



Signs in the Heavens: A Muslim Astronomer's Perspective on Religion and Science

Imad-Ad-Dean Ahmad

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A popular subject of discussion in the modern West is the relationship between religion and science. Are they inherently incompatible or can they be reconciled? In the classical Islamic civilization science and religion were considered allies against paganism and superstition. Reconciliation was not an issue between two subjects. This book advances the thesis that the myth of an incompatibility between religion and science is a myth of Western civilization, born out of its unique history. In this book, the author presents the attitudes towards science put forward in the Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions and by the great Muslim scholars of the classical era. Besides reviewing some of the scientific achievements of the golden era of Islamic civilization and some important achievements in astronomy, the book narrates as to how the methodology of modern science was developed in the Islamic classical era and how advancements in science by the Muslims were the natural outgrowth of the Qur'anic foundations of Islam. This edition is the product of a research grant from the Templeton Foundation, and has benefited from the recommendations of three distinguished scientists who have been involved in the study of the history of science. Dr. Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, a Palestinian-American Muslim, graduated cum laude from Harvard in 1970 and in 1975 obtained a Ph. D. in astronomy and astrophysics from the University of Arizona. Dr. Ahmad has done postdoctoral work in astronomy at Harvard, the University of Maryland, Goddard Space Flight Center and for private firms and now teaches courses in Religion, Science and Freedom at the University of Maryland. Since 1993 he has been the president of the Minaret of Freedom Institute, an Islamic think tank in Bethesda, Maryland. Dr. Ahmad is author of A Uniform Islamic Calendar for the Western Hemisphere, editor of Proceedings of the International Institute of Islamic Thought's 1987 conference on the Islamic lunar calendar, editor of Islam and the Discovery of Freedom by Rose Wilder Lane, and co-editor with Ahmad Yousef of Islam and the West: A Dialog.

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