
Discourses on the Relation of Science and Religion: An Islamic Paradigm of Education *

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Abstract:

*It is an observable fact that modern education has brought forth magnificent advancements in human life but not without problems. Many scholars and practitioners of education have lamented the byproduct, if not the direct result, of the modern education. Pitirim Aleksandrovich Sorokin of Harvard University terms this byproduct as "crisis" in his *The Crisis of Our Age* (1941). Likewise, Rene Guenon in his *Crisis of the Modern World* (1942). Seyyed Hossein Nasr conceives it as "plight" in his *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man* (1975). Whilst another Harvard scholar, Harry R. Lewis, former dean of Harvard College, in his *Excellence without a Soul* (2006), astonishingly questions the future of liberal education: "Does liberal education have a future?" Hence, this paper attempts, firstly, to address the very issue of liberalism and secularism as the *raison d'être* of modern education, which has ended up in the dichotomy of knowledge, i.e. scientific and dogmatic. Secondly, it shall highlight the discourses among the scholars on the relation of science and religion. And, finally, it shall discuss an Islamic paradigm of education proposed by Muslim scholars as an alternative solution.*

* This paper was originally presented in Asian University President Forum (AUPF) 2017: *Innovation & Foresight: Education Solution for a Better World*, held in Manila, Philippines, 24-26 October 2017.

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Key words: epistemology, scientific truth, religious truth, integration, integralism, secular education, liberal education, Islamization of knowledge

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

So far, the intellectuals among Muslims in general seem to feel, out of their own subjectivity, that the problem of the “humanitarian crisis”, plagues the modern human race entirely, which has been in fact caused by secularism and the process of secularization, is the subject of concern and resentment by the Muslims only. Similarly, it seems that the same feeling also occurs among non-Muslims *vis-à-vis* the problem. Although the nature of the ideas, the theses or models proposed by many from both groups in order to address the problem clearly reveals a serious effort to base them on cross-religious and cross-cultural, or even trans-religious and trans-cultural arguments, it seems that each still struggles within its own sphere and almost without trying to look into that which its neighbor has done and been doing in this regard. This phenomenon is very interesting to observe and explore more deeper.

The more intense this phenomenon is observed, by deeply exploring the topics addressed in the related discourses and literature, it is increasingly being found the flurries of thought, ideas, theses, theories, models, typologies, categorizations, paradigms as well as valuable information and other astonishing data. Out of these many that have been introduced along this line, several points have become commonly agreed upon. The point which is really interesting is that almost everyone agrees to direct the allegations to secularism as the main source of disaster and humanitarian catastrophe in this modern era. Departing from the

identification of this problem, then, the efforts to search for a solution began to be initiated and thriving.

It should be emphasized here that in the beginning of this early endeavors emerged in the Islamic world as an attempt to liberate and awaken the people from a series of humanitarian calamities (poverty, ignorance, backwardness in all fields, and colonization). At least as early as the beginning of the 20th century, this effort has begun to reveal its identity. As a pioneer in this early effort, it is necessary to be credited to the reform movement of Islamic thought (*al-Islāh*) led by Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1838-1897) through his magazine *al-Urwat al-Wuthqā*,¹ and intellectually substantiated by Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) with his “reconstruction” paradigm unfolded in his lecture series in Madras, Hyderabad and Aligarh in 1928-1929, and then published in 1930 under the title of *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.²

Then in the early forties, the following effort was carried out by a great sociologist from Harvard University, United States of America, named Pitirim Aleksandrovich Sorokin (1889-1968), by introducing a model of “Integralism” through his book *The Crisis of Our Age*.³ The following year, 1942, Rene Guenon, through his book *Crisis of the Modern World*, attempted to propose a thesis “*scientia sacra*” through integration of science with “tradition” to overcome the calamity and crisis of the modern world.⁴

During the next two decades, i.e., fifties and sixties, there seems to be no significant idea in this field. It was not until the late seventies that discursive and critical ideas in this field began to flourish again, and especially among Muslim

¹ Magazine *al-Urwat al-Wuthqā* published by Jamaluddin al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh. The first volume was published on 13 Maret 1884 M. / 15 J. Ula 1301 H.

² Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Karpur Art Print Works, 1930). Oxford edition published in 1934 with the addition of the last chapter “Is Religion Possible?”.

³ Pitirim Aleksandrovich Sorokin, *The Crisis of Our Age* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1941, reprinted in 1945).

⁴ Rene Guenon, *Crisis of the Modern World* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 1942, reprinted in 1981).

intellectuals. Perhaps one of the main factors in the crystallization of this concern is the “Makkah Manifesto 1977” declared at the International Conference on Islamic Education in Makkah in 1977. Subsequently, concepts and ideas of the Islamization of Knowledge have been concocted and formulated intensely in a series of workshop, seminar and conferences, and simultaneously in almost all the Muslim world. Institutions of learning, research, and higher education that bear the vision and mission of “Islamization of Knowledge” also emerged. The two prominent figures in this movement deserve special appreciation, without belittling (let alone denying) the important contributions of the others. They are Prof. Dr. Syed Muhammad Naqib Al-Attas with his Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) and the late Prof. Dr. Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi with his International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT). Two international Islamic universities, namely International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI, Pakistan) and International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), are also specifically established in order to foster the process of “Islamization of Knowledge” systematically.

Most Muslim figures and intellectuals agree widely to use the term, or even the jargon, “Islamization of Knowledge” (*Aslamat al-Ma'rifah*) or simply “Islamization” as to branding this intellectual movement by always adhering to the spirit of *işlāh*, *tajdīd* and/or reconstruction that has been echoed by earlier generations. While some of them, for some reasons, prefer to use “Islamicization” (*Islāmiyyat al-Ma'rifah*), and the others to use *al-Takāmul al-Ma'rifī*, and still some others *al-Ta'şīl al-Islāmī*, etc.

Meanwhile, still within the Islamic circle Prof. Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr came up with his significant contribution to the discourse which is actually an articulation and further exposition of the “traditionalism” paradigm introduced by his

“Master”, Rene Guenon,⁵ mentioned above. Nasr explicated this paradigm in his *magnum opus* book, entitled *Knowledge and the Sacred*,⁶ which was originally a series of lectures he delivered as his Gifford Lectures at Edinburg in 1981.

The period of the nineties until the turn of the 21st century and the first decade of it witnessed a remarkable development in this field. What is interesting is that in this period, the contribution in the discourse is not only monopolized by Muslim intellectuals. Non-Muslims, and Western scholars in particular, are also keen on discussing the topic of the relationship between science and religion. Even according to bibliographic study by Ian G. Barbour, during the decade of nineties of 20th century alone there was no less than 210 books per year published in this topic. Although most of the authors of these books are inclined to the school of “Integralism” or “integration” and promote it, but only few of them become prominent and shortlisted. And in the shortlist are Ian G. Barbour as the first and Ken Wilber as the second.

Barbour elucidates his theory of “integration” eloquently in the series of his prestigious lectures,⁷ as Seyyed Hossein

⁵ In some of his work, Seyyed Hossein Nasr calls Rene Guenon, together with Ananda Coomaraswamy and Frithjof Schuon as “The Masters”. Compare with the analysis and observation from Adnan Aslan in his book, *Religious Pluralism in Christian and Islamic Philosophy: The Thought of John Hick and Seyyed Hossein Nasr* (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998), p. 43.

⁶ Nasr is a prolific writer and has an exceptional capability to articulate brilliantly the concept, epistemology, and paradigm of “sacralization” and “traditionalism”, which is not only complex but also against the modernization. Some of his works which especially discuss about this matter: Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, [1981] 1988); ----, “The *Philosophia Perennis* and the Study of Religion,” in Frank Whaling (ed.), *The World’s Religious Traditions: Current Perspectives in Religious Studies*, vol. I (Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton, 1983), pp. 181 – 200; ----, *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, [1988] 2nd impression 1994); ----, *The Need for a Sacred Science* (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1993); ----, *Ideals and Realities of Islam* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 1994).

⁷ Apparently, this Gifford lectures was developed from his article, “Ways of Rethinking Science and Theology,” previously published in Robert Russell *et al.*, (ed.), *Physics, Philosophy, and Theology* (Vatican City State: Vatican Observatory, 1988), pp. 21-48. And this typology is the result of Barbour’s long reasoning and contemplation which has appeared in his first work published in 1966 [see: Ian G. Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1966)]. Almost all of his works including books and articles, are dedicated to discuss about this subject matter.

Nasr had done before, as *Gifford lectures* from 1989 to 1990, at the University of Aberdeen, Edinburg. In these lectures, which were published as a book entitled *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*,⁸ and later on sharpened and refined again in another book, *When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers, or Partners?*,⁹ Barbour introduces and explores his theory of “relations of science and religion” into four typologies: (i) Conflict (scientific materialism, biblical literalism); (ii) Independence (contrasting methods, differing languages); (iii) Dialogue (boundary questions, methodological parallels); and (iv) Integration (natural theology, theology of nature, systematic synthesis).

There are actually some typologies of science and religion relationship advanced by a number of Western scholars, such as Arthur Peacocke (1981) with eight typologies; Nancey Murphy (1985) with five typologies; John Haughts (1995) with four typologies similar to Barbour’s; Willem B. Drees (1996) with nine typologies; and Ted Peters (1998) with eight typologies.¹⁰ But among these typologies, only Barbour typology is probably the leading and widely accepted. Though Barbour seemingly exposes and elaborates merely his four typologies on the relation of science and religion, one thing is clear that through a slightly critical reading of his exposition one definitely would find it compelling that Barbour basically, to borrow his own expression, has a great “sympathy” with the latter two typologies, i.e. “Dialogue” and “Integration”, as the most reasonable models in the issue of the relation of science and religion. In this regard he succinctly states, “It will be evident that my own sympathies lie with Dialogue and Integration (especially a theology of nature and cautious use of

⁸ Ian G. Barbour, *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997).

⁹ Ian G. Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers, or Partners?* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000).

¹⁰ See more on: Robert J. Russell, “Dialogue, Science and Theology.” <<http://www.disf.org/en/Voci/51.asp>> accessed on 27 March 2012.

process philosophy), but I hope that I have accurately described all four positions.”¹¹

Meanwhile, more or less the same spirit is also expounded by Ken Wilber with his “Integral Theory”. This theory, according to him, is “*the theory of everything*” highly projected to settle any problems and any conflicts. Having identified the main character of Wilber’s theory in this way, one would easily understand the reason why his books, in which his theory being, in fact, well-grounded and articulated, were given a versatile title after “*everything*”: (i) *A Theory of Everything — An Integral Vision for Politics, Science, and Spirituality*;¹² (ii) *A Brief History of Everything*;¹³ and (iii) *The Integral Vision: A Very Short Introduction to the Revolutionary Integral Approach to Life, God, the Universe, and Everything*.¹⁴

As for the issue related to the relation of science and religion, Wilber spells it out in his co-authored article with Sean Esbjörn-Hargens entitled “Toward a Comprehensive Integration of Science and Religion: A Post-Metaphysical Approach,” published as Chapter 31 in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*.¹⁵

Conceptual Epistemic Analysis

The problem of the relation of science and religion or of reason and revelation is a common concern among the scholars, intellectuals, and philosophers from different religious, traditional and cultural backgrounds, though the way to address this problem, along with the solutions offered, has been

¹¹ Ian G. Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion*, pp. 3-4.

¹² Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything—An Integral Vision for Politics, Science, and Spirituality* (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 2001).

¹³ Ken Wilber, *A Brief History of Everything* (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 2000).

¹⁴ Ken Wilber, *The Integral Vision: A Very Short Introduction to the Revolutionary Integral Approach to Life, God, the Universe, and Everything* (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 2007).

¹⁵ Sean Esbjörn-Hargens and Ken Wilber, “Toward a Comprehensive Integration of Science and Religion: A Post-Metaphysical Approach,” in Philip Clayton and Zachary Simpson, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 523-46.

divergent and multi-faceted which obviously can be seen from the foregoing section. If analyzed carefully, the diversity of approaches and solutions can be simplified, without being over-simplificative, into two main models: “Islamization” and “Integration”.

For some, especially Muslims, these two models may be considered differently at the level of terminology only, while the spirit and essence are the same. This common impression is clearly seen from the discourses that have been taking place in several Islamic universities in several Muslim countries like Indonesia, whereby the “Integration” is set up then as its vision. Regardless of the “practicality” reasons (or even particular ideological background) which is commonly used as justification, the underlying view of such a policy, in the opinion of the author, clearly reflects “over-simplification,” “indifference,” or even “intellectual laziness”. Because the model or typology of “Integration” is actually born into being through so many stages of the conception process which is quite complicated, and does not appear in the vacuum or out of sudden. Failure to understand this process will automatically lead to over simplification, which can potentially cause a very misleading.

This model or typology of the relation of science and religion has been deliberately and seriously discussed among researchers and scholars in the Western world, as mentioned above. The emergence and development of this issue is more due to the problem of a philosophical assumption or hypothesis about the “truth dichotomy” of one and the same object, i.e, the existence of “two truths” which are not only different but even opposite to each other, namely “scientific truth” and “religious truth”. That is, the underlying worldview that molded and configured the concept or model or typology of “Integration”, is a purely “secular worldview.” Departing from this hypothesis, then, some Western intellectuals try to bridge the large gap that has separated between the “two truths”. This gap is often

perceived as a “crisis” (crisis) by Sorokin and Guenon, or which is called “plight” by Nasr. So, it is this gap that constitutes the subject matter complained by them and desperately needs a solution.

Therefore, after exploring all possible conceivable means of settlement, they tried to introduce a sort of “integration” model being the only option of solution as the most rational. Sorokin, for example, offered an “integral theory of truth and reality” that seeks to integrate “truth of the senses, truth of reason, and truth of faith”; Nasr and his Master, Guenon, offered a “desecularization” or “sacralization” paradigm that seeks to integrate “knowledge” and “sacred tradition”; Barbour proposed an “integration” model that attempted to synthesize “religion and science”; while Wilber offered a theory of “integralism” which he says is a “post-metaphysical (post-modernist?) approach. According to him, this approach “provides a way of truly integrating the many aspects and understanding of science with the many facets and perspectives of religion. And it does this in a way that speaks to traditional, modern, and post-modern understanding of both science and religion.”¹⁶

The last model offered in this regard is quite interesting, not because of its holistic and all-sweeping claim, but precisely because of its high sensitivity and awareness of the complicated epistemological problems. In initiating this theory, Wilber and Esbjörn-Hargens tried to raise this problem with a question: “Which Science? Which Religion?”¹⁷ which is indeed a fundamental conceptual problem that the integralists must answer first. For this matter is a purely logical question which would arise itself automatically when science and religion are to be integrated. This is due the fact that empirically and historically there are many different sciences and variegated religions, each of which has its own characteristics, which

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 524.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 523.

cannot be reduced or relativized or denied. Indeed, it is to be admitted that in addition to Wilber, as a matter of fact those who promoted the above-mentioned integration models are all aware of this fact, as reflected implicitly in their respective elucidations. Even Seyyed Hossein Nasr may be considered almost as firmly as Wilber in revealing this matter, where Nasr's perennialism itself is meant as an attempt or effort to do just to all religions. Interestingly, the Wilber's and Esbjörn-Hargens' Integral Theory also share a spirit similar to perennialism, as they point out, "We believe an Integral approach can sort through the different definitions and understandings of 'science' and 'religion' and *honour the partial truth claims* made by every perspective in this crucial exploration."¹⁸ The difference between the two lies in the approach used by each. The perennialists use a "traditionalist" or "religious" approach; while the integralists use "post-metaphysical", or full-fledged post-modernist approach.

Whatever the difference is there, in essence, this "integration" model ultimately leads to the advocacy of "Religious Pluralism" agenda, which will create new problems, instead of offering solutions.¹⁹ This is the first. Then the second, as clearly seen above, the emergence of the model or typology of "integration" is based more on secularism in general, hence the problems that has been created by this school is impossible to be resolved by itself. This is just like the saying "to do sweeping the ground using dirty brooms." In other words, the proposal to resolve the problem of the relation of "science and religion" by applying this "integration" model would lead eventually to the deadlock or stalemate. This is true especially when we consider some complaints (testimony?) or high concerns spelt out by

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 524.

¹⁹ Cf. Anis Malik Thoha, "Urgency of the Integration of Religion and Knowledge for the Development of Muslim Character," (the paper was presented in *the International Seminar on Islamic Higher Education: Model and Experiences in Muslim World*, organized by University of Ibnu Khaldun, Bogor, Indonesia, 18-19 Mei 2011). About "Religious Pluralism" furthermore, read: Anis Malik Thoha, *Tren Pluralisme Agama: Tinjauan Kritis* (Jakarta: Perspektif [Gema Insani Press], 2005).

practitioners of higher education in Western universities themselves, such as prof. Harry R. Lewis, a Harvard professor for thirty two years, who served as dean of Harvard College for eight years (1995-2003). In his book, *Excellence Without a Soul: Does Liberal Education have a Future?*, which is regarded by some as the most important work on education published at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Lewis expressed his concern, based on his living experience as a lecturer as well as a decision and/or educational policy maker, about the modern Western educational system. This educational system, he said, has committed a great mistake (moral errors) that erode the moral-spiritual side of man. This fallacy is clearly reflected in the loss of a serious moral vision, resulting in a “soulless education”. Because the education system has been designed primarily to develop human resources (HR) as a means to achieve national development goals in a narrow sense, i.e. economic growth, disregarding totally the moral duty of education to educate students into good human beings, as he puts it succinctly “Harvard articulates no ideals of what it means to be a good person, as opposed to a well person.”²⁰ Actually, such auto-criticisms and self-complaint have been made by some Western scholars much earlier such as Sir Walter Moberly in his book, *The Crisis in the University*, published in 1949;²¹ and Christopher Dawson in his book *The Crisis of Western Education*, in 1961.²²

Nevertheless, it seems that they did not specifically try to really uncover the main source of this crisis. But at least, Paul C. Vitz, a Professor Emeritus of Psychology at New York University, observes that in the last few decades, has witnessed three great modern ideologies showing signs of saturation and bankruptcy. In his deep observations, the ideology of secularism

²⁰ Harry R. Lewis. *Excellence without a Soul: Does Liberal Education Have a Future?* (NewYork: Public Affairs, 2006), p. 160.

²¹ Sir Walter Moberly, *The Crisis in the University* (London: SCM Press, 1949).

²² Christopher Dawson, *The Crisis of Western Education* (NewYork: Sheed and Ward, 1961).

ranks the first among all three.²³ Interestingly, nay surprisingly, the fall of this ideology was actually also admitted and witnessed by many sociologists of religion, social scientists, historians and theologians. Two figures of them deserve to be mentioned in this regard: Peter L. Berger, an eminent American sociologist of religion and Professor Emeritus of Religion, Sociology, and Theology and Director of the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs at Boston University; and Harvey Cox, a prominent American theologian who served as the Hollis Professor of Divinity at the Harvard Divinity School. Now, Peter L. Berger, who assumed firmly in the fifties and sixties that the secularization theory was correct and unavoidable due to modernization process, found himself compelled to change his previous view after the data in the field obviously do not support it. To the contrary, he ultimately argues that the secularization theory is wrong and that the world is as religious as ever, and in fact, in some areas of the world, is more so now than it was before.²⁴

The theory (of secularization) is wrong. Now, to conclude that the theory is wrong is the beginning of a new process of thinking. I came to the conclusion some years ago that to replace secularization theory—to explain religion in the modern world—we need the theory of pluralism. Modernity does not necessarily produce secularity. It necessarily produces pluralism, by which I mean the coexistence in the same society of different worldviews and value systems.²⁵

Similarly, Harvey Cox in the late sixties and seventies of the last century, was so convinced, very adamant and optimistic about the victory of secularization. Yet by the end of the

²³ Paul C. Vitz, "Excellence without a Soul: A Response to the Problem of the Modern University" (15-minute talk given on Oct. 30, 2006 at Harvard University). (http://christianpsych.org/wp_scp/2009/08/24/excellence-without-a-soul-a-response-to-the-problem-of-the-modern-university/).

²⁴ A Conversation with Peter L. Berger "How My Views Have Changed" by Gregor Thuswaldner, published in Lent 2014 (Vol. LXXVII, No. 3, pp. 16-21). http://thecresset.org/2014/Lent/Thuswaldner_L14.html.

²⁵ Ibid.

nineties, this conviction had evaporated and eventually he had to revise his secularization thesis he advocated earlier in his book *The Secular City*. Cox was so giddy and puzzled at the fact that, stating: “religion has not only survived, it has even thrived in some of the most modernized areas of the world. There is every indication that in many places it has even continued to stimulate the modernization process.” He then wondered, “How are we to explain the dramatic failure of the secularization thesis as an explanatory paradigm for religion, culture, and politics in the twentieth century? Where does that leave us as theologians of culture at the beginning of twenty-first?”²⁶ This is an obvious and *straightforward* admission that the “secularization thesis” is inadequate or even fail as a religious interpretation paradigm. But oddly enough that even in such an indefensible position as being “cornered,” both Berger and Cox still have the reserve and been skeptic as to reverse the “secularization” diametrically into “re-sacralization” (de-secularization). Alternatively, he offers a “transformation of religion” thesis, as he asserts in his tentative conclusion, “what we are witnessing is neither secularization nor its opposite (“re-sacralization”). Rather, it is a fascinating transformation of religion.”²⁷ Given the fact that this will serve as a highly apologetic defensive trait, both Berger and Cox here are well aware of the logical implications of the re-sacralization thesis, which would accordingly mean the absolute necessity of unraveling the concept of the West and Western *weltanschauung* in total. In mathematical calculations, this thesis is not only next to impossibility (something to negate itself), but also its “cost” is too expensive (suicide).

In a nutshell, the models on the issue of the relation of science and religion having “integration” as their motto, philosophically leave a series of fundamental epistemic

²⁶ Harvey Cox, “The Myth of the Twentieth Century: The Rise and Fall of ‘Secularization,’” in Gregory Baum (ed.), *The Twentieth Century: A Theological Overview* (New York: Orbis Books, 1999), p. 136.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

questions that are so problematic as clearly discussed above. Even those scholars who attempted to offer “de-secularization” concept would eventually run aground and end up in absurdity. The main factor contributing to this is the absence of defining criterion for the relation; all elements are treated equally, not only between science and religion, but even between science with other sciences internally on the one hand, and one religion with other religions on the other. Although it should be emphasized here that there is some kind of effort among the integralists to make one particular religion, Christianity, as a model of reference, as Ian Barbour does for example. In the introduction of his book, *Religion and Science*, Barbour states: In looking at these five challenges — science as a method, a new view of nature, a new context for theology, religious pluralism, and threats to the environment — my goals are to explore the place of religion in an age of science and *to present an interpretation of Christianity* that is responsive both to the biblical faith and to contemporary science.²⁸

He reemphasizes this again in his other book, *When Science Meets Religion*:

I will be *focusing primarily on the Christian tradition*, in which reflection on science has been far more extensive than in other traditions, both historically and today. It is indeed important to recognize the particularity of each religious tradition and to avoid the risk of superficial generalities in trying to include too much in a brief account. I believe that examples of each of the four categories can be found in the major world religions —especially in the monotheistic ones (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam), but also in Hinduism and Buddhism. However, only a few such examples are included here. My attempt to categorize may itself reflect a Western bias. Authors from Eastern traditions might try to merge diverse viewpoints and to seek common ground among them.²⁹

²⁸ Barbour, *Religion and Science*, p. xv.

²⁹ Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion*, pp. 5-6. (emphasis added).

Of course, this kind of effort deserves a duly appreciation. Yet Barbour's claim to emphasize on his religion, Christianity, as the principle of, and the ground for interpretation in setting up his model and paradigm, is still found by some reviewer of his book doubtful.³⁰ In addition, those who are familiar with this kind of approach will easily discover and identify the framework of Barbour's thinking orientation or worldview that is responsible for molding of his Integrity paradigm. Moreover, he himself has made it rather explicit in the quotation above somehow about his awareness of “bias” (i.e, particularly “posmo bias” and “secular”), which ultimately leads his model and paradigm to the same fate of the other models of “Integrations”.

Islamization Paradigm

Unlike those models and paradigms discussed above, the case of “Islamization” paradigm is completely different. Compared to the existing models and paradigms on the relation of science and religion, “Islamization” is evidently formidable and tenable both theoretically and empirically. The epistemic conceptual questions that plague the “Integration” paradigm above are hardly applied to “Islamization”, since the defining criterion is very clear, namely Islam. Thus, the question “Which religion?” raised by Wilber and Esbjörn-Hargens above, and the likes, shall be irrelevant here. Likewise, the “epistemological gap”, which is by nature so dichotomist being assumed above, will be automatically settled down and disappeared perfectly. Perhaps it sounds apologetic and too absolutist. But to be honest, if by apology we mean defending the truth of a worldview, ideology, tradition, value system, or religious teachings through systematic argumentation and discourse, then wittingly or unwittingly the same thing does occur with other traditions or

³⁰ See for example a *review* written by Howard Taylor for the book of *When Science Meets Religion*, on the following link:<http://www.amazon.com/When-Science-Meets-Religion-Strangers/dp/006060381X>.

“value systems” exactly. The difference is only on the matter of whether it occurs transparently or otherwise covertly. Islam has always been transparent as a value system and/or religion, while modern ideologies, particularly secularism that has obviously molded Western worldview and supplied it with modern norms and values holistically seems reluctant to admit itself as a religion. Yet, these modern ideologies have evidently competed with the living religions and took over the role and function of formal religion in total (*kāffah*). However, the subject matter is very subtle and delicate, indeed. So much so that it is not easily recognized or realized by its own adherents who are even well-educated and very rationalists.³¹ Especially the propagators and advocates of those ideologies used to cover up and expose them to the public in such a way that they are not religions and will never be expected to replace religions. And as a matter of fact, this perception has been widespread pervasively among the people, which thus leads some

³¹ One example of the living experience that the author himself witnessed in the *International Congress on Philosophy of Education: Philosophical Dimension of Educational Problems in Globalization Process* held in Ankara, Turkey, 6-8 March 2009, where he was invited as a speaker. There was an atheist Professor from Miami University, named Dr. Harvey Siegel. He asked a question innocently and “surprisingly” to the writer right after the writer finished his presentation: “Dr. Anis, I am an atheist. Am I religious?” This question was in response against the writer’s submission that the essence of religion is simply “a set of value” believed by its adherents to be the “ultimate truth”. Therefore the writer responded in affirmation. It seemed that to Siegel, and the secularist minds like him, once a person has denied the existence of god(s) or has become an atheist, he/she is no longer in a religious state. But it is noticeable that this does not necessarily mean at all that that is really detaching from all religions, so that the person is in the state of “religious detachment”, or that which Paul Tillich calls “religious indifference”. Because this state, in the final analysis, is but a “transitory stage”. As a matter of fact, it does not last longer than the moment the traditional religions have lost meaning and trust of their follower, while the new alternative has not consciously arisen yet. So, this state is conceivably very short, as Paul Tillich puts it:

...in the depth of technical creativity, as well as in the structure of the secular mind, there are religious elements which have come to the fore when the traditional religions have lost their power. Such elements are the desire for liberation from authoritarian bondage, passion for justice, scientific honesty, striving for a more fully developed humanity, and hope in a progressive transformation of society in a positive direction. Out of these elements which point back to older traditions the new quasi-religious systems have arisen and given new answers to the question of the meaning of life. (Paul Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 9.

philosophers and scholars forced to create new categorizations. Paul Tillich, for example, makes a categorization: (i) religion *proper*, for the “conventional” religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, etc.); and (ii) *quasi*-religion, for the modern ideologies (secularism, humanism, socialism, nationalism etc.).³² While Ninian Smart comes up with a classification: (i) religion; and (ii) semi-religion.³³ And John Hick introduces another categorization: (i) theistic religion; and (ii) non-theistic religions.³⁴

No matter how different is this categorization, one thing that needs to ponder and be underlined is that the existence of the modern ideologies which has transformed and metamorphosed into the “alternative religions” slowly began to be more widely recognized, perceived and acknowledged among those experts dealing with religion academically and intellectually. Evidently this further proves the absurdity of the “Integration” model, which from the appearance it seems as if to reveal the absence of partisanship, preference, of a particular religion or value system, but actually after being skinned-up layer by layer, and traced critically, it discloses the real identity of its underlying value system which is anatomically no different from the religion *proper*. It is actually due to this

³² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (London: Nisbet and Company, 1953); as well as his work *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1963); as well as his book *The Encounter of Religions and Quasi-Religions*, ed. Terence Thomas (Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990). Departing from Paul Tillich's quasi-religion theory, John E. Smith tries to examine and review it in more detail through his sharp analysis of Humanism, Marxism and Nationalism. See, John E. Smith, *Quasi- Religions: Humanism, Marxism and Nationalism* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1994). Another writer, Francis Ching-Wah Yip, also developed this Tillich theory by taking Capitalism as the focus of his study. See, Francis Ching-Wah Yip, *Capitalism as Religion? A Study of Paul Tillich's Interpretation of Modernity* (Massachusetts: Harvard Theological Studies, 2010).

³³ Ninian Smart, *Dimensions of the Sacred: An Anatomy of the World's Beliefs* (London: Harper Collins, 1996).

³⁴ John Hick discussed the theological and non-theistic religions in the opening of his work, lifted from his anthology lecture “Gifford Lecture” at Edinburg University 1986-1987. See: John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent* (London: Macmillan, [1989] reprinted 1991), pp. 3-5.

reason, Tillich prefers to use the prefix “quasi”, instead of “pseudo” or “semi”.³⁵

This epistemic conceptual aspect frequently escapes the attention of most of us, especially those who have been dazzled and obsessed by certain thoughts and ideologies, so that their reason and critical mind become dull, and in turn, it fails to detect and sense a problem. This is further exacerbated by the highly acute disorientation and inferiority complexes caused by “colonizableness” mentality as brilliantly theorized by Ibn Khaldun in his *Muqaddimah*³⁶ –a kind of acute and chronic mental disease that would cripple and paralyze the human faculty and intellect whereby a person won’t be able to stand uprightly and to recognize his/her own self-identity.

At the same time, there are among Muslims, those who, due to the superficial understanding of “Islamization” or other causes, try to find the argument of the Qur'an and *ḥadīth* selectively to simply impress theologically and religiously as if that which is popularly called “universal values” is really Islamic, without the need to decipher its basic concepts first whether or not these “values” are actually compatible with the Qur'anic worldview? Such an effort of “*ayatization*” and “*hadithization*” as this kind consciously or unconsciously, has destroyed the scholarship, the concept, and Islam itself, and thus it is misleading.

In short, these facts further confirm the fundamental problem plaguing the Muslims today is the problem of “knowledge” which is more “epistemic conceptual” rather than political, economic, or social. That is the integral (*tawḥīdic*) knowledge or worldview or *weltanschauung* that can furnish explanation comprehensively about the great realities in this existence, which includes the life, the universe, the man and the God, and the position and the interrelationship of each of

³⁵ Tillich, *ERQR*, p.6 4; and his *CEWR*, p. 4.

³⁶ Ibn Khaldūn berkata: "المغلوب مولع دائم بالافتداء بالغالب" (The defeated mind is always obsessed and fond of emulating the defeating power). See Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, edit. by Hajar ‘Āṣī (Beirut: Dār wa Maktabah al-Hilāl, 1983), p. 101.

these great realities with one another.³⁷ Through the *tawhīdic* knowledge and framework about these great realities all concepts related to the life of a Muslim, individually or collectively, can be formed, built and constructed holistically and harmoniously.

As such, “Islamization” must be understood as a process of change or reconstruction of the philosophy of the reality and its underlying value system according to Islamic teachings and refers to the prophetic agenda, which successively and respectively became the main mission of the Prophets and Messengers throughout the ages, and has then been taken over and continued by their legitimate heirs, i.e, ‘*Ulamā*’ (scholars – those who are given knowledge), as stated in the *ḥadīth* of the great Prophet Muhammad SAW: “The ‘*Ulamā*’ are the legitimate heirs of the Prophets (in terms of preserving of “science” and the task of “delivering of science”).³⁸ This *ḥadīth* implicitly gives the ‘*Ulamā*’ the credential as the legitimate holder of “knowledge authority”. By ‘*Ulamā*’ here is certainly meant those scholars whose knowledge follows and imitates the knowledge, teaching and *sunnah* (tradition) of the Prophets and Messengers, and not to deny, deviate and contravene or breach them by following and emulating, instead, the traces of the non-Muslims and those who are hostile and blasphemous against the Prophets and Messengers, or those who are generally termed by Imam al-Ghazālī and other Salaf as ‘*Ulamā*’ *al-Sū*’ (corrupt scholars). The salient features of the ‘*Ulamā*’, the heirs of the Prophets and Messengers, are those who by their knowledge come closer and become more *khashyah* or fearful to Allah SWT, as clearly stated in the Qur'an: “From among His servants, only those who have knowledge are the real fearful to Allah.”³⁹

³⁷ For further detail about *Tawhīdic* worldview, kindly refer: Isma'il R. al-Faruqi, *Al-Tawhīd: Its Implications for Thought and Life* (Herndon, Virginia: IIIT, 1982).

³⁸ Abū Dāwūd.

³⁹ Surah Fāṭir: 28

It is really unfortunate that this concept of '*ulamā'* is widely misunderstood. Even among Muslims themselves, most of them are still confused and do not understand about the concept rightly. Accordingly, there should not be any surprise if there are some who clearly do not follow, nay go against!, the role model of the Prophets and, hence, do not deserve to be called '*ulamā'*, yet the people still consider them '*ulamā'*. So the point is, this problem of knowledge among the Muslims is so chronic and acute. This is the greatest challenge of Islam anywhere throughout the ages with different forms and manifestations. In the time of Prophet Muhammad, the manifestation of this challenge is known in the Qur'an, *Sunnah*, and history as *Jāhiliyyah*, which includes *mushrik* and *dahriyyah*. Later in the post-*nubuwwah* era this challenge was manifested in the thoughts of *al-Sūfasā'iyah*, the skeptical Neo-sophists (*al-lā adriyyah*, *al-Shukkāk*), *nihilist* (*al-'inādiyyah*), and liberal (*al-'indiyyah*). While in the modern era, this challenge is reincarnated in the relativist, liberal, secular, and postmodernist thoughts that all which converge and confluence into the idea of "shifting" or even "killing" and "death" of God, to replace His position with human. They, thus, feel free to regulate themselves (even to set up terms and condition for God!), making new laws, new rules, new values, etc. using names and terms which are apparently attractive and friendly.

Thus, the voices to blaspheming '*ulamā'*, the Prophet, and even God are getting stronger and louder. And this kind of blasphemy is done in Indonesia particularly by those who profess Islam, and at the Islamic campus, in very vulgar and demonstrative ways, "for the sake of and on behalf of freedom". This Islamic liberalization movement has grown strongly in the Islamic countries with the political and financial support of global powers almost unlimited. In his report in www.usnews.com, April 25, 2005, pertaining to the Islamic liberalization project in the Islamic world, David E. Kaplan gave it a surprising headline: "Hearts, Minds, and Dollars: In

an Unseen Front in the War on Terrorism, America is Spending Millions ... To Change the Very Face of Islam “. The target of this “silent operations” taking “war of ideas” as its battleground and at the cost of millions of dollars is very clear, i.e., “To Change the Face of Islam”. In other words, this liberalization of Islam wants to forge an entirely new Islam, and not the actual Islam.

Thus, the writer agrees with a philosopher of Christian theology, Paul Tillich, who insists that the common enemies of today's religions are modern ideologies such as Liberalism, Secularism, and Humanism, which he calls “quasi-religions”. Furthermore, Tillich said: “The dramatic character of the religions is produced by the attack of the quasi-religions on the religions proper, both theistic and non-theistic.”⁴⁰

Conclusion

Generally speaking, humankind today is confronting the existential problems as a result or byproduct of the modern epistemology and the modern system of education. It is the problem that would certainly lead to disrupt the very life if not properly taken care. Various efforts have been made by scholars and experts in order to pinpoint the prime cause of this problem. Most of them point directly to the weird relationship between science and religion in the modern era. In making effort to realize harmonious, sustainable and fruitful relationship between science and religion, experts and scientists have advanced some paradigm, typology, model or categorization. Out of the many theories and paradigms, “Integration” seems to be the most plausible and viable. However, based on epistemic conceptual analysis, it turns out that this paradigm leaves a number of epistemic problems that hardly be resolved entirely, as the question “which religion”

⁴⁰ Paul Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 8.

remains unanswered due to the fact of its pluralistic nature. By contrast, in light of the critical epistemic analysis and examination, the paradigm of “Islamization” is evidently more reliable and credible compared to its competitors, which thus makes itself suitable to become the preferable alternative model in the problem of the relation of science and religion, especially to Muslims. The paradigm of “Islamization” is able to assert itself without necessarily infringing unnecessary conceptual or practical problems. In addition, in the “Islamization” paradigm, the “integration” process is automatically accommodated, and not the other way around.