



The Necessity of Understanding the Cosmos, Nature and Man, as Well as the Unity of Knowledge, Faith and Ethics from the Worldview of the Qur'an: Implications on an International Islamic University

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Abstract

It is our considered view that if scientists, technologists, technocrats and scientific organizations, institutions including universities, were to continue to view the various natural and human phenomena from a naturalist, positivist, materialist, empiricist, modernist, agnostic or atheistic philosophical presuppositions – which are different branches of the main trunk of the secular worldview in the world today – then modern science as well as modern social sciences would continue to be one of the contributors to the grave crises of modern civilization. Therefore, we support any effort by non-Muslim scientists or scholars to promote a theistic or metaphysical worldview of reality, nature and human life which is based on the belief in a Single Living and Transcendent Creator, Master and Sustainer of all that exists. Therefore, the Godless worldviews or presuppositions in Western philosophies of science, such as atheism, naturalism, scientism, physicalism, materialism, empiricism, agnosticism, positivism, secular humanism, rationalism, skepticism, existentialism, and postmodernism are viewed by the worldview of the Qur'an as different forms of Falsehood (*al-batil*). The inseparability of faith, knowledge and good ethical conduct in the worldview of the Qur'an should be given serious attention by all the Believers, in particular the Muslim students, scholars, scientists, professionals, administrators, officers and workers in an Islamic university. As far as the medical faculties and hospitals are concerned, the observation of good medical ethics by all the staff and students is of the utmost importance as the disciplines taught in the faculties and the services rendered in an Islamic hospital contribute directly to the fulfilment of some of the most important higher objectives of the Divine Law or the "*maqasid al-shari'ah*", namely the preservation of life, the preservation of religion, the preservation of the intellect, the preservation of progeny and the preservation of wealth and property. All those objectives require the upholding of moral integrity, justice, and benevolence as the core of Islamic ethical values. In light of IIUM's mission of Islamization of Human Knowledge, Internationalisation and Comprehensive Excellence, the staff and the students of the university should be quite concerned about the international reputation of the institution. In our view the reputation of any Islamic university is to maintained not only through the achievement of academic excellence, but also in the attainment of the image of environmental and physical cleanliness, and the commitment to good governance, administrative and management efficiency, discipline, integrity, justice, fairness, objectivity, decorum, etiquette and respect for human beings irrespective of religion or ethnicity, transparency, compassion, diligence, accountability, collegiality, kindness and willingness to sacrifice money, resources and time for a higher public good (*maslahah*). The university leadership, administrators and staff should be highly sensitive to any acts of injustice, irregularity, disregard of rules and regulations, immorality, irresponsibility, complacency, duplicity, fraud, bribery, corruption, nepotism, cruelty to living creatures, wastage, extravagance, egotism, authoritarianism, and other manifestations of what the Qur'an calls *al-haram*

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(prohibited) *al-munkar* (objectionable, bad, evil, wrong), *al-zulm* (injustice, cruelty, oppression), *al-fasad* (corruption), *al-darr* (harmful, detrimental, noxious) *al-khiyanah* (betrayal of trust, treachery), *al-kibr* (arrogance) and *al-fitnah* (trial, temptation, intrigue). As far as the general public, the students, and industries dealing with IIUM are concerned, their expectations of an Islamic university or the

hospital in it are generally favourably disposed. Such positive expectations are presumably based on what they believe Islam has promised to deliver to the whole of humanity – all that represents *al-salam* (peace), *al-ma'ruf* (that which is agreeable, acceptable, right), *al-wasat* (justice, excellence, balanced, moderation), *al-khair* (goodness), *al-'adalah* and *al-qist* (justice and fairness), *al-manfa'ah* (beneficial, useful, advantageous), *al-birr* (righteousness), *al-ihsan* (beneficence, moral excellence), *al-salih* (righteous), *al-rahmah* (mercy), *al-rifq* (kindness), *al-tayyib* (good, wholesome, agreeable, friendly, pleasant, delightful) *al-jamal* (beauty), *al-hasanah* (good, wellbeing), *al-itqan* (thoroughness, exactitude, perfection) and everything else that would be embraced by the Prophetic mission of spreading "*rahmatan li al-'alamin*" (Divine grace and mercy to all the worlds). Bearing in mind such positive and lofty expectations from the "outside world" and from the "internal customers", it is to be expected that the Muslim leaders, managers, academics, officers, workers and staff of the different parts of the university would give a high premium to the maintenance of the holistic ethical culture that Islam advocates.

Keyword: *Cosmos, Nature, Man, Unity of Knowledge, Faith, Worldview and the Qur'an*

Abstrak

Pandangan kita terhadap jika saintis, ahli teknologi, teknokrat dan organisasi saintifik, institusi termasuk universiti, akan terus melihat pelbagai fenomena semula jadi dan manusia dari seorang naturalis, positivis, materialis, empiris, pendukung pemodenan, agnostik atau praandaian pemikiran ateis – merupakan cabangan yang berbeza dari akar utama pandangan dunia sekular di dunia hari ini - maka sains moden serta sains sosial moden akan terus menjadi salah satu penyumbang kepada krisis grava tamadun moden. Oleh itu, kami menyokong sebarang usaha oleh saintis atau sarjana yang bukan Islam untuk mempromosikan pandangan kehidupan teistik atau metafizik tentang realiti, alam dan kehidupan manusia yang berdasarkan kepercayaan dalam kehidupan tunggal dan penciptaan unggul, penguasai dan pengekalan dari semua yang wujud. Oleh itu, pandangan dunia yang tidak Bertuhan atau praandaian dalam falsafah sains Barat, seperti ateisme, naturalisme, saintis, fizikalisme, materialisme, empirisme, agnostisisme, positivisme, humanisme sekular, rasionalisme, skeptisisme, eksistensialisme, dan postmodernisme dilihat oleh pandangan hidup dari *Al-Qur'an* sebagai bentuk yang berbeza dari Kepalsuan (*al-batil*). Keabadian iman, pengetahuan dan kelakuan etika yang baik dalam pandangan hidup dari *Al-Qur'an* perlu diberi perhatian serius oleh semua orang yang beriman, khususnya para pelajar, ulama, saintis, profesional, pentadbir, pegawai dan pekerja Islam di dalam Universiti Islam Antarabangsa. Kefahaman fakulti perubatan dan hospital yang berkenaan, pemerhatian terhadap etika perubatan yang baik oleh semua kakitangan dan pelajar adalah sangat penting kerana disiplin yang diajar dalam fakulti dan perkhidmatan yang diberikan di hospital Islam menyumbang secara langsung untuk memenuhi beberapa objektif yang paling penting dalam Hukum ketuhanan atau "*maqasid al-shari'ah*", iaitu pemeliharaan dari segi hidup, agama, akal, keturunan dan kekayaan dan harta benda. Semua objektif tersebut memerlukan penegasan keutuhan moral, keadilan, dan kebajikan sebagai teras nilai etika Islam. Memandangkan misi Universiti Islam Antarabangsa (IIUM) terhadap keislaman pengetahuan manusia, pengantarabangsaan dan kecemerlangan komprehensif, kakitangan dan pelajar universiti harus mengambil berat tentang reputasi antarabangsa institusi tersebut. Melalui pandangan kami reputasi setiap universiti Islam adalah untuk mengekalkan bukan sahaja melalui pencapaian kecemerlangan akademik, tetapi juga dalam pencapaian imej kebersihan alam sekitar dan fizikal, dan komitmen terhadap tadbir urus yang baik, kecekapan pentadbiran dan pengurusan, disiplin, integriti, keadilan, keadilan, keobjektifan, kesopanan, etika dan penghormatan bagi manusia tanpa mengira agama atau etnis, ketelusan, belas kasihan, ketekunan, kebertanggungjawaban, kesungguhan, kebaikan dan kesanggupan mengorbankan wang, sumber dan waktu untuk peningkatan kebaikan orang awam (*maslahah*). Kepimpinan universiti, pentadbir dan kakitangan harus sangat sensitif terhadap apa-apa tindakan ketidakadilan, ketidakteraturan, mengabaikan peraturan dan peraturan, ketidak laku, tidak bertanggungjawab, kepuasan, penipuan, penipuan, rasuah, rasuah, nepotisme, kekejaman terhadap makhluk hidup, pembaziran, pemborosan, egotisme, autoritarianisme, dan manifestasi lain dari apa yang disebut *Al-Qur'an* al-haram (dilarang) *al-munkar* (tidak adil, buruk, jahat, salah), *al-zulm* (ketidakadilan, kekejaman, penindasan), *al-darr* (merbahaya, merugikan, membenci), *al-khiyanah* (mengkhianati kepercayaan, penderhakaan), *al-kibr* (keangkuhan) dan *al-fitnah* (percubaan, godaan, tipu muslihat). Masyarakat umum, para pelajar, dan industri yang telah berurusan dengan UIAM, harapan mereka terhadap sebuah universiti Islam atau hospital universiti Islam yang mudah berurusan secara umumnya. Ekspektasi positif tersebut mungkin berasaskan apa yang mereka percaya dalam Islam yang menjanjikan pelaksanaan kepada seluruh umat manusia - semua yang mewakili al-salam (keamanan), *al-ma'ruf* (yang

sesuai, diterima, betul), *al-wasat* (keadilan, kecermerlangan, keseimbangan, kesederhanaan), *al-khair* (kebaikan), *al-'adalah* dan *al-qist* (keadilan dan kebajikan), *al-manfa'ah* (bermanfaat, berguna, kewajaran), *al-ihsan* (keutamaan, kecermerlangan moral), *al-salih* (muhsin), *al-rahmah* (rahmat), *al-rifq* (kebaikan), *al-tayib* (yang baik, ramah, mesra, memberi senyuman), *al-jamal* (kecantikan), *al-hasanah* (baik, kesejahteraan), *al-itqan* (ketelitian, ketepatan, kesempurnaan) dan segala yang akan dipunyai oleh Nabi dalam misi menyebarkan "*rahmatan li al-'alamin*" (rahmat untuk seluruh alam). Jangkaan yang positif dan berluhur tinggi daripada "dunia luar" dan daripada "pelanggan dalaman", pengharapan dari segi pemimpin, pengurus, akademik, pegawai, pekerja dan kakitangan Islam dari pelbagai bahagian dalam universiti akan memberi premium yang tinggi untuk mengekalkan budaya etika holistik yang disokong oleh Islam.

Kata kunci: Kosmos, Alam Semula Jadi, Manusia, Perpaduan Pengetahuan, Iman, Pandangan Hidup dan *Al-Qur'an*

1. Philosophical Presuppositions or Metaphysical Assumptions of Secularized Modern Sciences

It is quite well-known to many scholars and intellectuals that modern science is based upon certain metaphysical or philosophical presuppositions, such as materialism, physicalism, naturalism, positivism, empiricism, agnosticism or atheism. These assumptions may or may not be acknowledged, or consciously adopted by some scientists (Butt, 2003). Among the metaphysical assumptions that many secular scientists take for granted, which have led to the crisis of modern science and the environment are: 1) the universe is self-existent and operates on purely natural laws with no higher order or power controlling it; 2) human beings are the products of natural evolution with no transcendent purpose or meaning; 3) everything is essentially material or mechanical; 4) nature is purposeless and has no religious or metaphysical meaning; 5) evolution has no goal or direction; 6) minds are inside the head and are nothing more than the activities of brains.

Another important issue regarding the problem of modern science is the popular belief that natural science or the so-called "exact" or "hard sciences" are value-free (Kincaid, Dupré, Wylie, 2007). However, since the latter part of the 20th century, several Western philosophers of science, historians and sociologists of science have challenged the popular notion of science as value-free and the uncritical confidence in the scientific method. They do not agree with the assumption that the scientist's willingness to be objective implies the ability to be completely value-free (Bahm, 1971). Some scholars advocate a middle ground between the two opposite claims: a) that values have no place in science, and b) that science is saturated with subjective values or is highly value-laden (Doppelt, 2007). Although the popular claim that science is value-free is rejected by the critical philosophers and historians of science as being overstated and misleading, it does not mean that objectivity does not exist or not attainable in science.

In this connection, it is useful to reflect on what Bernard E. Rollin has to say on the subject of "scientific ideology" and the notion of "value-free" science. The presence of strongly held beliefs ("hardened and unshakeable ideology") in the scientific community regarding the separation of science and ethics is the root cause of the problem of the relationship between ethics and science in the West. The positivist and empiricist ideology (or worldview in our view), which demand empirical verification of all meaningful claims, became "the dominant way of knowing about the world in Western societies since the Renaissance". Consequently, ethical judgments are seen as outside of the scope of science. Rollin says: "The slogan that I in fact learned in my science courses in the 1960s, and which has persisted to the present, is that 'science is value-free' in general, and 'ethics-free' in particular. (Rollin, 2006)" In his analysis of the development of the modern scientific ideology he comes to the conclusion that "the component of scientific ideology that affirms that science is value-free and ethics-free is incorrect. We can also see that the more fundamental claim – that science rests only on facts and includes only what is testable – is also badly wrong." (Rollin, 2006)

It is our considered view that if scientists, technologists, technocrats and scientific organizations, institutions including universities, were to continue to view the various natural and human phenomena from a naturalist, positivist, materialist, empiricist, modernist, agnostic or atheistic philosophical presuppositions – which are different branches of the main trunk of the secular worldview in the world today – then modern science as well as modern social sciences would continue to be one of the contributors to the grave crises of modern civilization. Therefore, we support any effort by non-Muslim scientists or scholars to promote a theistic or metaphysical worldview of reality, nature and human life which is based on the belief in a Single Living and Transcendent Creator, Master and Sustainer of all that exists. As believers in the religion of Islam, our

understanding of the reality and meaning of the Cosmos, nature, life and man's role in the world is derived from the worldview of the Qur'an. By the worldview of the Qur'an we mean the comprehensive and integrated Islamic conceptions of life, reality, existence, truth and falsehood, which were revealed by Allah the Most Gracious in His Final Revelation, the Qur'an, as a framework of fundamental doctrines, beliefs, principles, values and norms to serve as True Guidance for all mankind towards achieving the objectives for which they were created.

2.The Qur'an Proclaims, In No Uncertain Terms the Creed of *Tawhid*, Shall Be the Foundation of a Comprehensive and Holistic Worldview Upon Which the Study of Nature, Man and Life Should Be Based.

The foundation of this worldview is the faith and conviction in the greatest and most important Truth and Reality, namely the existence of the One True God, Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful, who is the Creator, Master and Sustainer of all that exists. This fundamental is known creed (*'aqidah*) of *Tawhid*, which literally means "affirmation of the Absolute Oneness of God" Who is not just the only Creator or the Supreme Being, but also as the only Object of Worship, Master, Sustainer, Protector, Provider, Ruler, Manager, Controller, Judge and Ultimate Source of knowledge, wisdom and values, for all human beings and all that exists.

The creed or doctrine of *Tawhid* -- in its comprehensive meaning and scope -- makes it necessary that all worldly acts or activities of human beings should be in conformity with His will, norms and values, accompanied by a constant mindfulness (*taqwa*) of His presence, omniscience, will, pleasure and displeasure because He is constantly watching, controlling, managing and sustaining all affairs -- from the greatest to the minutest -- in everything that exists.

The Godless worldviews or presuppositions in Western philosophies of science, such as atheism, naturalism, scientism, physicalism, materialism, empiricism, agnosticism, positivism, secular humanism, rationalism, skepticism, existentialism, and postmodernism are viewed by the worldview of the Qur'an as different forms of Falsehood (*al-batil*). In the Qur'anic cosmology, reality and the realm of existence (*'alam, wujud*) consist of two interrelated dimensions, the first being the *'Alam al-Ghaib* (lit. the world of the Unseen), namely the realm of reality and existence that is not material or physical and cannot be perceived by the senses in this earthly existence, and that which is beyond the reach of human

perception, such as the essence of God, the Throne of God, the realm of Divine Command, Control and Decree, the Preserved Primordial Word of God, Revelation, Divine Creation, Divine Intervention, Divine Punishment, Divine Miracles, the Soul, the Spiritual realm, the Hereafter, the Last Hour, the Day of Judgement, Resurrection of body and soul, Eternity, the Angelic realm, the realm of unseen beings, the metaphysical dimensions, and the reality of Death.

The second realm of existence is that of *'Alam al-Shahadah* (lit. the world that can be seen, visible or witnessed), which is the opposite of *al-Ghaib*. It refers to the material or physical Cosmos, the universe, the world, nature, human beings, things or realities which were created by Him and can be perceived by the senses and analysed by human reason, experimentation and logic. It is this created realm of the Cosmos that is being studied and analysed by modern natural, empirical and mathematical sciences. We need to recognize that, in studying nature, the modern secularist sciences, ignore -- if not deny implicitly -- the Single Real Creator, Owner, Power, Energy, Designer, Manager and Sustainer of the universe, nature and mankind. Instead they appear to enthrone Nature as the creative Power and Energy behind all that exists. Thus nature is being studied, analysed and understood only as a purely physical phenomenon governed by "the laws of nature", without any connection with the Creator, the Owner, the Controller and the Sustainer of all that exists in it. This is, from the worldview of the Qur'an, the greatest intellectual Crime and Injustice (*Zulm*) committed by the modern secular mind. It is a crime that Muslim scientists, doctors, scholars and intellectuals cannot be associated with.

It is by virtue of the Qur'anic revelation that we know the true purpose and meaning of human existence. Represented by the life and teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the worldview of the Qur'an offers the right Guidance (*al-huda*), outlook, perspective, values and norms for mankind to gain ultimate success (*al-falah*), prosperity and happiness in the Hereafter and to avoid the ultimate loss (*al-khusran*), failure, and terrible suffering in the Eternal Abode of the Hereafter. It is the Right Guidance for human beings to follow because He promised to provide the Guidance and expected all His servants to obey Him (The Qur'an 2:38, 16:89, 20:47, 123).

The most fundamental fact that we Believers acknowledge and accept as absolutely true is the God-given knowledge that the whole cosmos or universe including nature and human beings were created by the One True God, a fact that is denied by the believers of atheism, naturalism, materialism and

scientism. It is the strong influence of anti-theistic worldviews that mainstream scientific thinking in the world today is still denying the belief in Divine creation of the universe.

A thorough reading of the whole Qur'an will not fail to impress upon the reader that one of the most important themes and messages of Allah's final revelation is the fact that this whole Cosmos, the vast universe (or universes, if there are more than one) with billions of galaxies, the amazing natural phenomena in the heavens and the earth, the world and its diverse flora and fauna, and human beings are **the creation** of the One Omnipotent Creator (The Qur'an 43:9) and not the result of blind forces or the accidents of nature as is the belief of materialists, naturalists, agnostics or atheists.

3. A Tremendous Intellectual and Epistemological Transformation in The History of Human Civilization Was Brought About by The Qur'an.

It should be noted that all the amazing cultural and intellectual transformation of the early Muslim societies was brought about by the message of the Qur'an. It supplied a new basis for all the early Muslims' efforts in constructing the new civilization based on the worldview of Islam. A remarkable observation made by Muhammad Asad is the following:

"[N]ever has any book - not excluding the Bible - been read by so many with a comparable intensity and veneration; and never has any other book supplied to so many, and over so long a span of time, a similarly comprehensive answer to the question, 'How shall I behave in order to achieve the good life in this world and happiness in the life to come?' However often individual Muslims may have misread this answer, and however far many of them may have departed from the spirit of its message, the fact remains that to all who believed and believe in it, the Qur'an represents the ultimate manifestation of God's grace to man, the ultimate wisdom, and the ultimate beauty of expression: in short, the true Word of God" (The Qur'an 43:9).

The concept of knowledge (or science, because the word *al-'ilm* means both knowledge and science) in the Qur'an places the supreme value of knowing God (*ma'rifat Allah*) as the highest goal for all human beings. This, together with the knowledge of man's proper relationship (*al-din*) with God, is the highest knowledge and science in the hierarchy of knowledge

in the worldview of the Qur'an. The knowledge and science of life in the world (*al-dunya*) is another category of knowledge, but it is not to be separated or divorced from the knowledge of *al-din*. However, the Qur'an cautions emphatically against the influence of unsound speculation or conjecture (*zann*) in human thought, the corruption of human reason by negative emotions or ideas, and the attitude of man's self-sufficiency and intellectual arrogance (*takabbur*). It reminds human beings that, without the illumination and guidance of Divine Revelation, the most that human reason can know or achieve is merely the outer form of worldly life ("*ya'lamuna zahiran min al-hayat al-dunya*") (The Qur'an 30:7). Even so, the knowledge that Allah Most Gracious has given to human beings "is only a little" (The Qur'an 17:85). Thus the abundance of scientific knowledge, creativity and astounding technological innovations in today's world should not lead intelligent people, including scientists such as the well-known theoretical physicists Stephen Hawking (author of *A Brief History of Time* [1988] and *The Grand Design* [2010]) and Michio Kaku (author of *Physics of the Future* [2011]) to think or assume that secular science, without the help of God's religion or sound philosophy, has the capability to answer all the questions about the origins and nature of the universe.

4. The Characteristics of "People Who Possess Sound Intellects" (*Ulu Al-Albab*)

The true scholars and people of knowledge, in the worldview of the Qur'an, are humblest and most conscious of their dependence upon the Ultimate Source of Knowledge, the All-Knowing (*Al-Alim*), the All-Wise (*Al-Hakim*). They are most conscious of human dependency upon the overflowing grace and the profound knowledge of the Absolute Master and Sustainer of the Cosmos. Their personality represents the product of the unification of true faith (*iman*), constant fear of the displeasure and pleasure of Allah the Most Compassionate (*taqwa*), true knowledge (*'ilm*), righteous action (*'amal salih*) and high moral standards (*akhlaq karimah*). Thus the scholars are described by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who was the blessed recipient of Divine Knowledge and the embodiment of Divine Wisdom (*hikmah*) as "the inheritors of the Prophets".

The message of the Qur'anic verses also makes it clear that the mind or intellect of the God-fearing scholars or scientists derive their knowledge of the One True God and of His power, wisdom, mercy and presence not only from one source, i.e. the written book of Allah the Most Gracious but from two sources, the other being the unwritten and observable

“Book” of the Cosmos and the world of nature. In several places the Qur'an urges the “people who use their reason” to study and contemplate on the multitude of Allah's creation in nature, and on their usefulness and indispensability for the physical sustenance and wellbeing of human life. The result of such study and contemplative thinking (*tafakkur*) would be manifested in their fear (*khasyah*) of the displeasure of their Master and Sustainer. Thus the Qur'an says:

Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky with which We bring forth fruits of various colors? Similarly, in the mountains there are streaks of various shades including white, red, jet-black rocks. Likewise, men, beasts and cattle have their different colors. In fact, only those among His servants who possess knowledge fear Allah; surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Forgiving. (The Qur'an 35: 27-28)

The term “*al-‘ulama*” in The Qur'an in surat *Fatir* 35: 28 can be interpreted to mean “scholars (or experts) who know how to “read” the natural phenomena deeply – they are the ones who truly fear the wrath of Allah”, because the complexities, intricacies and systematic order in the Cosmos could only be comprehended by those who are truly knowledgeable of this Book of Nature. Thus the character, behavior and ethics of the people of knowledge or scholars in Islam, being imbued with *iman* and *taqwa*, require that they use their intellects, reason, expertise and knowledge in the way that Allah the Most Gracious had intended them to be used. These Muslim scholars, scientists and educators, should then not be evaluated purely on their fields of specialization – religious or worldly – but also on the quality of the “profound awe and fear of Allah” arising from their ability to understand that the natural phenomena and the natural wonders in the heavens and the earth are evidences of the presence, the knowledge, the design and the power of the Creator and the Sustainer of the Cosmos.

The useful knowledge and technologies to be derived from the scientific study of nature is undoubtedly necessary for the servants of Allah the Most Gracious and vicegerents on His earth to play their active and constructive civilizational role as required by the religion of Islam. But in order to understand the purpose, function and metaphysical meaning of all the natural phenomena, they need the illumination and guidance of the Book of Divine Revelation as represented by the Qur'an. Thus the most desirable form of Muslim education is one that combines the “readings of the two Books” in a truly integrated and balanced manner.

The Muslim scientists, physicists, astronomers, engineers, architects, medical doctors, chemists and mathematicians of the glorious period of Islamic civilization, were well-known for their scientific studies and discoveries of the secrets of nature and the human body, but unlike the secular-minded scientists or social scientists of the modern era, they were Believers who were inspired by the worldview of the Qur'an. These great scholars of Islam integrated *Tawhidic* values and norms in their lives and their intellectual works. Many of them could be considered as the embodiments of the integrated model of the *Ulu al-Albab* and the ‘*Ulama*’ as propagated by the Qur'an.

From the cosmology of the Qur'an, Muslim scholars and scientists were made to understand that: (1) the cosmos, universe, nature, man, and all the natural bounties belong to Allah the most gracious; (2) that the whole of nature “submits” to the will of Allah the Most Gracious and they all “declare His glory and celebrate His praise” although human beings do not know their mode of declaration and celebration of praise; and (3) that the whole of creation, including some aspects of inherent human nature, good social behaviour and human instincts, and the rise and fall of nations in human history, manifest the *Ayats* (Signs, Evidences, Proofs, Indications, Symbols, Messages, Manifestations, Verses and Lessons) of Allah the Most Gracious. These Signs, in a variety of ways and forms, proclaim and point to Allah's existence, oneness, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, wisdom, goodness, compassion, and other attributes of His. The Qur'an reveals that Allah's Signs are present in the universe and in man's own nature as one of the ways by which human beings will know and realise the truth about Allah the Most Gracious:

“Soon We will show them Our Signs in the horizons and within their own selves until it becomes clear to them that this is the Truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is a Witness, over all things?” (The Qur'an 41: 53)

5. Gratitude to Allah the Most Gracious as a Crucial Ethical Principle

The Qur'an makes it an obligation for human beings, particularly scholars and scientists, to practice the principle of gratitude to Allah the Most Gracious for; (a) having the divine gift of the intellect; for (b) being given knowledge, wisdom and learning by him and; for (c) being taught that the whole cosmos, nature and humans are manifestations of His oneness, His “signs”, His goodness, and His “bounties” (*ni'am*,

sing. *ni'mah*) and; for (d) making all those bounties available and subservient to human beings. The principle of gratitude (*shukr*) to Allah the Most Gracious is a vital spiritual and ethical quality of the correct relationship of servanthood (*'ubudiyyah*) between the human servants and their Compassionate Master and Sustainer (The Qur'an 76:3). It is the opposite of the attitude of *Kufr* (unbelief or rejection) and *Kibr* (intellectual arrogance) that characterize the modern secular mind including the minds of agnostic, materialist, empiricist and atheistic scientists. It is not surprising that the modern secular civilization represents, in many ways, the spirit of human ingratitude to His Master and Sustainer and the failure to recognize His "Sign" or His "Bounty" in nature.

A heavy price is now being paid by many countries in the world for this unbecoming attitude in various global crises besetting the world – environmental degradation, global warming, energy depletion, wars, violence and terrorism, economic and financial turmoil, political leadership corruption, moral decadence, cultural hedonism, and the widening rift of social injustice between the privileged few and the deprived majority. In this regard it may worthwhile to recall how a Western personality views the relevance of Islamic conception of nature to the contemporary crisis. As an environmentalist and propagator of international humanitarianism, Prince Charles has delivered two very important addresses at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, once in 1993 and the second one in 2010. We feel that what he has to say about Islam and Islamic civilization, and their relevance to the troubled world of ours, deserves to be known worldwide – for Westerners as well as educated Muslims – because it is extremely rare for prominent Western leaders to have such knowledge and positive opinions about the West's debt to the scientific contributions of Islamic civilization (HRH The Prince of Wales, 1993).

The Prince describes how the intellectual and scientific prominence of Muslim Spain made Islamic culture "to be a part of Europe for so long" and concludes that "Islam is part of our past and present, in all fields of human endeavor" and that "it has helped to create modern Europe." His admission that "Islam can teach us a way of understanding and living in the world" because of it still preserves "an integral view of the universe" which unites religion and science, man and nature, and mind and matter, is extremely assuring for us Muslims. Not many Western leaders would be so humble and honest to make such a statement.

"More than this, Islam can teach us today a way of understanding and living in the world which

Christianity itself is poorer for having lost. At the heart of Islam is its preservation of an integral view of the Universe. Islam - like Buddhism and Hinduism - refuses to separate man and nature, religion and science, mind and matter, and has preserved a metaphysical and unified view of ourselves and the world around us..."

The Prince then expresses a very critical view of the materialistic spirit and disintegrative tendency of the Western natural sciences: "we study our world in order to manipulate and dominate it, turning harmony and beauty into disequilibrium and chaos." The Prince reiterates the need for contemporary Western civilization, which has lost the balanced perspective and the spiritual vision of the world, and becomes more exploitative, to "relearn from Islam" and to benefit from "the ways of thought in Islam" in searching for the lost metaphysical dimension of life in Western societies. The Prince of Wales' second speech we would like to quote from is titled "Islam and the Environment" which he delivered at Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies in 2010. His speech is a profound critique of the secular, materialist and empiricist worldview of the modern West which has caused severe environmental crisis in the world today. The negative consequences of the comprehensive industrialization of life, in his view, is the result of the secular worldviews and mechanistic thinking which are contrary to the teachings of Islam.

One major obstacle to the proposition that there be a major shift from the secular paradigm of knowledge to the holistic paradigm of knowledge is what Immanuel Wallerstein identifies as the spirit of "human arrogance" of secular civilization:

"Human arrogance has been humanity's greatest self-imposed limitation. This, it seems to me, is the message of the story of Adam in the Garden of Eden. We [the Western scholars] were arrogant in claiming to have received and understood the revelation of God, to know the intent of the gods. We were even more arrogant in asserting that we were capable of arriving at eternal truth through the use of human reason, so fallible a tool. And we have been continuously arrogant in seeking to impose on each other, and with such violence and cruelty, our subjective images of the perfect society" (HRH The Prince of Wales, 1993).

In our view the spirit of humility is required, not just to realize the grave mistakes of the modern secular civilization, but to study and understand the universe and natural phenomena in a holistic way.

This spirit of humility, we submit, can only grow out, first, from our acknowledgement of the limits of human reason when compared to the limitlessness of Divine Wisdom and Revelation; of our willingness to acknowledge our true nature as Servants of the One True God; of our responsibility as Vicegerents on His earth who use all the God-given bounties and provisions according to the will of the Creator; of our understanding of nature as Divine property and Divine Signs which have to be approached with the proper attitude of respect and gratefulness; of our dealing with nature as a form of carrying out the Trust that Allah the Most Gracious has placed on our shoulders; and of our study of the natural phenomena as a form of knowing and worshipping the Compassionate Creator.

6. The Environmental Crisis as an Indictment of the Failure of Modern Secularized Sciences

The environmental crisis is not an isolated crisis; it is connected with the larger issue of the materialistic and mechanistic spirit of secular modernity and progress, both of which have led to the emergence of what Richard Tarnas calls as “the crisis of science” in the contemporary world. As an American cultural historian and professor of philosophy and psychology, Tarnas (b. 1950) wrote *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World View* (1991) (Tarnas, 1991). The rapid technological innovations of all kinds brought about unprecedented changes in the human environment. He describes the adverse impact on human life as follows:

“The world in which man lived was becoming as impersonal as the cosmos of his science. With the pervasive anonymity, hollowness, and materialism of modern life, man’s capacity to retain his humanity in an environment determined by technology seemed increasingly in doubt” (Tarnas, 1991).

In addition to those humanistic problems, there appeared to be “more disturbingly concrete signs of science’s untoward consequences” in the new phenomenon of environmental crisis. Tarnas underscores the fact that “under the West’s direction and impetus, modern man had burst forward and outward”, but it appears that modern man “had driven himself into a terrestrial nightmare and a spiritual wasteland [...] Nowhere was the problematic modern condition more precisely embodied than in the phenomenon of existentialism” (Tarnas, 1991). A more serious concern with the ethics of science became inevitable. He explains:

“The close association of scientific research with the political, military, and corporate establishments continued to belie science’s traditional self-image of detached purity. The very concept of “pure science” was now criticized by many as entirely illusory. The belief that the scientific mind had unique access to the truth of the world, that it could register nature like a perfect mirror reflecting an extra historical, universal objective reality, was seen not only as epistemologically naive, but also as serving, either consciously or unconsciously, specific political and economic agenda, often allowing vast resources and intelligence to be commandeered for programs of social and ecological domination. The aggressive exploitation of the natural environment, the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, the threat of global catastrophe—all pointed to an indictment of science, of human reason itself, now seemingly in thrall to man’s own self-destructive irrationality”.

It becomes clear to many perceptive and self-critical minds in the West that the present civilization as a whole is in peril. Tarnas concludes with a profound expression of disillusionment with the negative ethical and ecological consequences of the lack of moral compass in the scientific development and technological advancement of contemporary civilization. A strong indictment of modern science is clearly pronounced in his statement that “The West was again losing its faith, this time not in religion but in science and in the autonomous human reason (Tarnas, 1991).”

“Civilization itself was now brought into peril by virtue of its own genius. The same science that had dramatically lessened the hazards and burdens of human survival now presented to human survival its gravest menace: its culpability. The modern scientific mind found itself beleaguered on several fronts at once: by the epistemological critiques, by its own theoretical problems arising in a growing number of fields, by the increasingly urgent psychological necessity of integrating the modern outlook’s human-world divide, and above all by its adverse consequences and intimate involvement in the planetary crisis.”

Therefore, it is understandable that the scientific worldview has been subjected to fundamental questions, partly because “that conceptual framework was evidently both creating and exacerbating problems for humanity on a global scale.” We agree with Tarnas’ conclusion that, in spite of the great

contributions and wonderful achievements of modern science, the knowledge that is derived from the limited perspectives – of materialism, empiricism, naturalism or agnosticism – can be very harmful to the environment and to human life as a whole. He says: “Scientific knowledge was stupendously effective, but those [negative] effects suggested that much knowledge from a limited perspective could be a very dangerous thing.”

For the Muslim scientists, engineers, doctors and other professionals who understand the worldview of the Qur'an, they have a religious obligation -- not just professional obligation-- to offer the integrated and holistic perspectives. They will note that in most of the UN conferences or Earth Summits, the religious or theistic perspective is not given important considerations. Thus the planet Earth and its environment -- being severely ravaged by greedy and materialistic industrial and capitalistic world systems, and the unethical use of science and technology for economic growth -- have to be made sustainable for the present and future generations of human beings because this is the only planet habitable by human beings.

However, the mainstream discourse on sustainability of the environment, as well as the increasing awareness of the urgency of ethical concerns in scientific and technological research are not grounded on the premise of nature and the world as owned and governed by God, or as representing the Signs of God, or as their being made subservient for human welfare as a Divine Trust. The moral concern for human and environmental wellbeing, now and in the future, appears to rest on the premises of enlightened secular humanism which is tolerant of religious wisdom and traditional wisdom. Nevertheless, the present environmental crisis and the epistemological crisis of modern science afford new opportunities for Muslim scientists and technologists to become international problem-solvers in, at least, two ways. Firstly, they can work together with fellow scientists belonging to other faiths or worldviews in facing common environmental and technological problems. Secondly, they have to offer solutions, inventions and innovations from their scientific research which are in harmony with the worldview of the Qur'an, as part of the efforts to bring about a paradigm shift in the study of nature and the physical universe from the secular to the *Tawhidic*.

7. Good Ethical Conduct as the Quality, Character and Culture of Muslim Scholars, Medical Doctors, Educators and Professionals

If we think and contemplate on the abundance and generosity of Allah's care, bounty and concern for our material and spiritual wellbeing, in nature and in our lives, our minds and hearts should be overflowing with the feeling of obligation, first to praise our Master for all His Greatness and indescribable Magnificence, and second, to be grateful to Him by practicing the principles of *khair* (goodness), *'adalah* (justice), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ihsan* (moral excellence), and *al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar* (enjoining that which is good and right, and prohibiting that which is bad and wrong). These manifestations of Muslim gratitude should become part of the contemporary culture of integrity, balance and striving for excellence that Islamic *al-wasatiyyah* stands for in order to gain the pleasure of Allah the Most Gracious in Muslim professional practice as academics or administrators.

This is in line with the universal values of humans as moral beings who are destined by Allah the Most Gracious to be moral actors in the construction of an ethical society and civilization who detest bad manners, immoral behavior, injustices, corruption and abuse of authority. Unfortunately, many Muslim communities and countries are suffering from these moral and social diseases. For the Muslim doctors and medical students, the various modes of gratitude to Allah the Most Gracious mean upholding not only their Muslim doctor's Code of Conduct, but those moral values and behavior as taught by the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

It is primarily their religious responsibility to incorporate those moral and ethical values in their daily work, in their interaction with the public with the proper *adab* (decorum, manners, etiquettes), and in upholding moral integrity in scientific endeavors, research, consultancy and publication. In a morally degenerating civilization we are living today, it is a religious and professional responsibility of Muslim scientists, medical doctors and health science educators to present themselves as good examples of ethical scientists, scholars and educators as a manifestation of their gratitude to the Supreme Master and their common humanity and egalitarian values. It is perhaps useful, at this juncture, to be reminded of the necessary relationship between faith in God and righteous ethical conduct in the worldview of the Qur'an as exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.):

"And verily, you (O Muhammad (S.A.W)) are on an exalted (standard of) character." (The Qur'an 68:4).

The Prophet (S.A.W.) declares explicitly that "I was sent [by God] only for the sake of bringing to perfection good character" (hadith related by Imam Ahmad). It should be pointed out that many verses of the Qur'an, especially of the Meccan period, stress the direct linkage between Islamic religiosity and just and kind treatment of the neighbours, the underprivileged, the poor and oppressed masses. Social and economic justice, in Islamic teachings, go hand in hand with piety and faith. The following hadiths taken from *Riyad al-Salihin*, the well-known hadith collection compiled by Imam al-Nawawi (1233-1277 C.E.), the famous religious scholar from Syria, show very clearly in inseparable bond between religious faith and good character, the latter as a logical consequence of the former:

1. Abdullah bin`Amr bin Al-`As (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) did not indulge in loose talk nor did he like to listen to it. He used to say, "The best of you is the best among you in conduct." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].
2. Abu al-Darda (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (S.A.W.) said, "Nothing will be heavier on the Day of Resurrection in the Scale of the believer than good character (husn al-khuluq). Allah hates one who utters foul or coarse language." [Al-Tirmidhi].
3. Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said, "The most perfect man in his faith among the believers is the one whose behaviour is most excellent; and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives." [Al-Tirmidhi].
4. Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) reported: I heard Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) saying: "A believer will attain by his good character (husn al-khuluq) the rank of one who prays during the night and observes fasting during the day." [Abu Dawud].
5. Jabir (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said, "The dearest and nearest among you to me on the Day of Resurrection will be one who is the best of you in conduct (husn al-khuluq); and the most abhorrent among you to me and the farthest of you from me will be the pompous, the garrulous, and Al-Mutafaihiqun." The Companions asked him: "O Messenger of Allah! We know about the pompous and the garrulous, but we do not know who Al-Mutafaihiqun are." He replied: "The arrogant people." [Al-Tirmidhi].

8. The Unity of Knowledge, Faith and Ethics in the Worldview of the Qur'an and its implications on IIUM

The inseparability of faith and good ethical conduct in the worldview of the Qur'an should be given serious attention by all the Believers, in particular the Muslim students, scholars, scientists, professionals, administrators, officers and workers in an Islamic university. As far as the medical faculties and hospitals are concerned, the observation of good medical ethics by all the staff and students is of the utmost importance as the disciplines taught in the faculties and the services rendered in an Islamic hospital contribute directly to the fulfilment of some of the most important higher objectives of the Divine Law or the "*maqasid al-shari'ah*", namely the preservation of life, the preservation of religion, the preservation of the intellect, the preservation of progeny and the preservation of wealth and property. All those objectives require the upholding of moral integrity, justice, and benevolence as the core of Islamic ethical values. It is therefore not surprising that the early Muslim physicians in Islamic civilisation were known to observe Islamic ethical values in their profession.

It is therefore imperative that maintaining good ethical behaviour and establishing the culture of integrity be given high priority in the governance of public institutions, including Islamic universities, managed and led by Muslim professionals. In the International Islamic University Malaysia, the mission of Islamization of human knowledge is the soul of the university. In IIUM, Islamisation or Islamicisation of the Self is part and parcel of Islamicisation/Islamisation of Human Knowledge (IOHK) in IIUM. It entails the strengthening of *Ilm* (knowledge), *Iman* (faith), *Yaqin* (certitude), *Taqwa* (God-fearing consciousness), *Ihsan* (beneficence and moral excellence) and *Husn al-Khuluq* (good character) and ethical behaviour in the personality and life of a *Mu'min* (Believer) through the process of *Jihad al-Nafs* (striving against the influence of base desires, passion and moral vices as well as temptations of worldly pleasures), *Tazkiyat al-Nafs* (purification of the spiritual heart and soul from a variety of spiritual and moral "diseases").

In light of IIUM's mission of Islamization of Human Knowledge, Internationalisation and Comprehensive Excellence, the staff and the students of the university should be quite concerned about the international reputation of the institution. In our view the reputation of any Islamic university is to maintained not only through the achievement of academic excellence, but also in the attainment of the

image of environmental and physical cleanliness, and the commitment to good governance, administrative and management efficiency, discipline, integrity, justice, fairness, objectivity, decorum, etiquette and respect for human beings irrespective of religion or ethnicity, transparency, compassion, diligence, accountability, collegiality, kindness and willingness to sacrifice money, resources and time for a higher public good (*maslahah*). The university leadership, administrators and staff should be highly sensitive to any acts of injustice, irregularity, disregard of rules and regulations, immorality, irresponsibility, complacency, duplicity, fraud, bribery, corruption, nepotism, cruelty to living creatures, wastage, extravagance, egotism, authoritarianism, and other manifestations of what the Qur'an calls *al-haram* (prohibited) *al-munkar* (objectionable, bad, evil, wrong), *al-zulm* (injustice, cruelty, oppression), *al-fasad* (corruption), *al-darr* (harmful, detrimental, noxious) *al-khiyanah* (betrayal of trust, treachery), *al-kibr* (arrogance) and *al-fitnah* (trial, temptation, intrigue).

As far as the general public, the students, and industries dealing with IIUM are concerned, their expectations of an Islamic university or the hospital in it are generally favourably disposed. Such positive expectations are presumably based on what they believe Islam has promised to deliver to the whole of humanity – all that represents *al-salam* (peace), *al-ma'ruf* (that which is agreeable, acceptable, right), *al-wasat* (justice, excellence, balanced, moderation), *al-khair* (goodness), *al-'adalah* and *al-qist* (justice and fairness), *al-manfa'ah* (beneficial, useful, advantageous), *al-birr* (righteousness), *al-ihsan* (beneficence, moral excellence), *al-salih* (righteous), *al-rahmah* (mercy), *al-rifq* (kindness), *al-tayyib* (good, wholesome, agreeable, friendly, pleasant, delightful) *al-jamal* (beauty), *al-hasanah* (good, wellbeing), *al-itqan* (thoroughness, exactitude, perfection) and everything else that would be embraced by the Prophetic mission of spreading "*rahmatan li al-'alamin*" (Divine grace and mercy to all the worlds). Bearing in mind such positive and lofty expectations from the "outside world" and from the "internal customers", it is to be expected that the Muslim leaders, managers, academics, officers, workers and staff of the different parts of the university would give a high premium to the maintenance of the holistic ethical culture that Islam advocates.

In this regard, it would not be unjust for the public to expect the newly established Hospital of IIUM in the Kuantan Campus to be a shining example of the integration of the *maqasid al-shari'ah* and high ethical values such that it becomes not just a model of

a *shari'ah*-friendly or *shari'ah* compliant health centre but another model of *da'wah* (propagation) that would attract the Muslim public – and, in particular the non-Muslim patients -- to witness the ethical excellence of Islam via the efficient, caring and competent professionalism of the medical staff, the *taqwa*-motivated medical doctors and students, as well as the *qalb* (heart)-driven health care services offered by the staff and students of the Kulliyah of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences. However, in light of the severe financial constraints currently faced by IIUM and all the faculties, it is indeed a challenge for a new public hospital and the medical faculty to provide the best health care services that serve the wellbeing of the body as well as the soul, commensurate with the sacred mission and the moral character of an Islamic hospital. However, with good planning and strategizing on the priorities, together with the sincere commitment, fortitude, solidarity and dedication of the leaders and the staff to gain the *ridhwan* (pleasure) of Allah Most Compassionate, it is not impossible to meet the high expectations.

In the end, we hope and expect the Muslim scholars and students of natural sciences, medical sciences, allied health care disciplines and technology to be the new generation of '*ulama*' and *ulu al-albab* -- who begin their study of natural sciences and the health of the human body and social sciences from the worldview of the Qur'an. The scientific knowledge of nature and the Cosmos as the Property, the Kingdom and the Signs of Allah the Most Gracious that they acquire from this metaphysical and spiritual perspective is not just for the purpose of utilizing the natural resources for the benefit of physical human wellbeing and socioeconomic progress. Its higher purpose is ultimately to make human beings and societies know and serve Allah the Most Gracious through understanding His Signs, among which are: - His presence, His design and purpose, His bounties and blessings, His provisions and premeasurements, His laws in nature, man and society, His intelligence, knowledge and wisdom, His sovereignty and governance, His love, compassion and mercy, His artistry, balance and beauty, and His other attributes and actions. Then this knowledge of the physical universe (*al-kawn*) derived from empirical observation, experimentation, mathematical analysis and contemplative thinking, involving the disciplines of physics, chemistry, biology and astronomy, etc., together with the revealed knowledge of religious truths (*al-din*), involving the disciplines of Islamic theology (*'ilm al-tawhid*), religious worship (*'ilm al-'ibadah*), socio-economic transactions (*'ilm al-mu'amalat*), moral conduct and spirituality (*'ilm al-*

akhlaq), etc. would contribute to making the Islamic university, its faculties of medicine, allied health sciences, natural and physical sciences, dentistry, nursing and pharmacy as various manifestations of the universal vision of Islam --“*rahmatan li al-`alamin*” .

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