Sufism and Challenges of Modern Science:

Nasr's Perspective

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Abstract

If the universe is defined as a manifestation of the Divine in the Alevi-Bektashi and other Sufi thoughts, what are their responses to modern dominant philosophy and science that is fundamentally secular and leaves no space for the Sacred? Sufism is a broad and diverse movement within the history of Islam. It nevertheless represents a Divine-centric cosmology in which God -through His creation- is invisibly visible, and He is at the same time, the eternal and inward reality of the external and visible world. In other words, God is the eternal meaning of everything. This paper will study the question of philosophical assessment of modern philosophy and scientific world-view from a Sufi perspective. In particular, it will examine the phenomenon of modern science and technology from the perspective of the Sufi and traditionalist school of Islam. Thereupon, this paper aims to outline and examine the question of Sacred in confrontation of Secular in the context of Sufism and philosophy. For a Sufi-philosophical thought, this work will assess the idea of reviving sacred or religious science mostly elaborated in the works of Nasr. As a prominent figure of the Traditionalist School, also a Sufi of the Shādhilī order, Nasr (b.1933) emphasizes throughout his works on the necessity of recovering "Religious and Sacred Science". Embedded in this suggestion lies a critique of modern science and technology as well. The mentioned view, according to him, is religious, and the term "sacred science" in his works is juxtaposed to modern science. Furthermore, this paper investigates Nasr's critiques of modern science's fundamental philosophical principles as determining its *secular* nature in opposition to the notion of *sacred* science and world view in Sufism.

Keywords

Alevi-Bektashi; Sufism, Modern Science; Traditional Science; Sacred Science;

Seyyed Hossein Nasr; Secular Science

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