

Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies: Toward an Integratif and Interconnected Epistemology of Knowledge

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Abstract

Islam represents a *syamil* and holistic religious tradition that embeds knowledge at the core of its civilizational vision, as reflected in the primordial command of *iqra'*. Historically, during the Islamic Golden Age, religious and scientific disciplines evolved within an integrated epistemic framework, demonstrated by the works of Muslim polymaths who refused the dichotomy between *ulum al-din* and *ulum al-dunya*. The rise of Western colonialism and secular educational reforms, however, generated a structural epistemological rupture that separated religious knowledge from modern science. In the Indonesian context, this fragmentation surfaced in the divergence between pesantren/madrasah and public schools, producing generations with partial disciplinary competence. Contemporary Muslim thinkers including Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and Fazlur Rahman have formulated intellectual responses to reconstruct Islamic epistemology, subsequently institutionalized through integrative–interconnective paradigms in Islamic higher education. In the era of globalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the reintegration of knowledge is increasingly indispensable to ensure that scientific advancement remains ethically grounded and that Islamic studies retain analytical relevance to complex socio-civilizational challenges. This article asserts that adopting an integrative paradigm of knowledge is essential for addressing the epistemological crisis in the Muslim world and reaffirming Islam's transformative role in modern civilization.

Keywords: Interdisciplinary; Multidisciplinary; Integratif; Interconnected Epistemology

Abstrak

Islam merepresentasikan suatu tradisi keagamaan yang syāmil dan holistik, yang menempatkan pengetahuan sebagai inti visi peradabannya, sebagaimana tercermin dalam perintah primordial *iqra'*. Secara historis, pada masa Keemasan Islam, disiplin keagamaan dan keilmuan berkembang dalam suatu kerangka epistemik yang terpadu, sebagaimana ditunjukkan oleh karya para cendekiawan Muslim multidisipliner yang menolak dikotomi antara '*ulūm al-dīn*' dan '*ulūm al-dunyā*'. Namun, bangkitnya kolonialisme Barat dan reformasi pendidikan sekuler melahirkan suatu keterputusan epistemologis yang bersifat struktural, yang memisahkan pengetahuan keagamaan dari sains modern. Dalam konteks Indonesia, fragmentasi ini tampak dalam pemisahan antara pesantren/madrasah dan sekolah umum, yang pada akhirnya melahirkan generasi dengan kompetensi keilmuan yang parsial. Para pemikir Muslim kontemporer seperti Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, dan Fazlur Rahman telah merumuskan berbagai respons intelektual untuk merekonstruksi epistemologi Islam, yang kemudian diinstitusionalisasikan melalui paradigma integratif-interkonektif dalam pendidikan tinggi Islam. Di era globalisasi dan Revolusi Industri Keempat, reintegrasi pengetahuan menjadi semakin niscaya untuk memastikan bahwa kemajuan sains tetap berlandaskan nilai-nilai etis serta agar studi-studi keislaman tetap memiliki relevansi analitis dalam menghadapi tantangan sosial dan peradaban yang semakin kompleks. Artikel ini menegaskan bahwa penerapan paradigma keilmuan integratif merupakan kebutuhan esensial untuk menjawab krisis epistemologis di dunia Muslim sekaligus meneguhkan kembali peran transformatif Islam dalam peradaban modern.

Kata kunci: Interdisipliner; Multidisipliner; Epistemologi Integratif dan Interkonektif

INTRODUCTION

Islam presents itself as a *syamīl* (universal and comprehensive) religious dispensation that regulates not only the vertical relationship between the human and the Divine but also the horizontal relationships among human beings and between humanity and the cosmos. One of its constitutive features is the axiological primacy it accords to knowledge as the generative principle of civilisation. This is epistemologically inscribed in the first Qur'ānic revelation, the imperative *iqra'* ("read"). The divine dictum states: "Read in the name of your Lord Who created; created man from a clot. Read, for your Lord is most generous, who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know." (Q 96:1–5).

The verse thus signals that the inaugural revelation is not a legal (*shar'ī*) ordinance but an epistemic charter: an unconditional command to read, learn, investigate and expand the frontiers of knowledge (RI, 2008).

Historical records attest that during Islam's "Golden Age" (8th–13th centuries CE) the religious and natural sciences evolved within a single epistemic ecology. Thinkers such as al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, al-Bīrūnī and Ibn Khaldūn refused to compartmentalise '*ulūm al-dīn* (religious sciences) and '*ulūm al-dunyā* (secular sciences) (Bakar, 1998). Ibn Sīnā, for example, produced the *al-Qānūn fī al-Ṭibb*, a medical encyclopaedia that remained authoritative in Europe until the seventeenth century (Sina, 1952), while Ibn Khaldūn's *al-Muqaddimah* pre-figured the discipline of sociology centuries before its Western articulation (Khaldun, 2004).

The colonial incursion and the subsequent secularisation of educational infrastructures in the Muslim world, however, engineered an epistemic rupture that institutionalised the dichotomy between religious and scientific knowledge. In Indonesia this bifurcation is materially embodied in the curricular divergence between Islamic boarding school and general schools, yielding successive generations whose intellectual formation is either confessional or technocratic but rarely both (Azra, 1999). The outcome is a cognitive *dédoublement*: '*ulamā'* who are hermeneutically

tone-deaf to contemporary phenomena, and scientists disembedded from ethical-metaphysical moorings.

Modern Muslim intellectuals have interrogated this epistemic split. Ismā'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī (1921–1986) proposed the “Islamization of Knowledge” as a counter-hegemonic epistemic project (al-Faruqi, n.d.). Syed Muḥammad Naquib al-Attas (1931–) argued for the re-infusion of adab (intellectual etiquette) into the very structure of learning (al-Attas, 1987), while Fazlur Rahman (1919-1988) advanced a “double-movement” hermeneutic to mediate between revelatory text and historical context (Rahman, 1962).

Within Indonesian scholarship the integrative–interconnective paradigm pioneered by Amin Abdullah at UIN Sunan Kalijaga has sought to reconcile the Islamic, social and natural sciences within a single epistemic horizon (Abdullah, 2012). The paradigm has been institutionalized—albeit with local inflections—across the State Islamic University system: UIN Malang’s “Tree of Knowledge”, UIN Jakarta’s “Transformative Islam”, and UIN Alauddin Makassar’s tauhīdī model (Nata, 2010).

The urgency of epistemic integration has intensified in the context of globalisation and Industry 4.0, whose multi-dimensional problematic-environmental degradation, bio-ethical dilemmas, digital disruption, algorithmic governance—cannot be addressed from within single disciplines. Absent an integrative apparatus, fiqh ossifies into legalistic formalism oblivious to scientific contexts, while techno-science forfeits its ethical compass. The Qur'ān's directive is unequivocal: “Seek, by means of what God has granted you, the abode of the Hereafter, yet forget not your portion of the present world” (Q 28:77).

The verse furnishes a normative warrant: Islam does not reject modernity perse; rather, it demands its re-inscription within a taubīdī axiological matrix. Accordingly, this article is situated within two intersecting problematics:

1. The epistemic cleavage between religious and secular knowledge that erodes the

intellectual competitiveness of the ummah in global knowledge systems.

2. The imperative for a new paradigm-interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and ultimately integrative-interconnective Islamic studies-capable of sustaining Islam's explanatory and transformative relevance to the civilisational challenges of the contemporary world.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach anchored in library-based research. All data were elicited from published books, peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, policy documents and other textual sources; no primary fieldwork was conducted. Primary sources comprise canonical works that directly address the integrative-interconnective epistemology of Islamic knowledge. Secondary sources-reference works, scholarly articles, monographs and institutional reports-were deployed to corroborate, contextualise and deepen the analysis.

Data were collected through systematic documentation: tracing, close reading and annotating relevant literature. Analytical procedures followed the protocol of content analysis entailing (1) data reduction, (2) data display and (3) conclusion drawing/verification (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2020). Source triangulation was employed to enhance the credibility and objectivity of findings by cross-verifying claims across multiple references.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies

1.1 Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies

1.1.1 Definition and Characteristics

Interdisciplinary Islamic studies is an approach that integrates multiple academic disciplines within a unified analytical framework. Unlike multidisciplinary studies—which merely juxtapose disciplines without methodological synthesis—

interdisciplinary inquiry fosters dialogical engagement, conceptual cross-fertilization, and epistemic integration (cf. Connolly 1999; Abdullah 2012).

For instance, the study of zakat is no longer confined to fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) but is simultaneously examined through economic theory (distribution efficiency), sociology (social mobility), political science (state policy), and information technology (Sharia-compliant fintech). The result is a holistic, multi-layered understanding that a single-discipline lens cannot provide.

1.1.2 Qur'ānic Foundations

The Integration of Revealed and Empirical Knowledge

﴿سُنِّرِيْهُمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ﴾
(فصلت [41]:[53])

We shall show them Our signs upon the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that this Qur'ān is the truth" (Q 41:53, RI 2008).

The verse underlines the epistemic obligation to read the signs of God both in the discursive text of revelation (*qauliyyah*) and in the cosmic text of the universe (*kauniyyah*), thereby mandating a balance between worldly and other-worldly domains of knowledge.

﴿وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبِكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا﴾
(القصص [28]:[77])

Seek, by means of what God has bestowed upon you, the abode of the Hereafter, and forget not your share of this world" (Q 28:77, RI 2008).

The verse enshrines the principle of equilibrium: religious and worldly disciplines must proceed in tandem, neither eclipsing the other.

﴿أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ﴾
(يوسف [12]:[109])

Have they not travelled upon the earth and observed how those before them ended?"

(Q 12:109, RI 2008).

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The verse mandates a socio-historical lens, foregrounding the necessity of historical and sociological inquiry within Islamic studies. The verse mandates a socio-historical lens, foregrounding the necessity of historical and sociological inquiry within Islamic studies.

1.1.3 Prophetic Corroboration

The Obligation to Seek Knowledge

« طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ »

(رواه ابن ماجه، رقم 224)

Hadīth literature complements this stance: the universal obligation to seek knowledge (Ibn Mājah 224),

« إِنَّمَا أَعْلَمُ بِأُمُورِ دُنْيَاكُمْ » (رواه مسلم، رقم 2363)

“You are better acquainted with the affairs of your world.” (Muslim 2363)

The ḥadīth designates empirical disciplines-agronomy, economics, technology-as the legitimate creative space of human agency, while simultaneously leaving them open to integration with revelational values.

« إِذَا مَاتَ الْإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ: صَدَقَةٌ جَارِيَةٌ، أَوْ عِلْمٌ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ، أَوْ وَلَدٌ صَالِحٌ يَدْعُو لَهُ »

(رواه مسلم، رقم 1631)

When a human being dies, their deeds come to an end except for three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, and a righteous child who prays for them.” (Muslim 1631)

The ḥadīth establishes that any knowledge-religious or secular-which generates collective benefit constitutes a perpetual, eschatologically rewarded act.

1.1.4 Illustrative Applications

a. Digital Zakat

1. Fiqh: legal validity and distributional rules.
2. Economics: poverty-reduction impact evaluation.
3. Information Systems: blockchain-based transparency mechanisms.
4. Sociology: user trust and behavioural adoption.

b. Contemporary Islamic Education

1. Tafsīr: pedagogical theology of the iqra' verse (Q 96:1-5).
2. Developmental Psychology: age-appropriate cognitive scaffolding.
3. Curriculum Studies: competency-based learning design.
4. Educational Technology: adaptive e-learning platforms.

c. Islamic Bioethics

1. Fiqh: rulings on organ transplantation and IVF.
2. Medicine: clinical risk–benefit matrices.
3. Moral Philosophy: patient autonomy and confidentiality.
4. Sufism: spiritual dimensions of healing.

1.1.5 Critical Appraisal

Strengths:

1. Produces comprehensive, non-fragmented knowledge.
2. Enhances policy relevance for complex socio-technical problems.
3. Reconciles revelation, reason, and empirical reality.

Limitations:

1. Demands cross-disciplinary competence rarely institutionalised.
2. Risks epistemic reductionism if integrative protocols are absent.
3. Requires transparent, replicable methodological frameworks (Hidayat 2016).

1.1.6 Philosophical Reflection

Interdisciplinary Islamic studies operationalises the Qur'ānic ideal of the ummatan wasaṭan

(وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أَمَّةً وَسَطَا لِتُكُوِّنُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ)

(البقرة [2] :143)

Thus we have made you a middle community, that you may be witnesses over humankind." (Q 2:143, RI 2008)

The verse enshrines the principle of epistemic equilibrium-revelation and reason, the normative and the empirical—constituting the axiological core of any interdisciplinary Islamic methodology.

1.2 Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies

1.2.1 Definition and Concept

A multidisciplinary approach mobilises several disciplines in parallel to analyse a single phenomenon while each discipline retains its native methodology and epistemological commitments (Connolly 1999). In Islamic studies this implies that exegesis, jurisprudence, and ḥadīth criticism co-exist alongside sociology, psychology, economics, and natural sciences without necessarily forging a unified meta-methodology (Hidayat 2016).

1.2.2 Qur'ānic and Ḥadīth Foundations

Verses enjoining contemplation of the Qur'ān

(أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوْجَدُوا فِيهِ احْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا)

(النساء [4] :82)

Do they not contemplate the Qur'ān? Had it been from any other than God, they would have found in it much discrepancy." (Q 4:82, RI 2008).

The verse furnishes a Qur'ānic warrant for textual hermeneutics and, by

extension, for empirical investigation: coherence across revelation and the cosmos is itself a sign of divine authorship, thus legitimising disciplined inquiry into both textual and natural phenomena.

(فَدْ خَلَّتْ مِنْ قَبْلَكُمْ سُنُنُّ فَسَيِّرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ)

(آل عمران [3]:137)

Indeed, there have passed before you cycles of God's law; so travel the earth and observe how those who denied the signs fared in the end." (Q 3:137, RI 2008).

The verse constitutes a Qur'ānic sanction for empirical-historical inquiry: systematic observation of socio-natural phenomena is cast as a spiritual-epistemic act that discloses the moral-causal order embedded in creation.

(الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ)

(آل عمران [3]:191)

Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and who reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth." (Q 3:191, RI 2008).

The verse delineates a spiritual-epistemic modality in which ritual remembrance (*dhikr*) and cosmological contemplation are fused, legitimising affective-cognitive engagement with the natural order as an integral component of Islamic scholarship.

أَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِأُمُورِ دُنْيَاكُمْ (مسلم، رقم 2363)

You are better acquainted with the affairs of your world." (Muslim 2007).

The ḥadīth signals Islam's epistemic openness to worldly sciences, thereby furnishing a prophetic license for multidisciplinary engagement that preserves disciplinary autonomy while remaining nested within an overarching value framework.

1.2.3 Multidisciplinary Applications

- a. Islamic Education
 - 1. Tafsīr: theological grounding of learning.
 - 2. Educational Psychology: cognitive development stages.
 - 3. Sociology of Education: cultural learning patterns.
 - 4. EdTech: digital-pedagogy affordances.
- b. Islamic Law
 - 1. Fiqh: normative rulings.
 - 2. Positive Law: statutory transplantation.
 - 3. Human Rights: universal justice metrics.
 - 4. Criminology: socio-aetiological analyses.
- c. Islamic Economics
 - 1. Fiqh al-mu'amalāt: contract law, prohibition of ribā, zakāt regulations.
 - 2. Neoclassical Economics: market-failure theory.
 - 3. Management Science: governance of Islamic financial institutions.
 - 4. FinTech: sharia-compliant cryptocurrencies and zakāt apps.
- d. Islamic Medicine
 - 1. Ḥadīth: hygiene and dietary norms.
 - 2. Biomedicine: disease pathophysiology.
 - 3. Bioethics: organ transplantation, abortion, euthanasia.
 - 4. Sufi Psychology: spiritual well-being.
- e. Environmental Studies
 - 1. Fiqh: prohibition of ifsād fī al-ard (corruption on earth).
 - 2. Ecology: conservation biology.
 - 3. Environmental Sociology: socio-ecological feedback loops.
 - 4. Green Economics: circular-economy models.

1.2.4 Evaluation

Advantages:

- 1. Supplies multiple analytical angles simultaneously.
- 2. Accommodates complex problems that exceed mono-disciplinary reach.
- 3. Strengthens the applied dimension of Islamic research.

Disadvantages:

- 1. Fragmentation: disciplines remain epistemically siloed.

2. Absence of synthetic unity → latent methodological contradictions.
3. Serves as a preliminary rather than integrative stage (Abdullah 2012).

1.3 Integrative-Interconnected Epistemology of Knowledge

1.3.1 Definition

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge that examines its sources, methods, and validity. Within the Islamic tradition, an integrative-interconnected epistemology is a paradigm that conjoins revelatory sources (*naqlī*) with rational inquiry ('*aqlī*) and empirical experience (*tajribī*) (Connolly 1999).

Amin Abdullah conceptualises this paradigm as constructing a dialogical bridge between the religious and the secular sciences, enabling mutual conversation and collaboration (Abdullah 2012).

1.3.2 Ontological Grounding in *Tawhīd*

The principle of *tawhīd* supplies the ontological foundation for epistemic integration. All knowledge—religious or scientific—originates from a single source: God. The Qur'ān states: "He it is who created for you all that is on the earth" (Q 2:29), indicating that the study of worldly phenomena is itself an act of worship. A Prophetic report corroborates this: "Whomsoever God intends good, He grants him deep understanding of religion" (Bukhārī–Muslim), where *al-dīn* is construed as the totality of life-values deserving of worship, not merely normative rulings.

1.3.3 Tripartite Methodological Pillars

The integrative-interconnected epistemology rests on three methodological pillars:

1. *Bayānī*: text-based reasoning (Qur'ān, Sunnah, classical heritage).
2. *Burhānī*: rational-empirical reasoning (logic, science, research).
3. *'Irfānī*: intuitive-spiritual reasoning (Sufism, ethics, wisdom) (al-Jābirī 1991).

When isolated, each pillar risks epistemic distortion: *bayānī* may yield textual literalism, *burhānī* positivist reductionism, and *'irfānī* subjective mysticism. Their integration engenders a holistic scientific paradigm (Bakar 1998).

1.3.4 Integration of Text (Naqlī) and Context ('Aqlī)

The paradigm rejects the dichotomy between revelatory text and social reality. The Qur'ān commands: "Travel the earth and observe how those who denied the truth ended" (Q 3:137), thereby sanctioning empirical social research as religious praxis. Fazlur Rahman labels this the double movement: from text to context, and back to text, generating renewed understanding relevant to contemporary conditions (Rahman 1962).

1.3.5 Models of Knowledge Integration in the Muslim World

1. Islamization of Knowledge: Ismā'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī: modern sciences must be "Islamized" to align with *tawhīdic* values (al-Fārūqī n.d.).
2. Knowledge Integration: Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: integration anchored in the concept of *adab* (normative comportment within knowledge) (al-Attas 1987).
3. Integrative-Interconnected: Amin Abdullah: dialogical convergence of religious, social, and natural sciences (Abdullah 2012).
4. Science-Religion Dialogue: Seyyed Hossein Nasr: proposes an "Islamic science" grounded in *tawhīdic* cosmology (Nasr 1968).

1.3.6 Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths:

1. Bridges religious and modern sciences.
2. Fosters multi-dimensional research innovation.

3. Avoids epistemic reductionism.
4. Addresses global civilisational demands.

Weaknesses:

1. Requires human resources with dual competencies.
2. Lacks a standardised methodological protocol.
3. Faces resistance from traditionalist constituencies.

1.3.7 Relevance to Contemporary Challenges

The integrative epistemology offers robust responses to:

1. Environmental crisis: integrating environmental fiqh with modern ecology.
2. Bioethics: interfacing Islamic law with biomedicine (organ transplantation, gene editing).
3. Digital technology: aligning fiqh al-mu'amalah with digital economics (fintech, crypto-assets, digital zakāt).

The Qur'ān states: "Seek, by means of what God has granted you, the abode of the Hereafter, yet forget not your share of this world" (Q 28:77), providing a normative basis that Islam does not reject modernity provided it is oriented toward the common good.

1.4 Case Studies in Knowledge Integration

1.4.1 Indonesia

UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

Pioneered the integrative-interconnected paradigm popularised by Amin Abdullah, metaphorically depicted as a "Spider Web" that interconnects religious, social, humanistic, and natural sciences. The curriculum obliges theology students to take sociology, anthropology, and philosophy, while science students enrol in Islamic-studies courses (Azra 1999). Contributions:

1. Generates interdisciplinary research in Islamic education, gender, Sharia economics, and Islamic science.

2. Internationally recognised as a model of epistemic integration.

UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang

Employs the “Tree of Knowledge” metaphor: roots = *tawhīd*, trunk = *sharī'ah*, branches = modern sciences. All disciplines are viewed as emanations of *tawhīd*, rendering the secular sciences manifestations of faith (Asy'arie 1999).

Contributions:

1. Produces graduates with dual religious and scientific competencies.
2. Serves as a hub for *tawhīd* based knowledge integration.

UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

Advances a “Transformative Islam” paradigm through a multidisciplinary curriculum responsive to human rights, democracy, gender, and pluralism (Azra 1999). Contributions:

1. Nurtures leading Indonesian Muslim intellectuals.
2. Promotes research on national issues (corruption, injustice, poverty) (Mujani 2007).

UIN Alauddin Makassar

Applies a *tauhīdī* model: every discipline is referred back to *tawhīd* as the epistemic axiom. Emphases include environmental fiqh, Islamic health sciences, and Sharia-based value education (Daya 2018). Contributions:

1. Drives knowledge integration in Eastern Indonesia.
2. Generates eco-theological and local-wisdom-based research.

1.4.2 Muslim World

International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)

Founded on al-Fārūqī’s “Islamization of Knowledge” vision, its curriculum fuses Islamic studies with medicine, law, engineering, and social sciences. Contributions:

1. Produces global Muslim intellectuals.

2. Internationally cited success story of large-scale integration (Kalin 2004).

ISTAC, Malaysia

Established by al-Attas, foregrounds adab-centred integration, re-inserting modern science into a *tawhīdic* cosmological frame (Nasr 1968). Contributions:

1. Leading centre for Islamic philosophy of science.
2. Produces seminal works on Islamic epistemology.

Aligarh Muslim University, India

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's project to integrate modern Western education with Islamic values (Robinson 2002). Contributions:

1. Paved the way for Islamic educational reform in South Asia.
2. Prototype for modern Muslim universities.

Middle-Eastern Islamic Universities

Institutions such as al-Azhar have experimented with integration, albeit predominantly normative-theological. Recently, al-Azhar has incorporated modern social sciences within contemporary *fiqh* frameworks (Zeghal 1996).

1.5 Comparative Analysis

1. Indonesia (UIN): curriculum-level integration, contextualised to national development needs.
2. Malaysia (IIUM & ISTAC): ideological-philosophical Islamization of knowledge.
3. India (Aligarh): modernisation of Islamic education as anti-colonial strategy.
4. Egypt (al-Azhar): gradualist traditional-modern synthesis.

CONCLUSION

1. Interdisciplinary & Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies
 - a. Interdisciplinarity foregrounds dialogical synthesis (e.g., *tafsīr* + sociology + anthropology).
 - b. Multidisciplinarity offers parallel disciplinary insights, yet stops short of methodological fusion.
 - c. Both constitute stepping-stones toward an integrative-interconnected epistemology.
2. Integrative-Interconnected Epistemology
 - a. Rooted in *tawhīd*: unity of epistemic source (God) and method (revelation–reason–experience).
 - b. Operationalises the tripartite *bayānī*–*burhānī*–*‘irfānī* model.
 - c. Rejects the religious/secular knowledge divide.
3. Classical and Modern Contributions
 - a. Classical polymaths (al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Khaldūn) instantiated integration.
 - b. Modern thinkers (al-Fārūqī, Fazlur Rahman, al-Attas, Nasr, Abdullah, Azra) reconstructed epistemology for contemporary relevance.
4. Institutional Models
 - a. UIN Sunan Kalijaga: “Spider-Web” integrative model.
 - b. UIN Malang: *tawhīd* -rooted “Tree of Knowledge”.
 - c. UIN Jakarta: transformative, socio-politically engaged.
 - d. IIUM & ISTAC: ideological & philosophical Islamization.
 - e. Aligarh: modernist anti-colonial reform.
 - f. al-Azhar: traditionalist gradual opening.

5. Challenges and Prospects

- a. Challenges: epistemic dichotomies, methodological resistance, human-resource deficits, globalisation pressures.
- b. Prospects: addresses modern civilisational crises, supports Sustainable Development Goals, strengthens State Islamic University curricula, and nurtures multi-dimensional Muslim scholars capable of global intellectual contribution.

An integrative-interconnected epistemology thus offers both a corrective to the epistemic fragmentation of the Muslim world and a constructive Islamic contribution to contemporary global scholarship.

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