in terms of universal principles, all while acknowledging a divine purpose as the driving force behind existence and motion.

Al-‘Alwānī realized the difficulty of translating the message of the Qur’an in terms of science. According to him, the al-Qur’an contains alternative views (transcendental, epistemological, systematic), and the formulation is already contained therein. Because Muslims lack theory knowledge, they cannot express this alternative view from the al-Qur’an. Al-‘Alwānī explained the plans to support this program. *First*, putting together a modern Muslim way of knowing, especially based on ideas from the Qur’an. *Second*, developing techniques that draw on the Al-Qur’an and the Prophet’s Hadith as a repository of information, culture, and civilization. *Third*, devise ways to stop imitation and interference based on the classical Islamic heritage. *Fourth*, creating strategies based on contemporary heritage to foster dialogue with contemporary thought and civilization worldwide to resolve various crises <sup>44</sup>.

Al-Faruqi outlines a twelve-step process for Islamizing knowledge. These steps encompass (1) acquiring proficiency in modern scientific disciplines, (2) conducting a disciplinary survey, (3) gaining mastery over Islamic treasures, (4) analyzing Islamic scientific treasures, (5) identifying specific Islamic relevance within scientific disciplines, (6) critically assessing modern scientific disciplines, (7) critically assessing Islamic treasures, (8) examining challenges confronted by

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<sup>42</sup> ‘Imād al-Dīn Khalīl, *Madkhal Ilā Islamiyāt Al-Ma’rifah* (Virginia: IIIT, 1991).

<sup>43</sup> Abū al Qāsim Ḥajj Ḥammād, *Al-‘Alamiyah al-Islamiyah al-Insāniyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Mashirah, 1980).

<sup>44</sup> Thāhā Jābir Al-Alwānī, “Islamization of Knowledge: Premises, Challenges, and Perspectives,” *islamonline.net*, 2004, <http://www.islamonline.net/english/contemporary/2004/05/article01.shtml>.



Muslims, (9) examining challenges faced by humanity as a whole, (10) engaging in creative analysis and synthesis, (11) integrating modern scientific disciplines into an Islamic framework, and (12) disseminating Islamic knowledge<sup>45</sup>.

The followers of Al-Faruqi simplified the twelve steps into eight, which Nidhal Guessoum<sup>46</sup> summarizes in five steps. *First*, analyzing, dissecting, and mastering modern sciences critically, especially through their most advanced forms of development. Second, analyze the various contributions made by Islamic civilization, particularly in the field of knowledge, while keeping in mind that these contributions are based on knowledge of the Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions. Third, the merits and demerits of these contributions in light of their potential applicability to the needs of Muslims today will be evaluated, scientific advancements since that era will be considered, and connections will be built between particular academic disciplines and Islamic principles. Fourth, make a "leap of innovation" by fusing the foundations of Islamic civilization with the findings of modern knowledge, which can help Islam achieve its loftier objectives. Fifth, it is orienting different facets of Islamic thought toward a theistic or divine model.

Al-'Alwānī adopted Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's dual approach to acquiring knowledge. This approach includes emotional experience and the use of ratios. Al-'Alwānī attempts to establish some criteria for the method's validation despite being aware that the method may be applied to all kinds of knowledge. According to him, the outcomes must be the following four factors: human nature, universal laws, Islamic teachings, fundamentals, laws, and Islamic aesthetic and moral values.

Guessoum<sup>47</sup> quotes Ibrahim Abderrahman Rajab in his book "The Contemporary Muslim and the Question of Islamization of Knowledge", offering a realistic agenda for the Islamization of knowledge. *First*, it should be emphasized that social scientists are more directly affected by the Islamization program because it touches on all fields of knowledge, so the social sciences should be the program's initial area of focus. *Second*, while conventional scholars should begin

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<sup>45</sup> al-Faruqi, *Islamisasi Pengetahuan*, 98–116.

<sup>46</sup> Guessoum, *Islam's Quantum Question*, 119.

<sup>47</sup> Guessoum, 122.

to transform their research areas from the inside, social scientists should be permitted to concentrate. Let each team update its research techniques and areas of study. More specifically, they must review how consistently their field of study uses the 'deduction from basic texts' method (for the religious sciences) and the 'empirical induction' method (for the social sciences and science). After these fields are reformed, the two can merge naturally because the differences will appear artificial and blurred. *Third*, publishing textbooks for universities in various disciplines, ensuring there are no inconsistencies between Islamic principles and notions of the human condition, and if possible, including discussions of Islamic ideas in these textbooks. However, according to Rajab, it is necessary to understand that these efforts must be carried out individually without any claims that these things have certain scientific credibility or come from a methodology widely accepted because these steps will not be used in peer review. However, Rajab added that this aspect does not reduce the importance of the efforts that are needed and needed at this time. *Fourth*, the Islamic view of humanity and the cosmos must be the foundation for new conceptions. These ideas should be based on science and be able to be proven and tested in the field.

## **E. Discussion**

### **Transcending Paradigm: Bridging the Gap between Modern Science and Islamic Knowledge**

Transcending paradigms involve a sophisticated approach to reconciling Islamic conceptions of knowledge with the systematic methodology and secular foundations of modern Western science. This approach emphasizes the spiritual, transcendental, and monotheistic bases of Islamic science, which diverge from the premises of modern science. Nasr advocates uniting Islamic metaphysics with modern science to create "sacred science." This approach holistically probes interconnected realms of physical and metaphysical existence, integrating spirituality and materiality. Al-Attas stresses the importance of grounding all knowledge, including science, in Islamic epistemology. He focuses on "de-Westernizing" knowledge by removing secular assumptions and aligning them more closely with Islamic principles. Al-Faruqi concentrates on reforming Islamic education and mainstreaming *Tauhid* principles — the oneness of God — across

modern academic disciplines. His approach is geared towards integrating these principles within the fabric of contemporary educational systems.

The transcending paradigm, therefore, refers to their collective efforts to bridge the gap between Western modern science and Islamic knowledge and tradition. These scholars propose integrating these two seemingly distinct paradigms by emphasizing the importance of spirituality, transcendence, and a holistic worldview in pursuing knowledge. They argue that modern science can benefit from incorporating Islamic wisdom and spirituality elements to create a more comprehensive and ethically grounded approach to understanding the world. Nasr, al-Attas, and al-Faruqi have different perspectives in conceptualizing their thoughts regarding transcendent and modern science as follows:

Aspect	Nasr	Al-Attas	Al-Faruqi
Foundation	Nasr's approach relies on preserving classical Islamic metaphysics and philosophy and seeks compatibility between Islamic thought and modern science.	Al-Attas emphasizes the importance of grounding knowledge in Islamic metaphysical principles and epistemology, offering a solid foundation for the Islamization of knowledge.	Al-Faruqi advocates for the centrality of <i>Tauhid</i> and the Islamic worldview in all knowledge domains to ensure unity and coherence.
Unity of Knowledge	Nasr advocates for a harmonious relationship between religion and science, asserting the compatibility of Islamic cosmology with modern	Al-Attas promotes the unity of knowledge and the need for all forms of knowledge to be guided by Islamic principles to	Al-Faruqi supports the integration of various forms of knowledge under the banner of <i>Tauhid</i> , emphasizing the interconnectedness

	scientific discoveries.	maintain coherence.	of knowledge domains.
Interaction with Modernity	Nasr engages with modernity while emphasizing preserving traditional Islamic values and metaphysics.	Al-Attas critiques Western modernity and secularism, highlighting their potential to erode moral and spiritual values.	Al-Faruqi advocates for Muslims to adapt to modernity while preserving their religious and cultural identity through the Islamization of knowledge.

Table 1. Comparison of Nasr, al-Attas, and al-Faruqi Thoughts

The thoughts of Nasr, Al-Attas, and Al-Faruqi related to the Islamization of knowledge create a unique dynamic in their efforts to build a transcendent paradigm. Although all are committed to integrating Islamic values into modern knowledge, their approaches show significant variations. Nasr focused on integrating traditional Islamic values and wisdom into modern knowledge, emphasizing the continuity of Islamic intellectual traditions and seeking compatibility between Islamic thought and modern science. Al-Attas, meanwhile, stressed the Islamization of knowledge as a comprehensive process that requires rooting in Islamic epistemological and metaphysical principles, emphasizing establishing a solid foundation. Al-Faruqi, in turn, highlighted the centrality of *Tauḥīd* in all Islamic knowledge and worldview, emphasizing unity and cohesion through integrating various forms of knowledge under the banner of *Tauḥīd*. Despite the diversity of these approaches, all are united in the determination to maintain Islamic identity amidst modernity while recognizing the importance of cultural and historical context in developing a new paradigm that embraces Islamic values.

The challenge of Islamizing knowledge is undeniably intricate, surpassing the complexities recognized by Nasr, al-Attas, and al-Faruqi. One significant hurdle leading to the stagnation of the Islamization of knowledge programs is the prevalence of exclusivity and fanaticism among the followers of Nasr, al-Attas, and Al-Faruqi. These adherents exhibit a notable reluctance to entertain diverse ideas and perspectives. Even alternative thinkers like Sardar face criticism, with his

sharp rebuke of Nasr's ideas as mystical science and al-Faruqī's concepts as unclear and programmatic. This exclusivity fosters fanaticism, resulting in the transcendent paradigm of Islamization knowledge becoming a sect-specific program for each distinct group. The prospect of unifying Islamic science experts to formulate a comprehensive Islamization knowledge program appears challenging due to these entrenched barriers.

Another obstacle lies in the absence of collaboration. The successful Islamization of knowledge programs necessitates cooperation from scientists and practitioners across various disciplines, including philosophy, Islamic studies, history, politics, economics, and education. Without such collaboration, these programs risk revolving around conceptual or methodological pitfalls, such as *ayatization*, where specific verses (*ayat*) underpin scientific concepts without employing the rigorous methodologies of *tafsīr* and *takwīl*. Lastly, a critical need for continuous evaluation and development is emphasized. Acknowledging the imperfections inherent in any conceptual framework, the formulation of Islamic science requires a structured approach involving milestones encompassing formulation, evaluation, and ongoing development.

### **C. Conclusion**

The research concludes that the “transcending paradigm” championed by thinkers like Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Ismail Raji al-Faruqi represents a critical strategy for integrating Islamic spirituality with modern scientific methods. This method strives to develop an integrated framework that respects Islamic metaphysical beliefs while embracing empirical science. Nasr's vision of “sacred science” seeks to synthesize the tangible and intangible realms of knowledge, al-Attas calls for a redefinition of knowledge based on Islamic epistemology to counteract Western binary thinking, and al-Faruqi urges the incorporation of the principle of *Tauḥīd* throughout all realms of knowledge to sustain Islamic identity in the academic sphere. Despite challenges such as narrow-mindedness among adherents and the necessity for broader interdisciplinary cooperation, this approach emphasizes the importance of an adaptive, comprehensive, and forward-thinking Islamic scientific framework that aligns with the complex realities of the contemporary world, fostering a quest for knowledge that is both spiritually and empirically rigorous.

The article significantly advances the conversation on integrating Islamic spirituality with modern science by meticulously analyzing the ideas and contributions of Nasr, al-Attas, and al-Faruqi. It proposes a paradigm that honors Islamic intellectual tradition while actively engaging with contemporary scientific dialogue, aiming to enhance the Islamic intellectual legacy in line with the requirements of the modern scientific landscape.

The article suggests a cross-disciplinary and cooperative method for integrating Islamic knowledge tailored to the demands of global and technological shifts. It underscores the urgency of putting this paradigm into practice, ongoing scholarly dialogue, and reforms in education to develop scholars proficient in Islamic and modern scientific thought. It also calls for continuous evaluation of these initiatives to prevent misinterpretation, such as “*ayatization*,” and to ensure an effective amalgamation of Islamic viewpoints with contemporary science.[]

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