



Understanding Islam's Tawhīdic World View

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Abstract:

The concept of worldview is known as a precise philosophy of life; origin of the world; and a set of views about essential aspects of Reality that establish and influence all our comprehensions, rational, and endeavors. This article attempts to present an understanding of the monotheistic world view of Islam, in the light of teachings of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, which differ from the other world views. Section 1, provides an introduction to the terms: Monotheism and World-View, used in philosophy and other branches of social sciences, from the historical perspective. Section 2, explains the term Monotheism. Section 3, explains World-Views. Section 4, discusses the relation of Philosophy and World View. Section 5, provides definition & nature of World-View. Section 6, presents the Islamic World View OR the Monotheistic World View of Islam. Section 7, highlights the doctrines of Islamic World View. Section 8, presents the Conclusion.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The terms: “*Monotheism*”⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾ and “*World-View*” (*Weltanschauung* in German), has a extensive and thought-provoking history, which goes back to Kant (1724–1804).⁶ These terms are used in philosophy and other branches of social sciences.

David K. Naugle⁷ wrote a history of these concepts. Below cited quote shows its importance. “After all, what could be more important or influential than the way an individual, a family, a community, a nation, or an entire culture conceptualizes reality? Is there anything more profound or powerful than the shape and content of human consciousness and its primary interpretation of the nature of things? When it comes to the deepest questions about human life and existence, does anything surpass the final implications of the answers supplied by one's essential *Weltanschauung*?”⁸

In view of the above, a worldview is generally understood as a particular philosophy of life or conception of the world; a set of beliefs about fundamental aspects of ‘*reality*’, that ground and influence all our perceiving, thinking, knowing, and doings. The main theme of this article focusses and presents, the understanding of the monotheistic world view of Islam, in the light of Qur’ān and Ḥadīth, which differ from the other world views.

The following section will establish an explanation to understand the term “*Monotheism*”.

2. MONOTHEISM

Monotheism holds two essentially distinctive substances: God and Universe. God in monotheism is conceived of as the maker of the world and of humankind. ... God of

⁴ Lemaire, André. *The birth of monotheism: the rise and disappearance of Yahwism. Biblical archaeology society*, 2007.

⁵ Denova, R., 2019. Monotheism in the Ancient World. [online] World History Encyclopedia. Available at: <<https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1454/monotheism-in-the-ancient-world/>> [Accessed 26 September 2021].

⁶ Kant, Immanuel, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* [Critique of Judgment] (Berlin: 1790), part 1, book 2, section 26; Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, edited by Paul Guyer, translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Mathews (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), [ISBN 0521344476](https://doi.org/10.1017/9780521344476).

⁷ Naugle, David K. *Worldview: The history of a concept*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002.

⁸ Naugle, David. K., *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), p.345.

monotheism, as exemplified by the major monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—is an individual god⁹.

Monotheism, is a conviction within the presence of one god, or within the unity of God. As such, it is recognized from polytheism, the conviction within the presence of numerous divine beings, from skepticism, the conviction that there's no god, and from free-thought [disbeliever, skeptic], the conviction that the presence or nonexistence of a god or of divine beings is obscure or mysterious. Monotheism characterizes the conventions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and components of the conviction are recognizable in various other religions.¹⁰

The following section will establish an explanation to understand the term “*World-View*”.

3. WORLD VIEW

The term world view is unfortunately, frequently utilized without any exact definition. What could be an exact worldview? How can we characterize it? Indeed, interior reasoning, numerous distinctive definitions have been given (e.g., by Kant (1724–1804), Hegel (1770–1831), Kierkegaard (1813–1855), Dilthey (1833–1911), Husserl (1859–1938, Jaspers (1883–1969), Heidegger (1889–1976, etc.).¹¹

A worldview or world-view is the fundamental intellectual orientation of an individual or society encompassing the whole of the individual's or society's knowledge and point of view. A worldview can include natural philosophy; fundamental, existential [empirical], and normative postulates; or themes, values, emotions, and ethics.¹²



Figure 1: Some religious symbols in clock-wise order from top: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Bahá'í Faith, Hinduism, Taoism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Slavic

⁹ See, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/monotheism>. [16-07-2021]

¹⁰ Baaren, T. P. van. "Monotheism." Encyclopedia Britannica, September 18, 2019. [Professor of Science of Religions, State University of Groningen, The Netherlands. Author of *Menschen wie wir* and others. [16-07-2021]

¹¹ Ibid., p.345.

¹² Palmer, Gary B. *Toward A Theory of Cultural Linguistics*. University of Texas Press, 1996. p. 114. ISBN 978-0-292-76569-6

neopaganism, Celtic polytheism, Heathenism (Germanic paganism), Semitic neopaganism, Wicca, Kemetism (Egyptian paganism), Hellenism (Greek paganism), Italo-Roman neopaganism.¹³

Conducting a authentic comparison of distinctive worldview definitions, is outside the scope of this article. Therefore, we restrict our analysis to a clear and fruitful definitions proposed by the Western and Islamic scholars, which will be presented in the forthcoming sections.

The following section will be useful to understand the theme of this article.

4. PHILOSOPHY & WORLD VIEW

The two concepts “philosophy” and “worldview” are closely related. Will Durant¹⁴ explains this relation: “Every science begins as philosophy and ends as art; it arises in hypothesis and flows into achievement. Philosophy is a hypothetical interpretation of the unknown (as in metaphysics), or of the in-exactly known (as in ethics or political philosophy); it is the front trench in the siege of truth. Science is the captured territory; and behind it are those secure regions in the captured territory; in which knowledge and art build our imperfect and marvelous world. Philosophy seems to stand still, perplexed; but only because she leaves the fruits of victory to her daughters the sciences, and herself passes on, divinely discontent, to the uncertain and unexplored.”¹⁵

Talking about "a philosophy" in its broadest sense alludes, in reality to a worldview. Wolters summarized the relationship between worldview and reasoning what he calls "worldview crowns philosophy", that is, constructing a worldview is the highest manifestation of philosophy.¹⁶

The term “worldview” is often used to emphasize a personal and historical point of view. In this sense, the term can have a negative connotation for the philosopher, because philosophy

13 Újvári, Edit. "Religious Symbols from the Point of View of Visual Semiotics." *International Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Society* 10, no. 3 (2020).

¹⁴ William James Durant was an American writer, historian, and philosopher. He became best known for his work *The Story of Civilization*, 11 volumes written in collaboration with his wife, Ariel Durant, and published between 1935 and 1975. He was earlier noted for *The Story of Philosophy*, described as "a groundbreaking work that helped to popularize philosophy".

¹⁵ Durant, Will, *The Story of Philosophy* (Pakistan: Services Book Club, 1985), p. xxii.

¹⁶ Wolters, M. “On the Idea of Worldview and Its Relation to Philosophy,” *Stained Glass: Worldviews and Social Science* (USA: University Press of America, 1989), pp.14-25.
[[http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/Culp/Phil496% 20 Readings/Optional%20Wolters%20Ideas.pdf](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil/Culp/Phil496%20Readings/Optional%20Wolters%20Ideas.pdf)]

generally claims universal validity, as it has a clear association with rational thought. It is however possible to define the class of *philosophical worldviews*, as rooted in rationality and thus also aiming at a kind of universal validity.¹⁷

The following section will present the definition and nature of the term worldview.

5. WORLD VIEW: DEFINITION & NATURE

A worldview is the set of beliefs about fundamental aspects of *Reality* that ground, and influence all one's perceiving, thinking, knowing, and doing. It is a study of the world; a view of life; literally, a perception of the world; a particular philosophy of life; a concept of the world held by an individual or a group.¹⁸

“Worldview refers to a general conception of the nature of the world, particularly as containing or implying a system of value-principles. Any total philosophical system may be so styled which derives practical values from its theoretical component ---”.¹⁹

To put this more concisely, and reliably with the definitions considered over, A worldview is the set of convictions almost principal viewpoints of Reality that ground and impact all one's seeing, considering, knowing, and doing. One's worldview is additionally alluded to as one's philosophy, philosophy of life, mentality, and viewpoint on life, equation for life, belief system, faith, or indeed religion. Worldview can be considered as developmental and architectonic—relating to the classification of information utilized in metaphysics—rather than contextual; i.e., specifically depending on or relating to the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea. Social phenomena are alive and vital; and because of their interaction between the changing realities of life and the social worldview perception, they consistently have a progressive dimension.²⁰ Thus, a worldview remains in a prepare of alter and recreation over time, around a few unalterable components, since it is coming from people. For that reason, it at that point too begins to think approximately religious worldview, such as Islamic worldview.

¹⁷ Vidal, C. *An Enduring Philosophical Agenda. Worldview Construction as a Philosophical Method*, Submitted for publication, 2007. <http://cogprints.org/6048/>

¹⁸ Simpson, J. A, *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

¹⁹ Bullock, Allan & Trombley, S., *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* (London: Harper Collins, 1999).

²⁰ Vidal, C. *An Enduring Philosophical Agenda. Worldview Construction as a Philosophical Method*, Submitted for publication, 2007. <http://cogprints.org/6048/>

The next section presents the Islamic World View OR the Monotheistic World View of Islam.

6. ISLAMIC WORLD-VIEW (IWV) OR ISLAMIC MONOTHEISTIC WORLD VIEW (IMWV)

The Islamic Worldview (IWV) OR the Islamic Monotheistic World View of Islam (IMWV), is basically a theistic and ethical worldview which disagrees with the secularist or atheistic [irreligious] alternatives. This worldview originates from the fundamental belief, that life and existence came into being as a result of the will, desire and design of the One and Only Creator. The Islamic perception of God has therefore to lead all discussions on the nature of the universe and man's relation to it.²¹

The Islamic World-View is a comprehensive conception of the universe and man's relation to it from the Islamic viewpoint, thereby serving as a basis for one's philosophy or outlook of entire life.²² The vision of reality and truth that appears before our mind's eye revealing, what existence is all about; for it is the world of existence in its totality that Islam is projects. Thus, by 'worldview' we must mean ru'yat al-Islam li'l wujud رؤية الإسلام للوجود (Islam's vision of existence).²³

In the light of above discussion, we could say that in Islamic worldview, there is no separation of two lives or two worlds. There is no dichotomy. It is essential to understand that, the Islamic *Weltanschauung* (IWV) is based on the two primary sources: the Qur'an, which Muslims believe to be the direct word of God and the Sunnah, which incorporates the traditions concerning the life example of the Prophet Muhammad [PBUH]. However, it is the nucleus of Tawhīd, which provides impetus to all that is present in 'Islamic religious thought'.²⁴

The subsequent section will present the doctrines of the Islamic World View OR the doctrines of Islamic Monotheistic World View of Islam.

²¹ Hassan, M. Kamal, 'The Islamic World-View' in *Towards a Positive Islamic World-View: Malaysian and American Perceptions*, ed. Abdul Monir Yaacob & Ahmad Faiz Abdul Rahman (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia, 1994), pp.11-33; Quotation p.12.

²² *Ibid.*, p.12.

²³ Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur, 1995), pp.1-2.

²⁴ Allah's Knowledge: *Al-Qur'an* 2:140; 2:144; 2:149; 2:187; 2:197; 2:216; 2:220; 2:232; 2:234; 2:246-247; 3:29; 3:66; 3:7; 3:98-99; 3:115; 3:153-154; 3:167; 4:25; Allah's Attributes: *Al-Qur'an* 2:143; 2:185; 2:218-219; 2:221; 2:225; 2:255-257; 2:261; 2:265; 2:268; 2:283; 2:286; 3:2; 3:15; 3:20; 3:30-31; 3:34; 3:68; 3:108; Allah's Power & Authority: *Al-Qur'an* 2:148; 2:202; 2:212; 2:220; 2:224; 2:228; 2:240; 2:245; 2:247; 2:249; 2:251; 2:253; 2:259; 2:282; 2:284; 3:11; 3:13; 3:26.

**7. DOCTRINES OF ISLAMIC WORLD-VIEW (DIWV) OR
DOCRINES OF ISLAMIC MONOTHEISTIC WORLD VIEW (DIMWV)**

The Islamic worldview is straightforward and simple to get it and rationalize. It is based on three fundamental doctrines which are: *Tawhîd*²⁵ (theism), *Khilâfah*²⁶ (Vicegerency), and *'Adâlah*²⁷ (Justice).

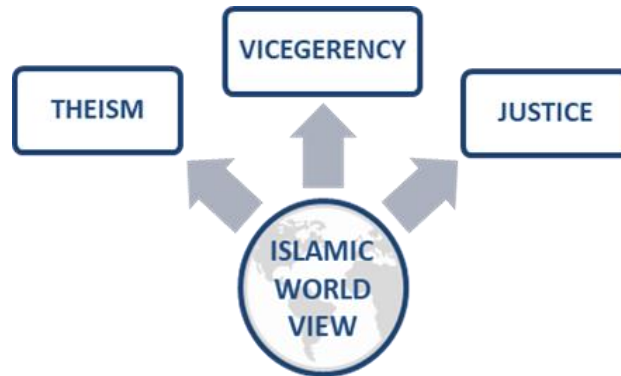
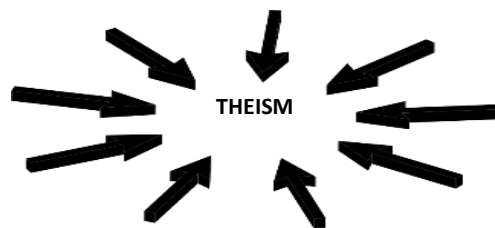


Figure 2: Three doctrines of Islamic World-View

These principles not only frame the Islamic worldview, but they also constitute the fountainhead of the *Maqâsid al-Sharî'ah* (objectives of Islamic law), and the strategy of Man's life in this world.

Hence, there's no address of a interwoven, or an after-thought in reaction to the clashing requests of pluralist bunches or social classes. In other words, no space for relationship or advocacy of a system, in which two or more states, groups, principles, sources of authority, etc., coexist.²⁸

1-*Tawhîd* (Theism)



²⁵ al-Qur'ân, Tawhîd: 2:143; 2:265; 3:15; 3: 144; 4:12; 4:99-100;5:99;8:29; 9:60; 24:2; 60:7;62:4; 64:4.

²⁶ al-Qur'ân, Khalifa: 2:30; 6:165; 24:55; 38:26; 57:7.

²⁷ al-Qur'ân, 'Adâlah (justice): 2:180; 4:2-6; 4:9-10; 5:42; 7:181;16:90; 17:26; 24:61; 41:7; 42; 57:7; 65:6-7.

²⁸ See, <https://www.britannica.com/>; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/in%20other%20words>

Figure 3: Doctrine of *Tawhîd*

Islamic worldview reveres [respects] Allah, as the one and only God, the only creator and Supreme Lord of the universe. He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Sustainer of the world and mankind.²⁹ He is the Maker of the Sky and the soil, and the Enormous Objects, the one who gives rain and gives life to the dried out arrive.³⁰ This concept can moreover be seen within the essential affirmation of Islamic faith: “There is no god but (one God) Allah, and Muhammad (ﷺ) is the messenger of God.” Muslims also hold that this god is the same one worshipped by Christians and Jews. Under this pillar all other obligations are included for, to believe in God and Muhammad (ﷺ) as His prophet is to obey their teachings and the example of Muhammad’s life. Unity of Allah sums up the Islamic way of life and presents it in a nutshell, the essence of Islamic civilization. It is the one term which describes the *process* of the Islamic transformation of an individual or a society³¹.

The doctrine of *Tawhîd* lays the establishment of Islamic social arrange, which educates man that his socio-economic exercises must be guided by the standards from a single common source, Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta’āla*). This single common source reveals its principles through Holy Qur’ān, which are elaborated by Sunnah.³²

The Qur’ānic teaching of *Tawhîd* and the clarification it offers on the concept of God and His qualities are implied to empower people to break free from the shackles of obliviousness and persevering custom and convention which would not guarantee unceasing salvation. It is this teaching that the Qur’ān offers mankind so that they are guided completely a right. It is this which makes the Qur’ān state with supreme certainty around its adequacy in giving people with extreme guidance³³. It is fundamental because of this that the Qur’ān is exceptionally critical of those who take other creatures or things or indeed their claim self image as objects of adore or as ‘lords’. Further, those who merely cling to tradition/custom without opening

²⁹ al-Qur’ān: 112:1-4 "Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him".

³⁰ al-Qur’ān 29:61-63.

³¹ Siddiqi, M. Nejatullah, *Tawhîd: The Concept and the Process in: Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honour of Mawlāna Sayyid Abul A’la Mawdūdī*, Khurshid Ahmad & Zafar Ishaq Ansari, eds., (UK: Islamic Foundation, 1978), p17.

³² Choudhury, Masudul Alam, *Islamic Economic co-operation* (London: The Macmillan press Ltd., 1989), p.7.

themselves up to the truth and taking advantage of the opportunities laid down by Allah through the divine word are severely criticized in the Qur'an.³³ This is something the Islamic worldview affirms.

2- *Khilāfah* (Vicegerency or Caliphate)



Figure 4: Doctrine of *Khilāfah*

Islamic worldview uses the term 'Vicegerency' (*Khilāfah*) instead of sovereignty³⁴, in view of the fact that, sovereignty belongs to Allah alone. Anybody who holds control and rules in agreement with the laws of Allah would without a doubt be the vicegerent of the *Supreme Ruler* and would not be authorized to work out any powers other than those designated to him. Another point stated in al-Qur'ān verse 24:55 is that the power to rule over the earth has been promised to *the whole community* of believers; it has not been said that any particular person or class among them will be raised to that position. From this it follows that all believers are repositories of the Caliphate (*Khilāfah*). The Caliphate granted by Allah to Man is popular vicegerency and not a limited one. There is no reservation in favour of any family, class or race. No individual is inferior to other. Every believer is a Caliph of Allah in his individual capacity. By virtue of this position, he is individually responsible to Allah.

Ḥadīth: (ﷺ): 'Every one of you is a ruler and everyone is answerable for his subjects.' Thus, one individual is in no way inferior to another.³⁵

The preceding argument explains that, Man is the vicegerent of Allah on this earth, and all the resources of this world are at his disposal as a trust.³⁶

³³ al-Qur'ān: 2:170-171.

³⁴ al-Qur'ān 57:7: " --- whereof He has made you heirs ---"; al-Qur'ān, Khalīfa: 2:30; 6:165; 24:55; 38:26; 57:7.

³⁵ Mawdūdī, Sayyid Abul A'la, *Political Theory of Islām* in: Khurshid Ahmad, (ed.), *Islām: its meaning and message* (UK: The Islamic Foundation Leicester, 1993), p.168.

³⁶ "--- I will create a vicegerent on earth". ---" (Al-Qur'ān 2:30); "O David! We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth--- ". (Al-Qur'ān 38:26).

This concept is pertinent to every Muslim individual. Achievement of such conceptual maturity, will undoubtedly create a monotheistic world view society.

3-'Adâlah (Justice)³⁷



Figure 5: Doctrine of 'Adâlah

Justice is a concept of ethical rightness based on morals, rationality, law, common law, religion, or value, together with the discipline of the breach of said morals; equity is the act of being fair and/or reasonable.³⁸ According to most contemporary theories of justice, justice is overwhelmingly important: John Rawls claims that "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought."³⁹ Justice can be thought of as distinct from and more fundamental than benevolence, charity, mercy, generosity or compassion.

Within the Islamic worldview, justice indicates putting things in their legitimate put. It too implies giving others equal treatment. In Islam, equity is additionally a moral virtue and an attribute of human identity, because it is within the Western tradition. Justice is near to balance within the sense that it makes a state of balance within the dissemination of rights and obligations, but they are not indistinguishable. Now and then, equity is accomplished through disparity, like in unequal conveyance of riches. The Prophet of Islam pronounced: "There are seven categories of people whom God will shelter under His shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His. [One is] the just leader⁴⁰." God spoke to His Messenger in this manner:

³⁷ al-Qur'ân, Justice: 2:18; 2:236-237; 4:9-10; 5:8; 7:159; 24:61; 26:181-183; 30:38; 31:14; 41:7; 42:15; 46:15; 51:19; 55:8-9; 57:7; 57:10 59:7 65:2 65:6-7 70:24-2; 89:19.

³⁸ Konow, James, "Which Is the Fairest One of All? A Positive Analysis of Justice Theories." *Journal of Economic Literature* 41, no. 4: 2003 (USA: American Economic Association Publications, 2003), p.1188.

³⁹ Rawls, John, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, revised edition, 1999), p. 3.

⁴⁰ Muslim, *Sahih*, Chapter: 'Adâlah, B-3, V- 46, Hadîth 693.

“O My slaves, I have forbidden injustice for Myself and forbade it also for you. So, avoid being unjust to one another⁴¹.” Thus, justice represents moral righteousness and fairness, since it means things should be where they belong.

8. CONCLUSION

The monotheistic world view of Islam, differs from the other philosophies or world views. It holds a specific philosophy of life, built on revelation and faith, which cannot be understood through empirical observation. Three fundamental doctrines: *tawhîd*, *khilâfah* and *'adâlah*, construct or create, the Islamic World View. The outcome of this World View, is a system of ethical and moral values, useful for the human society. IWV educates Man about the concept, purpose, and philosophy of two lives; and the results of his performance in this life. Islamic worldview would give meanings and purpose of all actions done by human beings, particularly Muslims.

⁴¹ Muslim, Sahih, Chapter: 'Adâlah, B-3, V- 46, Hadîth 690 .