ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON SCIENCE AND ETHICS: A CONTRAST WITH SECULAR AND CHRISTIAN VIEWS

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Abstract

This paper explores the interplay between worldview, science, language, and religion by comparing secular, Christian, and Islamic perspectives. Worldviews fundamentally shape human perception and guide the development of knowledge. The Islamic worldview, in particular, integrates ethics into scientific inquiry and assigns humanity the role of Khalīfah—stewards of the Earth. Employing a literature review and thematic analysis of primary sources (the Qur'ān and Hadīth) alongside secondary scholarly works, this study investigates how Islamic ethics inform approaches to knowledge and scientific advancement. The analysis reveals that Islam promotes a morally grounded pursuit of knowledge, wherein scientific progress is evaluated through social and ecological responsibilities. The findings emphasize how worldview influences scientific reasoning, linguistic frameworks, and religious understanding, highlighting Islam's distinctive ethical integration into knowledge systems. This study contributes to a broader comprehension of how worldviews function as frameworks for aligning faith, science, and ethics within the Islamic tradition.

Keywords : Islamic worldview, ethics, scientific thought, religion.

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INTRODUCTION

Humans understand the world through a set of beliefs and ideas that guide their life and give meaning to their existence, purpose, and nature. This set of beliefs, often called a worldview or philosophical outlook, is not just an abstract idea but a practical way of thinking that affects how people see science, language, and religion.[3] This paper compares the main features of three different worldviews—the secular Western, Christian, and Islamic—and how they influence human thinking, ethics, and knowledge.

The secular Western view focuses on material things, individual freedom, and reason. It often places science and human moral choices above religious rules. On the other hand, the Christian perspective is based on faith in God, focusing on divine creation, absolute morals, and salvation. This shapes how people understand ethics and nature. The Islamic framework offers a complete system where faith in Allāh (God) guides religious practice, moral decisions, scientific work, and learning. One important idea in Islam is that humans are Khalīfah—caretakers of the Earth with ethical responsibilities.[4]

A key part of the Islamic view is that ethics and knowledge are closely linked. Scientific progress must be done responsibly and with

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[3] Nur Hadi Ihsan et al., "Worldview sebagai Landasan Sains dan Filsafat: Perspektif Barat dan Islam," *Jurnal Reflektika,* vol. 17, nomor 1 (January 2022): 31–61, https://doi.org/10.28944/reflektika.v17i1.445.

[4] Abdul Rohman Ahmad, Amir Reza, and Muhammad Ari Firdausi, "Melacak Makna Worldview: Worldview Barat dan Islam," *Kanz Philosophia,* vol. 7, no. 1 (June 2021): 50, https://doi.org/10.20871/kpjipm.v7i1.147.

care for humans and the environment.[5] Historically, Muslim scholars made great advances in medicine, astronomy, and other sciences, driven by their religious and moral beliefs found in the Qur'ān and Hadīth. These holy texts teach respect for life, care for nature, and the search for useful knowledge.[6]

Many important books—such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr's Science and Civilization in Islam (1993),[7] Ziauddin Sardar's Reading the Qur'an (2006),[8] and Leif Stenberg's The Islamization of Science (2011)[9]—have explored Islam's role in science and ethics. However, most of these works focus either on historical developments or specific theological aspects. There is still a lack of clear, comparative studies that examine how the secular Western, Christian, and Islamic worldviews shape science, language, and ethics as interconnected domains. In addition, recent research has rarely emphasized how the Islamic perspective uniquely integrates ethical values into scientific understanding and knowledge production.

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[5] Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi, "*Worldview Islam: Kata Pengantar*" dalam *Worldview Islam Pembahasan tentang Konsep-Konsep Penting dalam Islam*, ed. M.Kholid Muslih (Ponorogo: UNIDA Press, 2018).

[6] Ryan Arief Rahman et al., "Bahasa dan Worldview serta Relasinya dengan Konstruksi Nalar Masyarakat," in *Prooceding of 1st Annual Interdiciplinary Conference on Muslim Societies (AICOMS), Institut Agama Islam Sunan Giri (INSURI) Ponorogo*, vol. 1, 2021, 21–33.

[7] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[8] Ziauddin Sardar, *Reading the Qur'an: The Contemporary Relevance of the Sacred Text of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[9] Leif Stenberg, *The Islamization of Science: Four Muslim Positions Developing an Islamic Modernity* (Lund: Lund University Press, 2011).

This study addresses that gap by offering a comparative analysis of these three worldviews, highlighting both their points of convergence and divergence—particularly in how they approach science, language, and religion. The key contribution of this paper lies in showing how the Islamic worldview distinctively blends faith and moral responsibility with scientific inquiry. This perspective helps us understand how belief systems shape human thought and behavior, encouraging a balance between scientific progress and ethical commitments to society and the environment. The relevance of this topic is also supported by recent studies emphasizing the need to integrate ethics into science to address global challenges, such as Mark Johnson's Ethics in the Age of Technology: Balancing Innovation and Responsibility (2020)[10] and Farah Ahmed and Adeel Malik's Rethinking Ethics in Scientific Research: Faith-Informed Perspectives (2022)[11].

RESEARCH METHODS

Methodologically, this research uses a qualitative approach based on a thematic and comparative literature review.[12] It examines major religious and philosophical texts, including the Qur'ān and Hadīth for the Islamic tradition, along with works by key thinkers such as Nasr, Sardar, and Stenberg. Christian and secular perspectives are

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[10] Mark Johnson, *Ethics in the Age of Technology: Balancing Innovation and Responsibility* (New York: Routledge, 2020).
[11] Farah Ahmed and Adeel Malik, *Rethinking Ethics in Scientific Research: Faith-Informed Perspectives* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022).
[12] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013), 46.

analyzed through theological writings and scholarly discussions on science and ethics. A range of classical and contemporary sources are considered to provide both historical depth and modern relevance.

Thematic analysis is used to identify core ideas such as moral responsibility, divine guidance, and the purpose of knowledge across these worldviews. These themes are then compared to understand how each framework shapes the perception and use of science. This method allows the study to emphasize the unique features of the Islamic paradigm, in which ethics and knowledge are deeply intertwined. By connecting insights from religion, philosophy, and science, this paper contributes to a broader understanding of how worldview influences scientific thought and ethical action in today's complex world.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Conceptualizing Worldview: A Comparative Analysis of Western, Christian, and Islamic Perspectives

The concept of the worldview is a complex, multilevel term that philosophy has employed across different intellectual traditions, each with its own particular understanding of how human beings approach reality. Even though these differences exist, mostly caused by cultural and philosophical contexts, there are elements that allow an explanation of this term within Western, Christian, and Islamic thought.

1. **Worldview in Secular Western Thought**

In Western secular philosophy, the worldview is generally understood as an idea framework or commitment that configures a person's perception of reality and, thereby, behavior. Scholars such as James W. Sire and Wilhelm Dilthey identify the worldview as an array of mental categories or commitments that determine perception and its corresponding response.[13] Sire regards worldview as a commitment of the human heart foundational to interpreting and acting in the world. This definition certainly rhymes with Dilthey's understanding of the worldview as a system of mental categories that organizes people's knowledge, emotions, and responses to the world. In both thinkers, attention is turned to worldview as an internal cognitive structure that then gets applied in behavior and action.[14]

On the other hand, some philosophers, such as Ludwig Wittgenstein and Michel Foucault, advance a somewhat critical view of the concept of worldview, emphasizing language and history. Whereas Wittgenstein refuses to accept the possibility of objective knowledge at all and thus states that a world view is predetermined by the language used, depicting the subjective reality of its master. According to Wittgenstein, the cognition of the limits of reality is connected with the understanding of the limits of language that describes it.[15]

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[13] James W. Sire, *The Univers Next Door* (USA: Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, 1976), 20.

[14] Sire, 27.

[15] David Naugle, *Worldview: The History of Concept (Grand Rapids* (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 161.

In his turn, Foucault presents the concept of the world view in the epistemological and historical context, claiming that knowledge as such is a product of a certain world view, which may be additionally influenced by power relations and historic processes. These thinkers frame worldview not as a direct reflection of objective reality but as a complex, contingent construction influenced by language, power, and culture. Thus, most Western secular positions emphasize the historic and linguistic elements as decisive in framing the individual's perception and relationship with reality.[16]

2. A Christian Perspectives on Worldview

In the Christian theological tradition, this notion of worldview is usually embedded in religious beliefs and dogmas that shape the moral and existential order through which the world is interpreted.[17] Thinkers like James Orr, Abraham Kuyper, and Ronald Nash hold the view that a worldview is a system in an inclusive meaning from which both theological and philosophical worldviews proceed. According to Orr, a worldview is a mindset that indicates the general philosophy or theological view of a person about the universe, while according to Kuyper, it is a life system that determines how one relates himself to the cosmos as a whole.[18] To Nash, the worldview is a system of beliefs through which moral action is guided. It provides a framing of reality with respect to divine principles and human responsibility. Intensely

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[16] Ninian Smart, *Worldview: Cross-Cultural Explorations of Human Belief* (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, n.d.), 1–2.

[17] Thomas F. Wall, *Thinking Critically About Philosophical Problems* (Australia: Thomson Learning, 2001), 532.

[18] Sire, *The Univers Next Door*, 28.

spiritual, this view emphasizes that the worldview is much more than some kind of intellectual framework—it is a moral and existential guide that informs social and ethical behavior. Thinkers such as Herman Dooyeweerd and James Olthuis stress, moreover, that worldview itself is something deeply involved in ethical decision-making and social change; it is at once a rational belief system and a spiritual commitment.[19]

Accordingly, secular Western and Christian worldviews contrast with each other in their basic levels, ethics, purpose, and idea of human identity. On the contrary, the secular approach is usually centered on humanism and rationalism. Knowledge in the perspective would be acquired by means of empirical science. Personal autonomy, meaning, and ethics are fluid and socially constructed.[20] Conversely, the Christian worldview would stand on the belief in God as the basis of truth, meaning, and morality; life would, therefore, have a divinely ordained purpose, while morals would be governed by unchanging biblical standards.[21] Whereas secular thinking regards human beings essentially in biological and social terms, in the case of Christianity, humans possess exceptional dignity and value as the creature made in God's image. These differences thereby manifest themselves in the

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[19] Ronald H. Nash, *Dooyeweerd and the Amsterdam Philoshopy* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondenan, 1962), 91.
[20] Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1985), 2–9.
[21] Ronald H. Nash, *Worldview in Conflict* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondenan, 1992), 16.

way each worldview takes up the matter of reality, knowledge, and even human purpose.

3. The Concept of Worldview in Islam

In Islamic thought, too, the worldview is integral in understanding existence, but it is expressed in terms like *al-Tasawwur al-Islamy* (Islamic Vision), *al-Mabda' al-Islāmī*, and *Ru'yah al-Islām li al-Wujūd*, to which different scholars have contributed their meanings. Sayyid Qutb explains *al-Tasawwur al-Islāmī* as the aggregation of all the basic beliefs in the mind and heart of a Muslim, by which one perceives reality and receives guidance for his action. This clearly explains how belief is related to daily life; it underlines that the worldview directly influences the way in which people act.[22]

According to the concept Syekh Atīf al-Zayn mentioned, *al-Mabda' al-Islāmī*, or Islamic Principle, the relation between faith and reason should be as harmonious as possible, where belief must be given precedence by reasoning.[23] While arguing in the reverse direction, Maulānā al-Mawdūdī relates the issue of worldview with the central concept of the oneness of God—*al-shahādah*—indicating that this very foundation provides the real basis upon which all human activities, personal and social, rest.[24] In a similar way, Prof. Syed Naquib al-Attas presents *Ru'yah al-Islām li al-Wujūd* as an Islamic view about existence, truth, and reality comprehended by the heart's vision

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[22] Sayyid Qutb, *Khasāish al-Tasawwur al-Islāmī wa Muqawwamātuhu* (Beirut: Dār al-Syurūq, 1983), 41.

[23] *Atīf al-Zayn, al-Islām wa Idulujiyyāt al-Insān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Lubnān, 1989), 13.

[24] Al-Mawdudi, *The Process of Islamic Revolution* (Lahore: 1967), 14.

and hence offering a metaphysical understanding of the notion of worldview in Islam.[25]

These Islamic reflections on worldview interrelate to one another in various ways, but they share one thread: the understanding that worldview presents a totalizing framework—one that integrates faith, reason, and spirituality. From this perspective, one would understand that the worldview is not just something mental. It is as wide as the totality of human existence, ranging from guiding one's thought to governing action in life based on divine principles. Each has a different emphasis—such as al-Mawdūdī's stress on the political and social consequences of belief or the metaphysical and epistemological concerns of Naquib al-Attas—but they all share the view that worldview is a coherent system that informs human actions, social convention, and the relation of the person to the divine.[26]

Various convergences and divergences emerge in this analysis of different perspectives on worldview across Western, Christian, and Islamic traditions. Even though there is considerable consensus on this question among all three traditions regarding the centrality it plays in shaping human understanding and guiding behavior, the basic assumptions of the foundational elements are considerably different. Generally, Western secular thought, as represented by the likes of Sire, Dilthey, Wittgenstein, and Foucault, tends to be preoccupied with

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[25] Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 2002), 2.

[26] Sarjuni, "*Islamic Worldview dan Lahirnya Tradisi Ilmiah di Institusi Pendidikan Islam*," Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam, vol. 2, no. 2 (2019), 11–28, https://doi.org/10.30659/jpai.2.2.25-43.

worldview as some sort of cognitive structure or linguistic construct produced and shaped by historical and cultural factors. It is therefore often regarded as dynamic and contingent, reshaped or reinterpreted according to new contexts or sets of linguistic frameworks.

In that respect, the theorist of the Christian worldview is more theological and doctrinaire in emphasis; the role of a worldview is more cognitive and spiritual in leading moral and social action. Many thinkers viewed worldview as an interpretive method of reality under the guidance of divine principles and religious beliefs, sometimes even as an integrating system regulating every domain of life.

Islamic thought represents a more holistic approach to the question, viewing worldview as an essentially spiritual, intellectual, metaphysical construct. The Islamic worldview emphasizes the need for knowledge that is based on the divine, rational reasoning, and ethical behavior in the relations between human beings and the world. Moreover, the Islamic thinkers place further emphasis on the interdependence between belief and practice, as the worldview is considered the overarching device through which the individual engages with the divine, the self, and the community.[27]

In spite of these differences in emphasis, the various perspectives suggest that worldview is an essentially important concept necessary for understanding how individuals and societies navigate and make sense of their existence. Whether through the lens of Western philosophy, Christian theology, or Islamic thought,

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[27] Ahmad, Reza, and Firdausi, "Melacak Makna Worldview: Worldview Barat dan Islam," 45–64.

worldview remains a key determinant of human action and perception, offering a framework for interpreting both the material and spiritual dimensions of reality.

The Elements and Characteristics of Worldview in Secular, Christian, and Islamic Thought

More importantly, knowing the various meanings of a worldview furthers the possibility of delving into the basic elements and attributes that make up such worldviews. These elements will provide the pillars that determine a worldview and make one different from another. It is possible to determine the elements and characteristics of a worldview from three points of view: secular, Christian, and Islamic.[28]

From the secular point of view, writers like James W. Sire find some basic questions that can reveal the heart of an individual's worldview. These questions encompass the issues of reality, human existence, whether knowledge is possible, and what the meaning of history is. In the secular worldview, reason, scientific knowledge, and empirical evidence are the means by which one's view of the world is to be developed. Sire's seven basic questions were proposed as sufficient to carry anyone through to an adequately comprehensive worldview, covering nature, knowledge, ethics, and human destiny.[29] Wilhelm Dilthey further divides worldviews into religious, freedom-oriented, and metaphysical types, pointing to great diversities within

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[28] Syamsuddin Arif, ed., *Islamic Science: Paradigma, Fakta dan Agenda* (Jakarta: INSIST, 2016), 6.
[29] Sire, *The Univers Next Door*, 22–23.

the ranks of secular thought. Secular worldviews generally stress the world of actual phenomena and human experience but are based upon larger philosophical systems of rationalism and empiricism; they do not, however, typically include metaphysical or divine elements.[30]

The Christian view is steeped in theological underpinnings. It is evident from the fact that thinkers like Abraham Kuyper have given specific emphasis to three central elements that surround the Christian worldview, namely, God, humanity, and the world. Ronald Nash further fleshes out this thinking by naming five key elements of a worldview: the nature of God, reality, knowledge, ethics, and humans. Through the interplay of these five elements, a worldview can be developed that is guided by Christian theology and biblical teachings. To the Christian, however, the Bible is more than a sacred text; it provides meaning to realities, morality, and purpose in life. Because of this latter relationship to Scripture, there is great emphasis in the Christian worldview concerning divine revelation, sin, redemption, and humanity's ultimate destiny. For example, Christian education provides a more concrete basis upon which the worldview theory directs students to understand how biblical propositions form behavior, relationships, and reality.[31]

On the contrary, the Islamic worldview tends to be broader and more inclusive in the meaning given by thinkers such as Prof. Syed

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[30] Wilhelm Dilthey, *The Typses of Worldviews and The Unfoldment Within the Metaphysical System* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), 74.

[31] Katherine G. Scultz and James A. Swezey, "A Three-Dimensional Concept of Worldview," *Journal of Research on Christian Education* (2013), 235–37.

Naquib al-Attas. The elements comprising the Islamic worldview include God, revelation, creation, human psychology, knowledge, religion, ethics, freedom, and happiness. These elements, all combined, give guidance to individual and collective life. What gives the Islamic worldview a real distinguishing mark is the element of wahyu, or divine revelation, that forms part of Islam's theory of truth and reality. Whereas most secular worldviews in one way or another emanate from empirical evidence and rational thought and Christian worldviews emanate from the Bible, Islam is a unitary worldview that integrates the material and spiritual spheres. Revelation provides a direct link to divine guidance and behavior that defines morals with clarity regarding the nature of existence.[32]

While the core elements of worldviews in secular, Christian, and Islamic thought do touch on some common themes—like, for instance, the nature of God, human existence, ethics, and religion—Islam adds this peculiar ingredient, putting great emphasis on divine revelation. This notion of wahyu makes Islam not only distinct from both the secular and Christian worldviews but holistic and comprehensive too. Islamic worldviews, which depend on divine revelation as the ultimate source of truth, perceive reality as an interconnected continuum of the seen and unseen.[33]

Additionally, there are notable differences in the traits of each worldview. Rationalism, materialism, and empiricism based on human experience and observation are characteristics of secular worldviews.

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[32] al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 5.
[33] Sire, *The Univers Next Door*, 30–33.

Secular philosophy frequently emphasizes scientific and philosophical research while drawing a clear line between objective and subjective reality. Christian worldviews are frequently replete with ideas about sin, atonement, the afterlife, the nature of God, and divine revelation. Christian theology firmly establishes the existence of a personal God who communicates with people via Scripture and Jesus Christ's life. The Bible provides a foundation of history and divinity that allows for a broad understanding of morality, life, and the nature of God.

The Islamic worldview, as represented by a number of thinkers like Naquib al-Attas and Sayyid Qutb, introduces a different and integrated stance. The unity of God (*tawhīd*) constitutes a cardinal concept, and it frames the Islamic perception of both the physical and spiritual worlds. Islam denies any dichotomy between objective and subjective realities and instead aspires to a holistic understanding based upon faith and reason. Revelation, is the point of conjunction between the divine and the human; it sheds light on moral and metaphysical questions. Sayyid Qutb further describes the Islamic worldview as divine, permanent, comprehensive, realistic, and balanced. These traits underline the wholeness of the Islamic outlook, where all aspects of life interrelate, and also where divine guidance is seen as indispensable to an understanding of truth and reality.[34]

The main difference between an Islamic worldview and either a secular or a Christian one then falls on metaphysical grounding and the part of divine revelation. Where secular thought is concerned,

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[34] Qutb, *Khasāish al-Tasawwur al-Islāmī wa Muqawwamātuhu*, 40–42.

much of it places the large part of its focus on human reason and empirical knowledge, with little room for either the divine or an afterlife. The Christian worldviews depend precisely upon salvation and divine intervention but are very often mired by a realization of reality through the interpretation of the Bible. In contrast to that, the Islamic worldview posits a unique blend of revelation, a holistic view of the cosmos, and deep integration of spiritual-material dimensions. In that sense, the Islamic worldview provides a broader perspective on existence, ethics, and human purpose, placing it as a unique and multi-dimensional way of comprehending the world.

This comparison shows that the secular, Christian, and Islamic worldviews have common elements, while at the same time they differ from each other fundamentally in their way of facing metaphysics, divine revelation, and the nature of reality. The uniqueness of the Islamic worldview lies in revelation; it connects the spiritual and material worlds into one integral framework. This particularity of the Islamic worldview provides an integrated and holistic approach toward human beings' existence, morality, and cosmos.

The Interrelation of Worldview, Science, Language, and Religion in Shaping Human Thought

1. The Role of Worldview in Shaping Scientific Thought

Acquiring knowledge is inseparable from developing one's worldview. To Thomas S. Wall, the process of acquiring knowledge, understood as one of developing "epistemological beliefs,"

considerably influences an individual's worldview. At the same time, worldview controls the reasoning process involved in creating knowledge for an individual and influences the ways scientific paradigms and systems of belief are constructed. It establishes the nature of knowledge and how it is acquired.[35] Knowledge in Islamic thought is perceived as an end product of the set of interrelated beliefs, ideas, and aspirations, along with other concepts that are woven together in a network of systematized ideas.[36]

Sociologically, worldview formation in society is based on an intellectual ambiance, which would promote the dissemination of knowledge and developing intellectual traditions. It requires what is known as a "scientific conceptual scheme," which is an orderly structure of scientific concepts developed through concerted intellectual efforts.[37] Therefore, a worldview may be divided into two categories: natural and transparent. The natural worldview evolves with the evolution of time, whereas the transparent worldview is the end product of conscious reasoning. In the case of a natural worldview, knowledge is transmitted by means of scientific methodology and concepts, which in time gives way to the formation of a scientific worldview.[38] On the other side, a transparent worldview—Islamic thought—is not a product of an already-formed

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[35] Wall, *Thinking Critically About Philosophical Problems*, 126.

[36] Alparslan Acikgence, *Islamic Science Towards a Definition* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1996), 10.

[37] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Wordview Sebagai Asas Epistemologi Islam," *ISLAMIA: Majalah Pemikiran dan Peradaban Islam,* Tahun II, no. 5 (April 2005): 14.

[38] Acikgence, *Islamic Science Towards a Definition*, 13–14.

scientific community but rather stands on the foundation of divine revelation as carried by Prophet Muhammad. This method, according to the explanation of Prof. Alparslan, can be regarded as a "quasi-scientific worldview."[39]

A worldview takes form through mental processes that link concepts together, although a worldview is not a total sum of ideas within a thinker's mind. When knowledge is acquired, there is a natural process of selection where ideas are accepted or rejected. The accepted knowledge is integrated into the system of an individual's worldview, which will be in tune with the basic components of a worldview, that is, life, the world, humanity, values, and knowledge. Such elements provide the general framework for the interpretation of all dimensions of life and, therefore, the pattern of thought and the view of the world by an individual. It is a universal feature in every culture and can act as the ground on which worldviews, including Islam itself, have developed. Thus, scientific drives in the West, the East, or in any other Islamic culture have their roots in their respective worldviews.[40]

The scientific facet, in the West, refers to knowledge that is verifiable, observable, and empirically proved. Divine revelation does not come under the ambit of science as it is not empirically establishable. The various scientific paradigms existing in the West, such as positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, and

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[39] Acikgence, 19.

[40] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Worldview of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1996), 28–29.

constructionism, are all related to a specific worldview that influences conceptions about reality. These theories underline the dichotomous characteristic of the West, which often separates the objective from the subjective. This separation gave way to the emergence of extreme schools, such as materialism and idealism. Empiricism, rationalism, realism, nominalism, and pragmatism are some of the methodologies that emerge as an immediate offshoot of this dichotomous world outlook.

On the other hand, the Islamic worldview seems more integrated in its approach to knowledge. The knowledge in Islam is impossible to separate from a religious framework since it emanates from the teachings of the Qur'ān and the interpretations of Prophet Muhammad. Dr. Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi describes the evolution of knowledge in Islam in four stages of development, namely: 1) the stage of revelation of guidance from Allāh and the birth of an Islamic worldview; 2) a scientific structure within the Qur'ān and Hadith; 3) the rise of Islamic intellectual traditions; and 4) the emergence of Islamic disciplines.[41]

The Islamic worldview is made up of ideas that interrelate and stem from the understanding of God, divine revelation—the Qur'ān—creation, human soul nature, knowledge, religion, freedom, values, virtue, and happiness. These ideas make up a metaphysical system that is central to the interpretation of truth and reality.[42] Whereas

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[41] Zarkasyi, "Wordview Sebagai Asas Epistemologi Islam," 15.
[42] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, "The Worldview of Islam, An Outline, Opening Adress"," in *Islam and the Challange of Modernity, Proceeding of the*

Western thought tends to be bound by the empirical or rational type of knowledge, Islamic thought unites rationalism and empiricism, taking divine revelation as a source of knowledge that transcends that contained by what can be known empirically or rationally. The rational and empirical methods utilized in Islam and the West have similarities; however, the worldviews that inform them are radically dissimilar. The Islamic philosophy of science differs radically from that of the West in its assumptions concerning nature, humanity, knowledge, values, and life.[43]

This difference brings into sharp relief the important role of worldview with regard to not only the contents of thought but also the manner in which thought is sought and expressed. Islamic thought represents a unitary and comprehensive approach to science: divine revelation becomes indispensable for grasping the universe and man. At the same time, Islamic science does not refuse metaphysical considerations in contrast to what has occurred in Western paradigms, therefore providing fuller, if not richer, knowledge of nature and man.

2. The Impact of Worldview on Language Use and Meaning

Worldview is related to language because it is with the help of language that people can express their ideas, beliefs, and perceptions. Language cannot be regarded as neutral in the light of Wilhelm von Humboldt's claim: "Language is a means of categorization,

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Inaugural Symposium on Islam and the Challenge of Modernity: Historical and Contemporary Contexts, Kuala Lumpur, ed. Sharifah Shifa al-Attas (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1994), 29.

[43] Arif, *Islamic Science: Paradigma, Fakta dan Agenda*, 24.

comprehension, and conceptualization of the world, which presupposes that it reflects the very worldview which shapes it." The relationship between worldview and language can be investigated from both Western and Islamic standpoints, each with its specificities on how the language represents, reinforces, and shapes its speakers' worldview.[44]

Within the context of Western thought, the general argument is that a language evolves within cultural units as conditioned by historical contexts and societal needs. In such a perspective, language is made to appear dynamic, in that it evolves rather than being created. Changes within language in this perspective mirror basically the changing perceptions and values of a society in the light of an ever-altering view of the world. The evolution, then, is not merely linguistic but part of broader cultural transformations in which meaning and terminology are continually reassigned to assume new realities. Given the linear nature of Western culture, these changes are often portrayed as progressive, even synonymous with modernization and secularization, reflecting a view of the world dichotomized from considerations metaphysical or spiritual.[45]

To the Islamic worldview, however, such ongoing evolution of language evidenced in the West is something to be rejected. Islam holds dear the preservation of fixed values inspired from the Divine

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[44] James W. Underhill, *Humboldt, Worldview and Language* (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2009), 16.

[45] Naugle, *Worldview: The History of Concept* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdimans, 2002), 184.

and beyond the temporal material aspects. As Prof. Al-Attas has remarked, though language is a carrier of a worldview, Arabic, being the holy language of the Qur'ān, has a special status: it is the one language, he said, which, unlike the Western languages, never underwent any diachronic change in their conceptual meanings since the time of the Prophet Muhammad insofar as it is the language through which divine revelation has been communicated. The Qur'ān, being the eternal word of God, carries meanings that are perfect and unchangeable. Thus, the language of the Qur'ān constitutes, in a sense, the foundation of Islamic thought, and the vocabulary is representative of an unchanging world arising from the metaphysical and spiritual dimensions of reality.[46]

In this regard, Arabic is not simply a communicative medium in Islam but rather a sacred instrument that represents the permanent essence of the unchanging divine reality. The contents of meaning invested within the terms used in Arabic are viewed as timeless, never changing. From this respect, the Islamic language is an unchanging structure rather like the tree with its strong, unaltered roots, in contrast to the dynamic, never-settling character of the language in the West. These roots signify the very principles of Islam, such as *Tawhīd*, and cannot be removed or replaced by human whims or changes in society.[47]

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[46] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Risalah Untuk Kaum Muslimin* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 2001), 102.
[47] Al-Attas, 105.

The Arabic word for universe, *'alm*, is derived from the root *'alm*, which means knowledge. Although some linguists find an etymological link of the word with *'alāmāt*, which means signs, yet the link between *'alam* and *'ilm*, or knowledge, essentially underlines the Islamic outlook. In this respect, the universe is not a collection of physical incidents but a sign; it is the 'alāmāt, pointing towards the Creator. Knowledge (*'ilm*) emerges from those signs that indicate God's being and power of creation. It would, in effect, render the universe some sort of divine manifestation of knowledge, solidifying the perception that knowledge of the world cannot be unearthed independent of the Creator.

For that matter, the Arabic language reflects the Qur'ānic worldview within Islam. Their meanings, too, were stable and unchanging in that language, but were steeped with metaphysical conceptions that are beyond the material or terrestrial world. The language of Islam is thus not purely used as a tool for communication but, rather, the vessel to preserve and transmit an integral worldview—from material to spiritual—that remains so ostensibly contradictory to the Western conception of language, which repeatedly separates it from metaphysical concerns, locating language within the observable, material world.[48]

The relation of worldview to language is thus basic to the way in which individuals and societies conceptualize their perception of the world. Whereas Western thought tends to emphasize change and

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[48] Al-Attas, 105–6.

evolution in language based on change in social mores and values, Islam stands for the unchanging nature of the Arabic language, right from its divine origin. This difference in position underlines the fact that language is not only a means of communication but also a signifier of deeper, metaphysical realities constituting the worldview of a particular community. The stability and sanctity of the language of Islam serve to preserve a worldview that remains anchored in eternal spiritual truths, furnishing an integrated framework for making sense of both the natural and supernatural aspects of existence.

3. The Role of Worldview in Shaping Religious Perspectives

Having argued that a worldview is something that interacts both with science and language, it is important to examine the integral connection between worldview and religion. A worldview borrows a lot from deeply held beliefs, and religion is among the key things affecting one's worldview. This link is derived from how religion serves as a guide to interpreting life, purpose, morality, and existence, where different religious traditions provide unique perspectives on these features in relation to the core teachings found within each.

In the West, the term "religion" comes from the Latin religio, which has within it an implied sense of binding or connection. In Western thought, however, upon what this binding is based is usually not well defined. Historically, religions in the West have been regarded as one of the great social constructs that hold communities together, at times even being considered modes of constraint on individual freedom. It was through this tension—that of religious adherence

versus personal autonomy—that the rise of Western humanism emerged and went on to reshape the notion of religion in the West. It thus tends, along with other Western religions, to be regarded by its critics as a product of human culture—that is, as the result of historical forces and evolution in culture—rather than as an inspired structure.[49]

Religion in Western thought has often been framed in terms of its relation to the state and society. The interplay of individual and society and the governing power clarifies the concept of morality and justice and religion as a personal or societal philosophy. Thus, in a Western perspective, religious ethical systems are more often than not in a state of flux. They change according to the evolution of society, and, hence, the fabric of religion becomes more secularized— worldly and materialistic—and less related to metaphysical or supernatural roots.

In Islam, on the contrary, religion's understanding is qualitatively different. Religion in Islam is not a man-made thing; it is a divinely revealed system of life that was articulated through the teachings of the Qur'ān and the prophetic tradition. Thus, the Arabic word "dīn" comprises several important meanings outlined by scholars such as Prof. Al-Attas: 1) indebtedness or obligation, 2) submission, 3) divine judgment, 4) natural inclination. These meanings suggest the Islamic view of religion as a total system of life regulating the relation of the

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[49] al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 55.

individual with God, having moral obligations based upon divine commands.[50]

But the essential difference, from the Islamic perspective, is that religion does not represent an abstract collection of beliefs but instead a deep and complete mode of life. The Qur'ān reminds one that human beings are essentially indebted to God and must, therefore, cast themselves upon His guidance in all particulars of their lives. This submission is voluntary and is summarized in verses such as Ali Imrān (3:83), where the Qur'ān invites men and women to accept God's will freely, realizing the fact that He is the Creator of the universe. Such submission extends beyond rituals into a general world view, dictating even religious practice and conduct on moral and social issues.[51]

Justice in Islam takes an interesting twist in particular. While the Western notion of justice would originate primarily from humanistic or secular considerations, Islamic justice is bound intrinsically to divine law. Islamic justice begins with the integrity of the person, wherein the Qur'ān Al-A'rāf (7:172) displays the unique and moral awareness of a human being and responsibility to Allāh. The ultimate end of justice in Islam is to protect righteousness, not merely based upon societal whims but based upon the intent of Allāh. The ideal in Islam is at once a Muslim, or one who submits to God, and a Mu'mīn, or one who

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[50] Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam dan Sekularisme* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 2010), 64.

[51] al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 61.

believes in God's message; both roles are intertwined within a holistic framework of personal and collective morality.[52]

The worldview of Islam is at once personal and communal, providing a framework of individual conduct while emphasizing the interconnectedness of society. The whole concept is critical because the individual integrates into a collective and at the same time develops both his personal responsibility and social harmony. Based on this perception, a covenant between man and God, 'Ahd, establishes the basis of critical Islamic concepts like freedom, responsibility, justice, virtue, and brotherhood. The same rationale goes further to establish the relation of an individual to society at large and reflects eventually in governance and social order.[53]

Furthermore, Islam is a metaphysical concept of reality and thus finds itself right at the center of its vision. In this metaphysics, wujud stands contrasted with mawjud because all createdness would come within the purview of the divine will. Unity, wahdah, sets itself off against multiplicity, kathirah, and the eternal, baqa, against the transient, fana. These metaphysical distinctions put the believer within the context of the world and in relationship to the Creator.[54]

In short, the Islamic worldview is a holistic perspective wherein material and spiritual are not separated or pitted against each other in a dualistic manner but interconnected, both spheres of reality being derived in the last analysis from the will of God. This holistic

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[52] Al-Attas, *Risalah Untuk Kaum Muslimin*, 65.
[53] Al-Attas, 73.
[54] Al-Attas, 65.

perspective enables man to fathom reality more deeply, whereby religion is neither a worldly nor man-made institution but an ordained system from God to guide every detail in life. Thus, the Islamic concept of religion has its roots in divine revelation, offering man an all-inclusive eternal schema that shapes not only the belief of the individual but also the accepted way of life in society.

The Islamic Worldview: A Framework for Integrating Ethics into Science and Knowledge

Its urgency is that it acts as the very foundation and needs to keep the development and application of knowledge in line with the values and principles of Islam. Such an Islamic world view, ontologically anchored in critical concepts like *tawhīd*, *khalīfah*, and *adab*, guarantees a philosophical framework whereby scientific inquiry is shaped regarding perspective, method, and aim. It unifies material and spiritual dimensions, rebelling against reductionist materialism with the understanding that the quest for knowledge also encompasses that which is metaphysical. In sum, this holistic approach will ensure that in achieving scientific advancement, the understanding of the physical world is complemented by a parallel development of moral responsibility.

While an Islamic world view, on the one hand, fulfills the important ethical requirement of moving knowledge in service for people for their benefit and welfare, on the other hand, it observes values that avoid negative use of developments in science-like technologies of destruction and exploitative environmental practices

with a view to attain ecological and social balance. In this respect, it strengthens a specific cultural identity for Muslims to develop critical interaction with global development in science instead of the blind transfer of paradigms in conflict with Islamic values.[55]

A truly Islamic worldview grounds knowledge in sharī'ah principles and thus promotes a very sustainable manner of dealing with economics, health, and other environmental management aspects. The subsuming of science within the higher objectives of *sharī'ah*—what is better described as *maqāsid al-sharī'ah*—nurtures social justice, environmental care, and well-being. This framework also offers an alternative to those secular paradigms that have divorced science from spirituality. In contrast to the secular view, the Islamic worldview presents knowledge both as a means for material prosperity and spiritual elevation within a unitary vision of humanity's stewardship role in God's creation.[56]

This comprehensive framework of science, so much more relevant to the modern era, is an invitation to move toward integrative, value-based scientific practice. Anchored in an Islamic worldview, this integrative model may critically work out in Scopus-indexed academic discourses as a contribution to the solution of complex global problems and outline a paradigm that develops

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[55] Fadhil Sofian Hadi, Najib R.K. Allaham, and Hasrul Sani, "The History of Worldview in Secular, Christian, and Islamic Intellectual Discourse," *Tasfiyah: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2021), 49–74, https://doi.org/10.21111/tasfiyah.v5i1.5325.

[56] Yūsuf al-Qardhāwī, *Madkhal Li Dirāsah al-Syarī'ah al-Islāmiyyah* (Aljazair: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 1990), 39.

technology responsibly within the framework of universal ethical principles.

Traditionally, a number of eminent Muslim thinkers developed some fundamental concepts concerning the role and importance of an Islamic worldview in shaping science and intellectual activity. Al-Farabi (872-950 CE) produced one of the earliest systematic accounts of knowledge, integrating philosophical scholarship and Islamic doctrine. He regarded knowledge as the path to actualizing human potential, which terminates in happiness, identified as sa'āda, from an Islamic perspective. Science in the mind of Al-Farabi was the means to get the divine wisdom and to fulfill the task entrusted to the humans: to be a rational species that contributes to the harmony of society.[57]

Ibn Sina (980-1037 CE) furthered this integrated system of knowledge by postulating that intellectual engagement drew one closer to God through comprehending the underlying ordinances of nature, themselves signs of divine ordinance. His works on philosophy and medicine underlined the fact that science is a search for wisdom burdened with ethical connotations, itself part of the interlinking of the physical and metaphysical worlds.[58]

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[57] Abū Nasr al-Fārābī, *Kitāb Arā'ī Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fādhilah* (Beirut: Dār al-Masyriq, 1986), 17–19.

[58] Nur Khasanah, Achmad Irwan Hamzani, and Havis Aravik, "Klasifikasi Ilmu menurut Ibnu Sina," SALAM: Jurnal Sosial & Budaya Syar-i, vol. 7, no. 11 (2020), 993–1008.

Al-Ghazali (1058-1111 CE), again, viewed the influence of Hellenistic philosophy on Islamic thought with a critical eye.[59] He warned against the secularism and atheism wrapped up in the clothes of many Greek philosophies. He pressed for an epistemology based upon revelation and spiritual insight to counter pure rationalism, thereby strengthening the premise that scientific and philosophical inquiry needed to be determined by an Islamic worldview. Al-Ghazali emphasized how there was a requirement to bring together intellectual pursuits with spirituality, placing science within an ethical framework.[60]

In more recent times, Sayyid Muhammad Naquib al-Attas took part in defining an Islamic worldview as a system that governed the objectives and methodologies of knowledge. He held the view that secular knowledge, if taken in isolation from Islamic values, really runs the risk of misguided humanity. Al-Attas proposed an Islamic worldview that gives prominence to *ḥikmah* (wisdom) and *adab* (ethical discipline) to ensure that knowledge makes its due positive contribution toward human flourishing in harmony with divine guidance.[61]

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[59] Azis Arifin and Jaipuri Harahap, "Kritik Al-Ghazali Terhadap Para Filsuf," *Aqlaina: Jurnal Filsafat dan Teologi Islam*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Juni 2021), 75–94, https://doi.org/10.32678/aqlania.v12i1.4375.

[60] Abū Hāmid Al-Ghazālī, "Al-Ghazali Deliverance from Error and Mystical Union with Almighty (Al-Munqidh Min Al-Dhalāl," in *English Translation by Muhammad Abūlaylah* (Washington: Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication, 2001), 24.

[61] Ahmad Nur Jali and Undang Ruslan W, "Konsep Adab Menurut Syed Naquib Al-Attas," *Jurnal Al-Ulum: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Penelitian ke-Islaman,* 11, no. 1 (2024): 43–57, https://doi.org/10.31102/alulum.11.1.2024.

Another contemporary scholar, Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, insisted on the "Islamization of knowledge" with the purpose of bringing present scientific disciplines into correspondence with Islamic epistemology. He called for a reform in the curriculum used in modern education that would include values, principles, and purposes of Islam in all fields. Al-Faruqi's approach emphasized an epistemological reorientation by which Muslim societies could participate in the development of science and technology and at the same time preserve their ethical and cultural identities.[62]

These thinkers stress that science and knowledge must be channeled in the interests of human good and spiritual fulfillment in concert with an Islamic perspective. Together, their respective arguments make the case that only a robust Islamic worldview provides the critical ingredient for morally grounded scientific progress and the true intellect of Islamic civilization. In as much as scholarship currently and increasingly interacts with the interface between religion, ethics, and science, such views invite useful understandings for the desacralization of scientific quests toward worldly needs and transcendental ends alike.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study bring out the Islamic worldview as uniquely comprehensive in integrating ethics, science, and human

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[62] Muhamad Fajar Pranomo and M.Najib Abdussalam Mohamad Latief, "Integrasi Tauhid dan Khilafah menurut Ismail Raji al-Faruqi," *Kalimah: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama dan Pemikiran Islam*, vol. 20, no. 2 (2020), 167–84, https://doi.org/10.21111/klm.v20i2.7895.

responsibility, unlike the secular and Christian worldviews. Although the secular perspective is hedged on materialism and human autonomy, as is also the central element of salvation through divine creation in Christianity, the Islamic worldview provides a holistic integration of faith and reason. In Islam, ethical considerations cannot be divorced from the pursuit of knowledge because man is made a steward upon this Earth, *Khalīfah*, entrusted with the duty of responsibility not only towards fellow creations in society but to the environment. This holistic approach emanates from the ethics that the Qur'ān and the Hadith have laid down for scientific inquiry, technological advancement, and social responsibility.

In fact, historically Islamic contributions to medicine, astronomy, and environmental science reflect this integrated worldview whereby a pursuit of scientific knowledge is integrally related to ethical responsibility. This contrasts with a secular or Christian framework in which scientific knowledge can be discussed completely independent of ethics or reduce ethical concern to questions of salvation. Thus, the Islamic worldview, in its holism, provides a model in which scientific progress and ethical responsibility combine with social well-being to underscore the wider, more integrated outlook on knowledge and ethics promoted by Islam.

These insights reveal the profound depth in which the Islamic worldview informs human thought and action regarding a guiding framework that intrinsically integrates ethical principles in the quest for knowledge. The current research lays a foundation for further

study with regard to the role of worldview in integrating ethics with scientific and technological developments within the most diverse cultural and philosophical contexts, with the aim of underscoring what constitutes the singular comprehensiveness of the Islamic perspective.

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