

CHAPTER V

THE PRINCIPLE OF METAPHYSICS

Hindu cosmology regards nature as an unfortunate event that happened to Brahman, the Absolute.¹ Creation (i.e., every individual creature) is an objectification of it (the Absolute) that should not have taken place because it is a degradation of its perfection as absolute. Everything in nature is hence regarded as an aberration, as something encaged in its creaturely form, pining for release and return to its origin in and as Brahman. While it continues as a creature in the world, it is subject to the Law of Karma through which it is upgraded, or further degraded, according to whether it acknowledges and complies with this first cosmological principle, namely, that it is merely an ontological mishap of the Absolute.² Christian cosmology regards nature as creature of God which was once perfect, but which was corrupted in the "fall" and hence became evil.³ The evil of creation, ontological, essential and pervasive, is the reason for God's salvific drama, of His own self-incarnation in Jesus, of His crucifixion and death. After the drama, Christianity holds, restoration has and has not come to creation, theoretically. Practically, the Christian mind continued to hold creation as fallen, and nature as evil. The great enmity to matter which characterized Gnosticism pass-

¹That the creation, or as the Hindu thinkers prefer to call it, "the world of manifestation" of Brahman, the Absolute, is not ultimately real and is therefore a debasement of the Absolute, a departure from its transcendental perfection and hence an unfortunate aberration, is affirmed in several *Upanishads*. A favorite passage is *Svetasvatara*, IV, 9-10. The same ideal is elaborated in medieval Hindu thought by Sankara (e.g., in the *Adhyasabhasya*) and by Ramanuja in the conception of the world as constituting the body of Allah, the body possessing a dependent existence in relation to the soul (*Brhadaranyaka* 3.7.3). In modern times the idea is expressed though more guardedly by such thinkers as S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1951, 1923), vol. 1, 38-39, 197 and M. Hiriyanna *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1961, 1932), 63-65.

²Ibid.

³Sin came into the world through one man, and his sin brought death with it. As a result, death has spread to the whole human race because everyone has sinned. There was sin in the world before the law was given; but where there is no law, no account is kept of sins. But from the time of Adam to the time of Moses death ruled over mankind, even over those who did not sin in the same way that Adam did when he disobeyed God's command (Romans 5:12-14).

ed on to Christianity and reinforced its contempt and antagonism for nature and "the world" so avidly pursued on every level by Christianity's first enemies—the Romans. Nature, with its material potentialities and propensities, was the realm of Satan. On the material level, its momentum is the pull away from "the other world" to "the flesh," to "sin." On the social, it is temptation to politics, to will power and self-assertion, to "Caesar." Programatism—the will to order the movement of history toward transformation of nature—is by Christian definition vain.⁴ For a millennium or more, "nature" was contrasted with "grace" as its opposite. Both were treated as mutually exclusive; pursuit of the one was necessarily violation of the other. Under the impact of Islamic thought first, and later of the Renaissance, of scholasticism and the Enlightenment, Christians opened themselves to life—and world affirmation. World denial and condemnation, however, were never eradicated but only muted. In more recent times, with the triumph of romanticism and secularism following the French Revolution, "naturalism" came to occupy and sometimes dominate the Christian attitude to nature and the world.

In Islam, nature is creation and gift. As creation it is teleological, perfect and orderly; as gift it is an innocent good placed at the disposal of man. Its purpose is to enable man to do the good and achieve felicity. This treble judgement of orderliness, purposiveness and goodness characterizes and sums up the Islamic view of nature.

I. THE ORDERLY UNIVERSE

To witness that there is no god but God is to hold that He alone is the Creator Who gave to everything its being, Who is the ultimate Cause of every event, and the final End of all that is; that He is the First and the Last. To enter into such witnessing in freedom and conviction, in conscious understanding of its content, is to realize that all that surrounds us, whether things or events, all that takes place in the natural, social or psychic fields, is the action of God, the discharge of His causal efficacy and ontic power, the fulfillment of one or another of His purposes. This does not mean that He is directly and personally the cause

⁴This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food and drink you need in order to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all, isn't life worth more than food? And isn't the body worth more than clothes? Look at the birds: they do not plant seeds, gather a harvest and put it in barns; yet your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren't you worth much more than birds? (Matthew 6:25-26).

of all, the immediate agent behind every event, but that He is the ultimate Agent Who may and does bring events about through other agents or causes. Nor does it mean that God, rather than us, is responsible for our deeds. We must reckon that the moral worth or unworth of our deeds is solely our individual responsibility; but that the ontological power which diffuses being and non-being is God's alone to have and to exercise. Humans are not creators. They can neither give being nor take it away, though they act as agents of such giving or taking away. Once made, such realization becomes a second nature to man, inseparable from him during all his waking hours. One then lives all the moments of his life under its shadow. And where man recognizes God's action in every object and event, he follows the divine initiative because it is God's. To observe it in nature is to do natural science,⁵ for the divine initiative in nature is none other than the immutable laws with which God had endowed nature.⁶ To observe the divine initiative in one's self or in one's society is to pursue the humanities and the social sciences.⁷ And if the whole universe itself is really the unfoldings of fulfillment of these laws of nature which are the commandments of God and His will, then the universe is, in the eye of the Muslim, a living theater set in motion by God's command and action. The theater itself, as well as all it includes, is explicable in these terms. The unization of God means therefore that He is the First Cause of everything, and that none else

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (الذاريات: ٢٠) هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَسْلَمُوا
عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابِ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ إِنِّي أَخْلِفُ آيَاتِي
وَالْقَهَّارِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقُوبُ (يونس: ٦٥)

⁵The earth is full of signs of evidence for those who have certitude (51:20)... It is Allah Who gave you the sun and moon for light; Who ordered them in their orbits that you may reckon the seasons and years. He created all this in truth; and He clarifies the evidence to those who have the mind to know. In the succession of day and night, as in all that Allah created in heaven and earth, are evident signs to those who fear Allah. (10:5-6).

... وَلَا تَجِدُ لِسِتِنَاغْيِيلًا (الإسراء: ٧٧) ... سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِن قَبْلُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَّقْدُورًا
(الأحزاب: ٣٨) ... سُنَّتِ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ فِي عِبَادِهِ ... (غافر: ٨٥) ... وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا
(الأحزاب: ٦٢) ... لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ... (الروم: ٣٠)

⁶In Our path, you will find no change of pattern (17:77)... That is the divine pattern in dealing with your predecessors. Allah's will is always done (33:38)... The pattern of Allah today is the same as that of the past (40:85)... No variation is observable in the pattern of Allah in creation (33:62)... His pattern is forever immutable (30:30).

⁷Isma'il R. al Faruqi and A. O. Naseef, *Social and Natural Sciences* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1981), chap. I.

is so. God's power is not so remote, and His causation is so indirect, as to render Him a *deus otiosus*, a "retired" kind of God. That was the mistake of the philosophers who pushed God's causality back to creation, and conceived of the cosmos as a woundup mechanical clock which does not need the clock maker to operate. The *mutakallimūn* have repudiated such a view; and so do we. Our God is a living, active God, Whose action is in everything that happens, though it happens through the causal mechanism proper to it. Our God is indeed present and everywhere active at all times. He alone is sole ultimate Agent of all events, the Cause of all being.*

Necessarily then, *al tawhīd* means the elimination of any power operative in nature beside God, Whose eternal initiative is the immutable laws of nature. This is tantamount to denying any initiative in nature to any power other than God's above all, the elimination of magic, sorcery, spirits, and any theurgical notion of arbitrary interference with the processes of nature by any agency. Through *al tawhīd*, therefore, nature is separated from the gods and spirits of primitive religion, from the superstitions of the naive and ignorant. As Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al Wahhāb has amply shown in his *Kitāb al Tawhīd*, every superstition, every piece of sorcery or magic, involves its subject or "beneficiary" in *shirk*. *Al tawhīd*, or the subjection of all creation to one transcendent God, made it possible for the first time for the religio-mythopoeic mind to outgrow itself, for the sciences of nature and civilization to develop under the blessing of a religious worldview which has renounced once and for all any association of the sacred with nature. Necessarily, therefore, *al tawhīd* achieves for natural science what it desires and needs most, namely, the *sine qua non* condition without which it cannot operate. And that is the "profanization" or "secularization" of nature. In the history of science, these terms have meant no more than the removal from nature of the many theurgical causes, of ghosts and spirits, which superstitious people and mystery-mongers have falsely ascribed to natural events. Science does not require the removal of God from nature, but that of ghosts and spirits that act arbitrarily and unpredictably. God, on the other

أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَالَهَا أَنْهَادًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ
بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (الأنعام: ٦١)

*Would you ascribe associates to Allah? Is it not Allah [the One] Who made the earth (your) place of settlement? Who placed rivers in the folds thereof and established its anchorage? Who made a barrier between the two seas? (27:61)

hand, never acts arbitrarily; and His *sunan* (laws and patterns) are immutable.⁹ Rather than being its enemy, God is the necessary condition of natural science, for unless the scientist assumes that the same causes will always produce the same results—which is precisely what the determination of nature by God means—science cannot function. *Al tawhīd* gathers all the threads of causality and returns them to God, rather than to occult forces. In so doing, the causal force operative in any event or object is organized so as to make a continuous thread whose parts are causally—and hence empirically related to one another. That the thread ultimately refers to God demands that no force outside of it interferes with the discharge of its causal power or efficacy. This in turn presupposes the linkages between the parts to be causal, and subjects them to empirical investigation and establishment. That the laws of nature are the immutable patterns of God means that God operates the causal threads of nature through patterned causes. Only causation by another cause which is always the same constitutes a pattern. This constancy of causation is precisely what makes its examination and discovery—and hence, science — possible. Science is none other than the search for such repeated causation in nature, for the causal linkages constitutive of the causal thread are repeated in other threads. Their establishment is the establishment of the laws of nature. It is the prerequisite for subjecting the causal forces of nature to control and engineering, the necessary condition for man's usufruct of nature, and hence the presupposition of all technology.

The modern scientists of the West rejected God and removed Him, as it were, from nature, out of their hatred for the Christian Church and the false *magisterium* it had imposed for itself on all knowledge including that of nature. Only when they did so, could natural science flourish and prosper in their midst. For a millennium, the Christians produced no science because of this dominion by the Church. Its paradoxical method, incarnational theology, and an authoritarian scripture which spoke *ex cathedra* on questions of natural science, stifled every possibility for the scientific spirit to move. Myth and superstition were backed by Church authority. Removal of the former was regarded as threat to the latter. In putting the scientists to the stake, the Church sought to guard

... فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا (فاطر: ٤٣)

⁹You will never find exception to the patterns of Allah in creation. His patterns are immutable (35:43).

its own foundations. Nonetheless, the scientists gradually won and the Church was defeated. What they succeeded in doing was “secularization” insofar as it meant the removal of the Church *magisterium* from the science of nature. Their accomplishment was valid and extremely worthy.

What is needed therefore for science to function and develop is a nature free of spirits, ghosts, *mana*, *numens* and all kinds of magical elements. Nay, more is needed. Beyond nature “secularized” in this sense, science needs to assume that nature functions according to patterns—that is an orderly system. This requirement is absolutely essential for science. Without it, i.e., with the possibility that natural behavior is arbitrary, erratic, and happenstance, no science is possible. Science rests its whole claim on the assumption that every time a cause is provided, its effect will follow upon it, that what the scientist has discovered is a true law of nature. This means that given the same causes, the same effects will indeed reappear.

Whence the authority for this assumption? Some Western scientists, notably those of the nineteenth century, have claimed that the patterned fabric of nature is deducible from nature itself; i.e., from empirical observation. The same position was advocated by Muslim philosophers a millennium earlier, and al Ghazālī has refuted both with equal philosophical finesse.¹⁰ Against their claim, he rightly argued that from the observable given of nature, one may conclude with the scientists that X follows Y, and that X has followed Y so many times in past experiments or observations. That X follows Y, however, is a far cry from the scientists’ claims that X was brought about, or caused, by Y; or that X will always follow upon Y because it is its necessary effect. And yet it is precisely such causal linkage and necessary or infallible predictability that are needed by science and assumed by the scientist to exist between “causes” and “their” presumed effects. Twentieth-century philosophers of science have exposed this prejudgment on the part of the scientists. In consequence, the scientists have grown to be much more humble, and many of them have returned to religion, to God, once their “faith” in the orderliness of nature has been exploded by Einstein’s relativity, and Heisenberg’s principle of indeterminacy. It was philosophy that contributed the most to the questioning of the inductive leap. And it was George Santayana, the skeptic, who called the scientists’ trust in cosmic

¹⁰Abū Hāmid al Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al Falāsifah*, tr. Sabih Aḥmad Kamālī (Lahore: The Pakistan Philosophical Congress, 1958), pp. 186 ff.

orderliness a piece of "animal faith." His obvious contempt for their trust is due to the fact that it is utterly without foundation in empirical truth. Thus, with but a little twist, Santayana repeated the same criticism al Ghazālī had directed to the philosopher-scientists in the sixth century AH/eleventh-century AC. Santayana derived his expression "animal faith" from the Pavlovian example, cited *ad nauseam* by all, of the dog becoming so accustomed to finding food upon hearing a bell ring that it "believed" the ring was the cause of the food.¹¹

For us, as Muslims, Allah (SWT) is the cause of this orderliness. The cosmos is indeed a cosmos, not a chaos, precisely because He implanted in it His eternal patterns. These patterns are knowable, i.e., discoverable by observation and intellection, faculties with which Allah (SWT) has equipped humans to enable them to prove themselves by their deeds to fulfill His purpose through such deeds. Rather than being a hindrance to science, Islam, especially its *al tawhīd*, is the condition of science. The Muslim is convinced beyond doubt that Allah (SWT) is, that He is the ultimate cause, the only Agent, by whose benevolent action all that is, and all that happens, happens. Nature, thus perceived through *al tawhīd*, is fit and ready for "scientific" observation and analysis. For the Muslim scientist, the so-called "induction-leap" is not a leap at all, but another step in an ethymematic syllogism which begins with *Lā ilāha illā Allāh* as its major promise.

II. THE TELEOLOGICAL UNIVERSE

The order of nature is not merely the material order of causes and effects, the order which space and time and other such theoretical categories make evident to our understanding. Nature is equally a realm of ends where everything fulfills a purpose and thereby contributes to the prosperity and balance of all. From the inanimate little pebble in the valley, the smallest plankton on the surface of the ocean, the microbial flagellate in the intestine of the woodroach, to the galaxies and their suns, the giant redwoods and whales and elephants—everything in existence, by its genesis and growth, its life and death, fulfills a purpose assigned to it by God, which is necessary for other beings. All creatures are interdependent, and the whole of creation runs because of the perfect harmony which exists between its parts. "To everything," God says in

¹¹George Santayana, *Skepticism and Animal Faith* (New York: Scribner's), 1977.

the Quran, "We have given a measure proper to it."¹² This is the ecological balance which the contemporary pollution of nature has brought to the consciousness of modern man with alarming threat. The Muslim has been aware of it for centuries, and has seen himself as standing within it, for he is as much a part of it as any other creature.

That each element of creation feeds on another and is fed upon by a third is certainly a nexus of ends, perhaps the most obvious among the higher creatures. The dominion of the same nexus over the unseen world of algae, microbes and enzymes is harder to observe, to establish and to imagine in all its reaches. But it is no less real. Still more difficult to discover is that the feeding patterns of vegetal and animal life are the chains of interdependence in the very activities of all creatures, activities other than feeding whether or not connected with it, in the continuous action and reaction of the elements on one another, whether in earth, in the waters, in the air and among the bodies of outer space. Our knowledge of the intricacies of nature's ecology is still at an infant stage, although the sciences of nature have revealed enough of it for the imagination to construct the system as a whole.

As a teleological system, the world presents us with a sublime spectacle. The size and comprehensiveness of the macrocosm, the delicate minutiae of the microcosm, as well as the infinitely complex and perfect nature of the mechanisms of the balance, are overwhelming and fascinating. The mind is literally "humbled," as the Quran says, before them; but it is the humbling of love and admiration, of appreciation and value-apprehension,¹³ for the world as the purposeful creation of the Almighty is beautiful, indeed sublime, precisely on account of its teleology. The exclamation of the poet, "How wonderful is the rose! In it is visible the Face of God!" has no sense other than this, that the rose serves the purposes of man and insects by its fragrance and visible beauty, purposes which have been endowed to it by God and which it renders

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ (الفر: ٤٩) لَقَدْ أَنْصَبْنَا وَعَدَهُمْ عَذَابًا (مريم: ٩٤) ... إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَلِّغُ أَمْرَهُ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَقْدَرًا (الطلاق: ٣)

¹²Everything We have created and assigned to it its measure, its character and destiny (54:49)... Allah keeps all things in census (19:94)... Certainly, His will will be done. To everything He prescribed a measure (65:3).

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ (الملك: ٤)

¹³Look into Allah's creation once, twice and more [for any flaw or discrepancy]. You will find none. Your quizzical sight will return to you humbled but convinced [of the perfection of Allah's creation] (67:4).

to perfection, reflecting, to those with the eye to see, the glorious efficacy and sublime workmanship of the purposive Designer and Creator—God.

A. NATURE AS DIVINE MANOR

So much for the metaphysical arm of Islamic doctrine. The other arm is the ethical. Islam teaches that nature was created as a theater for man, a "field" in which to grow and prosper, to enjoy God's bounty and in doing so to prove oneself ethically worthy.¹⁴ First, nature is not man's property but God's.¹⁵ Man was granted his tenure therein by God and to the end prescribed by Him.¹⁶ Like a good land-tenant, man ought to take care of his Master's property. The right of usufruct which man certainly holds does not entitle him to destroy nature, or to so exploit it as to upset and ruin its ecological balance. The right of usufruct which is all he possesses is an individual right which God renews with every individual at his birth. It is neither vicarious nor hereditary, and hence, does not entitle man to preempt the future of others' enjoyment of it. As steward of the earth—indeed of creation—man is supposed at death to

الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ يَسْأَلُكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونُوا عِبَادًا لَّهِ وَالْمَرْءُ لِلْفَقْرِ (الملك: ٢) إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِّمَنَّا
يَسْأَلُكُمْ فِيهَا أَنْ يَكُونَ عَمَلًا (الكهف: ٧)

¹⁴It is Allah Who created life and death that you may prove yourselves worthy in your deeds and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving (67:2)... We have made everything on earth an ornament unto it that you may prove yourselves worthy in deeds (18:7).

فَسُبِّحْنَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (س: ٨٣) قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ (آل عمران: ٢٦)

¹⁵Praised, therefore, is Allah, in Whose hand is dominion over all things. To Him will you all return (36:83)... [When you pray to Allah] Say, O Allah, King of all dominion, Owner of all things (3:26).

... أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَهِ غَيْرُهُ ۚ هُوَ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ وَاسْتَعْمَرَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ أَفَأَنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ (هود: ٦١)

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ كَمَا أَنْتَخَلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ (البور: ٥٥)

¹⁶Adore Allah and serve Him. There is no god but He. He brought you forth from earth that you may settle therein according to His pattern. Repent therefore to Him and seek His forgiveness (11:61)... Allah promised such of you as believe and do good that He will make them His vicegerents on earth as He did to those that went before them, that He will establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, that He will turn their fear into reassurance and security. For they worship and serve only Him without associates. Henceforth, whoever disobeys Allah commits great evil (24:55).

hand over his trust to God in a better state than it was when he received it.

Second, the order of nature is subject to man, who can bring to it such changes as he wills. Nature has been created malleable, capable of receiving man's intervention into its processes, of suffering deflection of its causal nexus by his deeds. No realm or area of nature is out-of-bounds. The firmament with its suns, moons and stars, the earth and the seas with all that they contain are his to explore and to use, for utility, for pleasure and comfort or for contemplation.¹⁷ All creation is "for" man and awaits his usufruct of it. Its disposal is utterly at his discretion.¹⁸ His judgement is the only efficacious instrument of intervention, the only arbiter. But nothing relieves him of responsibility for the whole of creation.

Third, in his usufruct and enjoyment of nature, man is enjoined to act morally, for theft and cheating, coercion and monopoly, hoarding and exploitation, egotism and insensitivity to the needs of others, are unworthy of him as God's vicegerent and are therefore strictly forbidden.¹⁹ Islam also frowns upon extravagance and forbids wasteful and osten-

... وَزَيَّنَّا لِلنَّاسِ فِيهَا مِنَ الرِّزْقِ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ... (الأعراف: ٣٢)

¹⁷And We decorated the sky and made it beautiful for men to enjoy (15:16)... We planted on earth a pair of everything beautiful (22:5)... False is the prohibition of beauty which Allah brought forth for His servants' enjoyment, and the delicacies of food and raiment which He provided. Say, (Muhammad): They belong to the believers to enjoy in this world (7:32). See also: *Supra*, n. 5.

... سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ ... (لقمان: ٢٠) ... وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبَيْنِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ (البراهيم: ٣٣) ... هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْحَيَاةَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ... (فاطر: ٣٩) ... الْقُرْآنُ اللَّهُ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ ... (الحج: ٦٥)

¹⁸Allah has made what is in the heavens and on the earth subservient to you (31:20)... He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon, predetermined in their orbits, and the day and night (14:33)... It is Allah Who made you His vicegerents on earth (35:39)... Can you not see that Allah has made all that is on earth subservient to you? (22:65).

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِنَ اللَّهِ ... (المائدة: ٣٨) ... وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُلُوبَهُمْ ظَلَمُوا ... (العدن: ٤٤) ... وَلِكُلِّ هُمْزٍ لُحْمَةٌ ... (الزمر: ٣١) ... أَرَأَيْتَ ... (الماعون: ٣-١)

¹⁹As to the thieves, whether male or female, cut off their hands for punishment due in return for their offence against Allah (5:38)... Nor were we of those who fed the indigent (74:44)... Woe to the scandal-makers and backbiters, among whom stand the collector and hoarder of wealth, thinking that that would make him immortal (104:1-3)... Will you consider the denier of all religion? That is the person who pushes away the orphan, who does not enjoin the feeding of the destitute (107:1-3).

tatious consumption.²⁰ Islamic culture is incompatible with any of these. Not poverty or want, but contentment is what the refined Muslim ought to have and show, expressing his satisfaction with what God has provided.

Fourth, Islam demands of man to search for and understand the patterns of God in nature, not merely those which constitute the natural sciences, but equally those which constitute nature's general order and beauty. The fact that nature is God's handiwork, His plan and design, the actualization of His will, casts upon it a halo of dignity. It must not be abused or raped or exploited, though it is subject to the usufruct of men. Sensitivity to nature and tender care given to it as garden or forest, river or mountain, is in accord with the divine purpose.

... وَلَا تُبْذِرْ بَذِيرًا (الإسراء: ٢٦) إِنَّ الْمُبْذِرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا (الإسراء: ٢٧)
وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ (الإسراء: ٢٩) ... وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُسْرِفِينَ (الأنعام: ١٤١)

²⁰Do not squander your wealth away (17:26)... Squanderers are the devil's kin, doomed to the eternal fire with him for his disobedience to Allah (17:27). Be not spendthrifts. Allah loves not the spendthrifts (6:141).