

## **Summary: The Rise and Progress of Islamic Scientific Tradition**

In his lecture, Prof. Dr. Alparslan Acikgenç provided a succinct discussion that is broad in its approach, enabling a wider reception by various strata of the public. He used the analogy of the painter to elucidate the methodology that a scientist employs in scientific investigations. Just as the painter adopts a certain perspective to view and express his subject artistically, the scientist adopts a unique perspective or worldview in the course of an experiment or in forming hypotheses and theories. Yet, the scientist is necessarily limited in his/her method of investigation by his/her scientific training, knowledge tradition and other personal attributes and this brings about a specialized perspective called the “scientific conceptual scheme”. Similarly an artist is bound by the limit of space, be it the horizon or the two-dimensional depths of expression within which he/she expresses his/her framework of thought. The scientist too operates within a certain framework. And the procedures and processes he/she undertake depends on his/her philosophy of knowledge or epistemology, which in turn, depends on the nature of science; its subject matter, its method, theories and accumulated knowledge and the scientific consciousness of the social milieu. The emergence of a scientific tradition within a Muslim society begins with a scientific consciousness that is evident from its method of science, its theories of natural law as well as its body of accumulated knowledge. From this, the disciplinary stage emerges, wherein the scientists become aware of the specialized nature of their subject matter and the major players in their scientific niche. Only then, will this consciousness results in them naming their subject matter. Prof Acikgenç asserts that his definition of science encompasses three dimensions of human

experiences, namely epistemology (philosophy of knowledge), sociology (community aspect) and history (tradition aspect). Thus, his definition of

“A scientific tradition is the totality of all customs, mores, attitudes and ritual beliefs which arise through the regular performance of certain behaviors of the members of a group of scientists or scholars that leave a mental conception of those behaviors attributed collectively to that community of scientists.”

According to Prof. Acikgenç, science is a universal endeavor. Each scientist brings his/her worldview into the lab in order to be more objective. As ludicrous as it may sound to the majority of modern scientists, Prof. Acikgenç stated that to be objective is to be sincere.

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