

i. If you characterize something in terms of how it relates to what is other, you are not characterizing it as it is in itself. (This premise is justified by an analysis of the concept of a thing in itself.)

ii. Things in themselves cannot be accurately characterized by external relations. (From i)

iii. The spatial properties of an object are essentially external relations. (This premise is justified by the foregoing analysis of enantiomorphs.)

iv. Things in themselves cannot be accurately characterized in terms of spatial properties. (From ii and iii)

v. Things in themselves do not have spatial properties. (From iv)

While a complete evaluation of this argument is beyond the scope of this paper, I do believe that it enjoys greater intuitive plausibility than the Inversion Argument. There is, moreover, a textual basis for attributing this argument to Kant. Though he does not explicitly advance the Externality Argument in the *Prolegomena*, we do find the following passage in his *Critique of Pure Reason* that advances a concise version of it.

Now a thing in itself cannot be known through mere relations; and we may therefore conclude that since outer sense gives us nothing but mere relations, this sense can contain in its representation only the relation of an object to the subject, and not the inner properties of the object in itself. [2, B67]

## 5. Conclusion

In the foregoing, we have seen that Kant's solution to the Paradox of Incongruent counterparts provides the basis for a promising argument showing that space is not a property of things in themselves. Additionally, we noted that it is an argument that Kant himself endorses in a brief passage in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. It turns out, then, that the Neglected Alternative is not so neglected by Kant after all.

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Мақалада автор Кант философиясын (Neglected Alternative) қарастырады.

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В статье автор рассматривает философию Канта (Neglected Alternative).

**WANG Jianxin**

## MUSLIMS AND ISLAMIC CULTURE IN JAPAN: A FIELD REPORT

### 1. Introduction

Just in recent years, academic researchers in Japan began to pay attention to Muslim society and Islamic culture in their own country, and regard Islam as an important, inseparable part of their religious tradition. However, Islam is still a very young religion comparing with other religious traditions in Japan. It became a part of Japanese religious tradition just from the end of Meiji period, and its influences have expanded very slowly in Japanese population. Even nowadays, it is still hard to say that Islam has strong influence as a religious tradition and its existence easy to be identified in Japan.

Now we are facing two problems in this academic production. Muslim population in Japan is very small, and it has no concentrated living area but scatters among non-Muslim Japanese population. Such conditions of Muslim distribution bring about the first problem, that studies on Muslims and Islamic culture in Japan cannot be undertaken at regional or community levels. The second problem is, That it is even hard to say Muslims in Japan have their own folk traditions such as Muslims do in other Asian countries.

For the purpose of making clear the present conditions of Muslim population in the urban area of Japan, I conducted a research in the Tokyo

metropolitan area. From the spring of the year 2000, I began to visit some major Muslim organizations and Islamic centers, undertaking interviews with Muslims who were there to observe their routine prayers and take part in other religious activities. I also collected materials in relation to the formation and development of those Muslim organizations. Here, my descriptions are based mainly on the data and materials I collected at those Muslim organizations in Tokyo area. The contents of my paper may not cover all Muslims in Japan, but it will provide helpful information on the present conditions of Muslims in Japan, including foreign Muslims and Japanese Muslims, and their Islamic culture.

Japanese people began to have their traditional religion, Shinto, from about 5<sup>th</sup> century. Almost from the same period, they also became Buddhism believers. It was about the middle of 15<sup>th</sup> century, that a part of Japanese people began to believe Christianity.<sup>1</sup> During the long historical procession of religious acculturation in Japan, these religions became the inseparable parts of Japanese religious tradition, contributing to the cultural exchanges between Japan and the other part of the world. As a natural result of such cultural exchanges, Islam began to be adopted by Japanese believers from the end of Meiji period.

It is said that the first Islamic believer in Japan was Yamada Torajiro, a rich merchant lived in Kamakura City (Morimoto 1980: 14-17). At first, he went to Osman Turkey to teach Japanese language in 1893, and became a Muslim there. Then he conducted trading business between Osman Turkey and Japan for several decades. Around the beginning of the twentieth century, several other Japanese converted to Islam, such as Ahmad Aruga became Muslim in Bonbey India, Omar Yamaoka went to Mecca as the first Japanese pilgrim (Morimoto 1980: 9). Therefore, we can say that Japanese people began to believe Islam from the end of Meiji period.

The Muslim population increased quickly after the First World War, when several thousands Turkic-speaking Muslims came to live in Japan from Central Asia. They built mosques in Tokyo, Kobe and Nagoya under the help of Japanese government and local residents, formed several small Muslim communities in their living areas (Komura 1988: 295-312). However, these Muslim communities in Tokyo, Kobe and Nagoya gradually disappeared in the Second World War, for a great part of the Turkic-speaking Muslims escaped to other countries after their living conditions became

worse in Japan.

The population of Japanese Muslims began to increase again after the Second World War, when many pioneer Japanese Muslims came back from Muslim countries and areas in Southeast Asia, China and Central Asia. They were sent there for military ruling and spy activities but became pious Islamic believers after they got deep insights into Muslim society and Islamic culture. When they came back home after the war, they began to conduct missionary activities among their fellow Japanese and contribute to the cultural exchanges between Japanese and Muslims in other countries.

After the "oil shock" in the first half of 1970s, Japanese government began to give importance to its relations to the Islamic world, especially the Middle Eastern countries. Many Muslim businessmen, physical labors and students came to work or study, contributing to the increase of Muslim population in Japan. Around the end of 20th century, Muslim population, including both foreign Muslims and Japanese Muslims, was said reaching about one hundred thousands (Kurasawa 2000).

The development of Muslim society and Islamic culture in the past century resulted in the appearance of Muslim literature in Japan. There were some important works appeared, such as "Islam in Japan" (Morimoto 1980), "Japan Islam history" (Komura 1988) and "Muslim Nippon" (Tasawa 1998). All these books provide with us precious information about the formation and development of Muslim society and Islamic culture in Japan. However, comparing with those works on historical events, we have less information on the present conditions of foreign and Japanese Muslims, their social organizations and interactions with the host Japanese society and culture.

Nowadays, Islam has already become an important cultural window for Japanese people to understand the part of the world with a cultural system totally different from their traditional ones. For Japanese people, that believe Islam means not only adopting a new religious tradition, but also gaining a convenient access to understand a civilization supporting one fifth of the world's population. Therefore, I believe that my study can surely benefits both the understanding of Islamic culture in Japan, and the understanding of the internationalization of Japanese society and culture.

## 2. Muslim Organizations and Ritual Centers

At the present day, Muslims in Japan have almost no concentrated living areas which can be mentioned as Muslim communities. They are just living together with other non-Muslim Japanese. For maintaining group activities and cultivating the common consciousness of being Muslims, they are making efforts to maintain various Muslim

<sup>1</sup> It seems quite difficult to make sure the exact dates of these religious conversions in Japanese history. So, I just give the approximate ones, referring Encyclopedia Nipponica and Cyclopedia of Japanese History, for the convenience of a brief describing on the concerned historical events.

organizations, prayer centers as the symbolic existence of their Muslim communities.

There are two kinds of Muslim organizations in Tokyo area. One is religious organization founded through judicial registration, and the other is voluntary group made freely by Muslims on their own purposes. The former ones are large-scaled Muslim organizations, which have their contracted members, clear missionary aims and provide their members with the facilities of Islamic education. The latter ones are small-scaled Muslim groups, which have no contracted members, education facilities, and owned by Muslims from some specific foreign countries and areas.

There are two major Muslim organizations, those religious corporations founded through legal registration in Tokyo area, Japan Muslim Association and Islamic-Center Japan. Japan Muslim Association is the oldest Muslim organization founded by a group of pioneer Japanese Muslims in 1953. It was registered as a religious corporation in 1968. Now, this organization has about 3000 regular members and 2000 observer members, and owns a Muslim cemetery located in Enzan City, Yamanashi prefecture.<sup>2</sup> All members at its board of management are Japanese Muslims. Its office is located on the tenth floor of a mansion building near Shinjuku station. Islamic-center Japan is the largest Muslim organization founded by mainly foreign Muslims in 1974. It has about 5000 members and owns a five-storied office building, Islamic Hall, near Shimokitazawa station of Keio line (Samaray 1997). Within eighteen committee members at its board of management, fifteen of them are foreign Muslims from Saudi Arabia, China, Tataristan and Pakistan.

Other than these two Muslim organizations, there are several other mosques and prayer centers for Muslims to observe routine prayers. The largest one is Tokyo Mosque located near Yoyogi Uehara station of Chiyoda line. Tokyo mosque was built in 1938 by a group of Turkic-speaking Muslims from Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tataristan, but was destroyed by an earthquake in 1986. In 1996, Turkey's government began to aid its reconstruction, and let it opened in the summer of 2000 (Sakamoto 2000). At the present, Tokyo mosque is actually managed by a group of Turkish Muslims, but it is open to also Muslims from other countries. Muslims from Bangladesh and Burma commonly own a prayer center near Shinokubo station of Yamanote line, Pakistani Muslims own a prayer center near Otsuka station, Iranian Muslims

maintains a prayer center near Ikebukuro station. Though these mosques and prayer centers are owned and maintained by Muslims from these respective countries, they are open to all Muslims with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

All these Muslim organizations and prayer centers in Tokyo area are located in some central habitation areas, without exceptions, having easier access to railway stations. This social fact reflects just the scattering distribution of Muslim habitation and the absence of their concentrated communities. Muslims in the Tokyo area use these organizations and prayer centers to reconfirm each other their religious consciousness and their relations to Islamic culture and the Islamic world.

### 3. Religious Activities and Islamic Education

A late Muslim researcher on Islam in Japan, Abu Bakr Morimoto, once mentioned that an Arab Muslim leader commented on Japanese religious life by saying 'Japan is a land of religious vacuum'. He rejected this opinion and wrote that Japanese people have their own understanding to their religion, their own ways of religious conduction. What important to Japanese Muslims is not to follow exactly what Arab Muslims do, but to raise up gradually the consciousness of being Muslims and to create their own traditions of Islamic believing (Morimoto 1980:1-7). What did Abu Bakr Morimoto want to tell us is that we should understand Japanese Muslims and their religious conduction by a wider and gradual view of religious acculturation.

My field research verified exactly this point. In Japan, we can hardly see Muslims observe their routine prayers and hold ritual ceremonies at public places. If they do, they may probably do it in their own houses and prayer centers, because their social circumstances make them hesitate to do that. Inviting imams to preside ritual ceremonies is almost impossible in remote areas, even difficult in central towns. Thus, the offices of these Muslim organizations and ritual centers become very important for Muslims. Other than observing prayers and holding religious ceremonies, the offices and ritual centers are actually playing the role of service centers for the various needs of maintaining the Islamic way of social life.

For example, the center office of Japan Muslim Association is a 3LDK apartment. It consists of two larger rooms used respectively as praying hall and classroom, a smaller room as library, the sitting room used as the reception, the kitchen used as purification room. The association has only one full-time staff, with other responsible members working at the office on only some certain weekdays. However, they will all get together for the collective prayers on Friday. Then on Saturdays

<sup>2</sup> The number of the organization's members here was given by the director of Japan Muslim Association in an interview made in the spring of 2000

and Sundays, the office is usually used for Islamic studying and various ritual gatherings. The office is open not only to all Muslims but also to non-Muslims observers. Muslims can become regular members of the association. The regular members have to pay membership fees but they enjoy special services at reduced prices, such as taking part in various ritual ceremonies, receiving Arabic education and using Muslim cemetery. Non-Muslims can become observer members who have the right to use religious materials and observe ritual activities the organization undertaken.

Islamic-Center Japan owns a five-storied building. Its first floor is used as reception and sitting room, the second floor used as purification room, the third floor used as prayer hall, the fourth floor used as its center office and Islamic library, the five floor used as class rooms. Islamic-center Japan has three full-time staff for maintaining its daily services to Muslims and non-Muslim visitors. Its responsible members at its board of directors get together there on Fridays for observing collective prayers and exchanging opinions on the center's management affairs. The center has three imams, one Japanese, one Saudi Arabian and one Pakistani, who are in charge of respectively guiding ritual prayers in different languages to Muslims with different ethnic and language background.

Both two organizations provide Muslims and non-Muslims with language classes to learn Arabic, as well as religious seminars for studying Islamic disciplines and routines. The organizations also provide Muslims, especially to Japanese Muslims, with ritual gatherings to observe and learn basic rules and manners needed for Muslim life. For examples, they organize summer camps for the exchanges between foreign Muslims and Japanese Muslims, providing chances for them to observe the Islamic ways of butchering domestic animals, the Muslim ways of diet and clothing customs. Also they perform missionary rituals for converting Japanese people to Islam, and hold Islamic rituals to confirm the marriage relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. These organizations maintain religious classes at their center offices, and also send teachers to give lessons on Islam at public schools, non-government organizations and companies having business relations with Muslim countries and areas.

These two Muslim organizations function also as the cultural windows for international exchanges between Japanese people and Muslims in the Islamic world. Japan Muslim Association is maintaining several branch offices in Southeastern Asia and Arab countries, sending Islamic researchers and students to collages and universities in these countries. Islamic-center Japan has close relations with almost all embassies of Muslim

countries in Tokyo area, issuing certificates for marriage relations and Islamic conversion in the needs of Japanese Muslims.

Islamic-center Japan also publishes the only Islamic journal in Japan, Al-Salam. The center started the journal in 1975, published three or four times in a year and had altogether published 86 numbers until April of 2002. The journal has columns for research papers on Islamic doctrines, articles on Islam history and Muslim societies in Southeast and Central Asia, and the Middle East. The journal also has a corner to give Arabic lessons to Japanese learners.

#### **4. Folk Customs and the Shared Identity: Some Field Cases**

At the present, though it is still hard to say that Muslims in Japan have already had their own folk traditions, it is reasonable to consider that they have their own way of Islamic believing and life style. Generally speaking, the religious acculturation in Japan in relation to the adoption of Islamic culture has two different streams. One is Japanese Muslims adopt gradually the Islamic ways of thinking and behaving, the other is foreign Muslims learn to be able to adapt to Japanese ways of community life. These conditions resulted in a special life style to Muslims in Japan, which consists of both Japanese and Islamic contents. Since Muslims have no mosques and Islamic instructors in their own living areas, the ethical standards of Muslim behavior and the observation of religious routines become the matters of private judgments. Next, I would like to give some examples for making clear the conditions.

A man called Chiang from Hui ethnic group of China lives in Shibuya district Tokyo. He is married to a Japanese woman who understands his belief but has no idea to become a Muslim. Chiang himself often goes to attend ritual prayers at Tokyo Mosque, but his wife never goes there with him. Since his parents in-law's house is located very near to his own, he often goes to take lunch there with his wife. He told me that his parents in-law respected his diet avoidance, while he himself never mind what his parents in-law cooked. He only ate by choosing what he could eat.

A woman called Palida from Uyghur ethnic group of China is married to a Japanese man. She is living now with her family in Chiba prefecture. For several times in every year, she gets together with her Muslim friends, but for most times, she lives with her husband and a child just as an ordinary Japanese woman. At the end of every year, she goes to visit Shintoist shrine with her husband and child, while she also gets together with her Muslim friends at Islamic festivals. She told that when she went back to her home town, Urumchi City China,

she put scarf on her head just as other Uyghur women do, while lived in Japan she used almost no head covering.

A study report tells us that Iranians living in Ueno Tokyo go to make ritual prayers quite less, because they are living in a non-Muslim social circumstance. Their religious piousness and enthusiasm to take part in religious rituals go down when they stay longer and get higher educational records (Sociology Faculty of Tsukuba University 1995). This phenomenon may not be explained as the Iranian Muslims had their Islamic belief withered, but is better to be understood as foreign Muslims are on their way of adapting to Japanese circumstance by adjusting their own customs.

In an interview I made to the chief director of Japan Muslim Association, I asked the man about his opinions on the way of Japanese Muslims following Islamic diet restrictions. He told me that he never comment much about what are his Muslim colleagues doing, such as their opinions and practices on Muslim diet and their life styles. He said that more important thing is to tell them what they have to do, and help them heighten their Muslim consciousness, especially those newly converted Muslims. They would gradually learn to know in what way they have to behave.

For several times, I went to attend ritual prayers at the office of Japan Muslim Association and Tokyo Mosque, making interviews with Muslims and observing their ways of conducting prayers. There, I found, each time, many Muslims with different ethnic, language and cultural backgrounds observed together their routine prayers. Some of them came with white hats on their heads, but many of them just came bare heads. When they talked together, they commonly use Japanese, while doing prayers they moved their bodies in response to the voices of Imams. They never mind what language the imam uses and whether it were understandable or not for them. It seemed that the most important thing for them is to confirm their common Muslim identity, and search for chances to communicate with their fellow Islamic believers.

All these facts showed us, Muslims in Japan now are on their way of religious acculturation. Foreign Muslims make efforts to adapt to the host Japanese culture by making changes in their life styles, while Japanese Muslims raise gradually their Muslim consciousness by adopting the Islamic ways of living. Their ways of believing Islam may be different from what of Muslims in other countries, but they have the same religious identity to all Muslims in the world.

## **5. Problems and Future**

Muslim population in Japan is increasing and Islamic life style becomes to be known more and

more by non-Muslim Japanese population. Muslims and non-Muslims in Japan are maintaining good mutual relations, and Muslims enjoy the freedom of believing their religion and living their life in the way they liked. However, there are still some discords existing in the procession of the Islamic adaptation to the host Japanese culture.

Firstly, there are problems coming from ignorance towards the strangeness of the life style and religious customs of Islamic believers. For example, on 21st May, 2001, in Kosugi-cho, Toyama prefecture, a Pakistani dealer of used-cars made a complaint to local police that some one broke the Holy Quran and scattered the scraps in front of his shop. At first, the police considered that this might be done by some right-wing organization because they had already got some complaints on troubles happened between the members of the right-wing organization and the Pakistani residents. However, later it happened to be a young woman who was informed separating by her Pakistani boy friend. For doing something to hurt the Pakistani boy, she committed such strange behavior hurting nobody but Muslims' feelings.

Once I had a chance to work as a Chinese-Japanese interpreter for a Muslim scholar from China. He came to Tokyo for attending an international conference of Middle East studies. After the meeting on the first day, one young Japanese scholar invited the Muslim scholar to take dinner together. For the convenience of language communication, the Chinese scholar asked me to go with him. Then in a restaurant, the young Japanese scholar ordered rice with meat for the Chinese. After we finished eating and separated with the young Japanese, the Chinese scholar told me that the meat given was not halal. He told me, "I hate the young man, he should know my religious background but ignored my diet limitation. He was so rude to me." In this case, it is clear the young Japanese scholar knew well that the Chinese scholar was a Muslim, but the problem actually came from their different seriousness towards the quality of meat.

Secondly, there are problems caused by different customs between Muslims and non-Muslims. A source gives us such a case. Some Muslim mothers complained that their children could not get halal food at public schools, since the schools their children going provided all students with same food. Some friends recommended those mothers to let their children bring about convenient food to their schools, but those mothers worried about that might make their children isolated from other students. The mothers of the children even did not dare to talk the matter to school teachers for being afraid of making allergic troubles (Sugimoto 2002).

Some sources also tell us that Muslim funerals may also cause troubles between Muslims and non-Muslims Japanese. There are some examples. Several years ago, an old pious Muslim in Tokyo died at illness. When he was alive, he always went to pray at Islamic-center Japan, and before he died, he left his will to his fellow Muslims that he would like to be buried as a Muslim but not to be cremated. But when Muslims from Islamic-center Japan went to prepare Islamic funeral for this Muslim, they got opposition from the wife and two sons of the man. They were told that the family believed in Buddhism, the funeral should be undertaken at a Buddhist temple. As the two sides confronted with each other, the sons of the man called police by complaining those Muslims made them troubles. At last, the two sides made a compromise under the arbitration of the police, that to observe a funeral rite at Buddhist temple at first, then to carry on an Islamic burial rite (Annual Report of Islamic-center Japan 1998:15).

Another Muslim living in Nara City died of a traffic accident. The Muslim had a son who converted to Islam in Indonesia. When the son heard the bad news in Indonesia, he phoned his mother telling her that his father should be given an Islamic funeral and buried at Muslim cemetery. But the mother told her son that she could not find a relative knows about Muslim funeral therefore helps her. In addition to that, carrying the dead body by car from Nara City to Enzan City will cost her three million yen money. Except the high expenditure, she complained that she would get no people to attend the funeral from such a long distance (Morimoto 1980:116-117).

For foreign Muslims, cemetery for interment is also a potential problem. At the present, there is no interring cemetery for Muslims to use in the Tokyo area. Japan Muslim Association owns a Muslim cemetery, and provides its members with funeral services at reduced price. Even though, bury a Muslim will cost a sum of money more than one million yen. Such a sum of money is still too big for foreign Muslims to pay. As a result, some Muslims would even like to send the dead by flight which cost them much cheaper, about seven hundreds thousands yen.<sup>3</sup>

Here, by summing up the cases introduced above, we can say that Islamic adaptation to Japanese culture is still on its way of the frustrated development. There are many problems to be dealt with in the future steps of religious acculturation, by the efforts of both Muslims and non-Muslim population. On the one hand, Muslim residents, including Japanese and foreigners, may adopt much

more flexible ways of Islamic believing which is both acceptable to themselves and easy to be understood by non-Muslims. On the other hand, non-Muslim population should have in turn a kind of cultural generosity by which they may worth to be mentioned as the citizens of an economically and democratically developed country, Japan.

Entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all residents with different ethnic and cultural back- grounds on the earth are facing together the same process of internationalization and globalization. The internationalization of specific nations will really benefit the worldwide movement of globalization, while globalization may quite not be realized under some specific cultural value. One of the greatest human legacies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is cultural relativism, however this legacy should not be inherited in a way of benefiting cultural imperialism but cultural egalitarianism. In present Japan, though the acculturation of different religious traditions seems going on smoothly, but the future is still a matter beyond our imagining. What have been clear to us is that Japan is a pioneer country in Asia in the worldwide stream of internationalization and globalization. The peaceful religious acculturation, for Islamic believers as well as believers in other religions, is actually a touchstone to the real and rational internationalization of Japanese cultural traditions.

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**Mark Owen Webb**

## SCIENCE AND RELIGION: COMPETING WAYS OF KNOWING?

It is a commonplace in contemporary theory of knowledge that human beings avail themselves of many different ways to acquire knowledge. Our senses provide one avenue, memory another, reasoning yet another, and so on. Most of these avenues of knowledge are windows on the world; that is, they all provide information about the spatio-temporal world we all inhabit. As a result, they provide a generally consistent picture. When the deliverances of one sense contradict those of another, we see this as a problem that requires resolution, and usually, further application of the senses provides that resolution.

What is more controversial is the claim that there are ways of knowing that provide insights into aspects of reality other than the physical world. Moral sense and aesthetic judgment, if they are avenues of knowledge at all, are examples of this. There is no concern that either our moral sense or our aesthetic judgment will ever give us grounds for beliefs that contradict the deliverances of our senses. This is the normal situation, what is to be expected. Our sources of knowledge either agree with one another (in the long run), or give us information about completely different realms.

Suppose that, as some have said, religion provides a way of knowing. What are we to make of apparent contradictions between religious belief and science? This is a live issue in much of the world today, where fundamentalist interpretations of scriptures tell one story about the origin of life, and science tells another, and different people respond differently. If revelation, or scripture, or prophecy, tells us something that is contradicted by science, historically, religion has yielded to science, but that is not the only possible response to apparent conflict. In what follows, I hope to lay out the different logically possible positions people can take on the relation between science and religion, and show how this analysis makes trouble for the idea of religion as an avenue of knowledge.

To begin with, we can divide the possible positions into two kinds: you can think either that science and religion are incompatible, that is, that

the claims the two systems make cannot all be true, or that they are compatible. If you think they are incompatible—call this view *Pessimism*—you have a decision to make. If they can't both be right, you know one of them is wrong, but the incompatibility alone doesn't tell you which one. So, some people, having great faith in the ability of science to get at the truth about the world, have decided that religion is intellectually disreputable, and so abandon all religious claims. Daniel Dennett, [1] Richard Dawkins, [2] and virtually every enlightenment atheist that ever was take this view. They believe science is by its nature directed toward truth, and there is no reason to suppose that religious traditions have that same truth-directed quality. If this view is right, then religion, to remain viable, must revise its doctrinal commitments.

But not all pessimists are scientific pessimists. Some, reasoning that science admits it is fallible, but that God (or the Vedas, or the Buddha) cannot be wrong, decide to jettison science instead. In this camp we find creationists, and Intelligent Design theorists like William Dembski. [3] It's important to understand that it is not only Christianity that harbors religious pessimists of this kind. In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, a Muslim philosopher named Al-Ghazzali applied rigorous logical reasoning to matters of cosmology and philosophy, and decided that the whole enterprise was self-refuting. He then gave up philosophy, became a Sufi mystic, and wrote a book called *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* [4]. He would say that if reason contradicts God, then so much the worse for reason. He would surely make the same judgment about science, which is, after all, just a regimented form of common sense, a way of reasoning about the world. Moreover there are Hindus and Buddhists who take their scriptures' claims about the origin of the universe and humankind as literally true, and therefore reject the claims of modern science. It used to be part of Hindu and Buddhist orthodoxy that there is a huge mountain, Mount Meru, at the center of the earth, which is flat and disk-shaped, and the continents