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**BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN
ISLAM AND THE WEST:
A RECONCILIATION APPROACH**

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last two centuries, Western influence on the Muslim world became dominant and covered all facets of Muslim life; political, military, economic and intellectual. There are many studies that have produced a wealth of information regarding these influences. In the present work, therefore, the author tries to discuss how Muslims respond effectively to the influence posed by the West. There have been various responses formulated over the past century. The responses, in fact, may be considered as one of the characteristics of Islam as a religion that has always shown awareness of contemporary intellectual issues.

THREE MAJOR RESPONSES TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE WEST

In general, Muslim responses to the influence of the West can be divided into three types. All of them differ in their intent and attitudes.

i) Absolute Rejection of the West

The idea of absolute rejection of the West has been proposed by some of the conservative or traditionalist Muslim thinkers. They denied all the Western values which they saw as the root cause of all troubles. For them, any form of cooperation with the West or adaptation of its culture is betrayal and surrender. In this sense, they advocated a policy of cultural isolation. This group consists of many of the learned scholars