On the London subway a passenger recites verses from the Quran. He does so in a low voice and smiles as he recognizes the divine words of his faith. The verses were recited for the benefit of those who might be curious about the Quran and Science, a pseudo-scientific work claiming to examine the Holy Scriptures in the light of modern knowledge. This book by the French convert to Islam, Maurice Bucaille, is popular in Muslim countries as well as among Muslims in Europe and North America. It is commonly referred to and even recommended by Islamic scholars throughout the world when discussing matters concerning Islam and science. However, in most cases, the person recommending it has not personally read the book himself. Instead, someone he/she trusts, at the local mosque or at the university, has told him of its content.

The book by Maurice Bucaille belongs to that apostolic genre of literature that attempts to Islamize knowledge, science, technology and education. In contemporary European and North American Muslim environments, more or less apologetic literature on the relationship between science, knowledge and Islam is flooding the market. Literature and pamphlets on the Islamization of these phenomena are present in almost every Muslim bookshop. In general, the literature is written in English and the authors are primarily Muslims from Europe, North America, Malaysia, India and Pakistan. The fact that these discussions are mainly carried out in English points to it as the language of communication among Muslims worldwide.

Since the 1960s, discussions of Islam and science in the European and North American contexts have been dominated by the Iranian-American scholar Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the Malaysian academic Syyad Muhammad Naguib al-Attas (who claims he was the first to introduce the concept of 'Islamization of knowledge'), the American-Arab scholar Is- mail Raji al-Faransi (d. 1986), the British-Pakistani author Ziauddin Sardar, the Iraqi-American scholar Jabir al-Alwan and the Pakistani Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam (d. 1996). Yet they represent a variety of ideological and philosophical outlooks that have different aims.

In the study of the many relationships between Islam and science and knowledge, it can be suggested that we are witnessing an evolving 'discourse'. That is, if discourse is seen as a constantly changing practice that redefines basic terms primarily concerned with power relations, a number of presupposi- tions that constitute the foundation for a new discourse on Islam and science and knowledge can be found. Of course, there are differences, but the common premises are focused upon here.

Interpretation: The participants in the discourse imagine the contemporary world as fragmented. The world needs to be put together in a systemized way, totality under the unity of 'Islam'. Firms rooted in an organic world picture, the participants criticize science and social struct- uring. Through a correct interpretation of the revelation (the Quran), human beings can gain understanding of the true meaning of the world. Hence, the work of interpreting the Quran is seen as an ongoing activity. The idea is to retrieve, to the early holy Quran and interpret it (allegorically) with the 'Muhammadan' society of Medina as the norm. The aim is not to establish a cognitively (a teleological dimension) influences the partic- ipants' view of history. They all turn to history to find the true norms and values of Islam. The idea is to retrieve, to the early holy Quran and interpret it (allegorically) with the 'Muhammadan' society of Medina as the norm. 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