

**ISLAMISATION P.G. UNICORE Topic #4****“ISLAMISATION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE”**

*(Text of lecture delivered by Prof. Emeritus Dr. M. Kamal Hassan)*

**January 2022**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

During the era of Western imperialism and colonialism, Muslim thinkers, intellectuals and renewalists expressed their deep reservations and anxiety against the agnostic and hegemonic modern Western culture and civilisation – a civilisation founded and constructed upon the dominant worldview of secularism which dethroned God and, instead, deified autonomous human reason. The secular modernity and material progress that it espoused and the reigning paradigm of human knowledge were devoid of transcendent meaning. The Islamic reformist critique argued that Islamic intellectual and cultural values offered more wholesome alternatives for modern man because they were grounded in a worldview of the inherent harmony and complementarity between Divine Revelation and human reason. However, the Islamic reformist and renewalist intellectual discourse was arrogantly dismissed by the Western intellectual establishment as “apologetic”, backward and outmoded.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Islamic reformist and renewal thought in Muslim countries was concerned as well with the meanings and implications of the ideologies of capitalism, socialism, and nationalism, which were being peddled or championed by post-independence nationalist power holders, intellectuals and secularised Muslim elites. Muslim reformist thinkers, scholars and intellectuals examined critically the Western understanding of those ideologies and concepts and proposed the adoption of the holistic and comprehensive Islamic concepts of governance and politics in which religion (i.e. Islam) and the state are integrated and the adoption of the Islamic way of life based on the worldview of *Tauḥīd* -- which upholds the absolute unicity of God and His all-embracing sovereignty, guidance and authority over the whole of mankind and the cosmos.

With the exposure of the failure of secular modernity to deliver the promises of “progress” and “development” in the Third World, the nationalist leaders in Muslim countries which are included in the Third World have been struggling to find the right solutions to the crises of progress and national development in their post-independent nations. In the meantime,

the Islamic reformist discourse on education, economics, politics, law, literature, architecture, psychology, science and technology which was initiated since the 50's paved the way for the construction of an alternative knowledge-construction paradigm popularly known as "Islamisation of Knowledge" (IOK) in the 80's. In IIUM, the term Islamisation of Human Knowledge (IOHK), instead of IOK is the preferred terminology. The reason for this preference is explained in the Course of "Islamisation of the Self" which is a prerequisite to this Course on "Islamisation of Human Knowledge".

It should be explained that the Islamic scholars who met in the First World Conference on Muslim Education held in Makkah al-Mukarramah in 1977 included Prof. Dr Syed M. Naquib al-Attas and Prof Dr Ismail Raji al Faruqi, both of whom pioneered the discourse on Islamisation of Knowledge, formally declared that knowledge (which in the worldview of *Tauhīd* is a unity) consisted of two categories, the first being Revealed Knowledge (known in classical Islamic Civilisation as "Transmitted Sciences") while the second was called Acquired Knowledge (known in classical Islamic civilisation as "Intellectual Sciences") which corresponded with the classical division of *ʿUlūm Sharʿiyyah* or *Dīniyyah* or *Naqliyyah* and *ʿUlūm Ghair Sharʿiyyah* or *Aqliyyah* or *ʿUlūm al-Dunyā*. They agreed there should not be any contradiction between the two; in fact, in light of the Islamic worldview of the unity of knowledge, the intellectually and empirically acquired human knowledge has to be in conformity with Divinely revealed knowledge.

## 2. DEFINITIONS OF ISLAMISATION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE (IOHK)

Many Muslim scholars have come up with a variety of meanings, definitions and interpretations regarding the concept or mission of "IOHK". Below are some of the brief definitions as given by a number of authoritative and respectable contemporary proponents of "IOHK"

- 2.1. "The deliverance of knowledge from its interpretations based on secular ideology; and from meaning and expressions of the secular"; "dewesternization of knowledge", "deseccularization of knowledge". (Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, 1978)
- 2.2. "Recasting knowledge as Islam relates to it" ... "to overcome the dichotomy between modern secular and traditional Islamic systems of education" ... "to recast the whole legacy of human knowledge from the point of view of Islam...the vision of Islam...to redefine and re-order the

data, to rethink the reasoning...to re-project the goals...and serve the cause of Islam". (Isma'il Raji al Faruqi 1989: 20)

- 2.3. "Reforming contemporary knowledge" and the Muslim mind. ('AbdulHamid AbuSulayman (1994)
- 2.4. "The foundation of the *tauḥīdī* episteme which holds that the universe has a Creator ... who has charged humanity with His stewardship and what they knew not, making revelation a principle source of knowledge and likewise the natural world, so that by means of reading the two within a framework of pure *tauḥīd*, proper, discerning, and purposeful knowledge may result". (Ṭāhā J. al 'Alwānī,1995: 5)
- 2.5. "Dekufurisation of human knowledge". (Malik Badri, as mentioned verbally by him in 2005 in I.I.U.M.)
- 2.6. "A process to reorganize the elements of modern knowledge and to purge it of deleterious elements, which are currently at war with the sanctity of our religious beliefs and practices". (A.K.Brohi,1993)
- 2.7. "Practicing (i.e. discovering, compiling, piecing together, communicating and publishing) intellectual activity based on the Islamic concept of the universe". ('Imād al-Dīn Khalīl, 1991).
- 2.8. "The process by which the whole body of human knowledge is particularized, classified, organized and systematized in conformity with Islamic epistemological principles". (Osman Bakar, *ISTAC Bulletin*, N0. 4/08: 9)
- 2.9. A very broad meaning of IOHK with relevance to the context of IIUM, before the establishment of *IIUM Policies and Guidelines On Islamisation* (to be fully discussed later), was developed by CENTRIS as follows:
  - i. IOHK is an alternative paradigm for pursuing, teaching, developing, organizing, disseminating, utilising and evaluating contemporary human knowledge which is **not** infallible -- as distinct from Divinely revealed knowledge which is **absolutely infallible** -- in accordance with the worldview, fundamental principles, ethical values and norms of Islam.
  - ii. This alternative paradigm views critically the different branches of contemporary human knowledge as presented by the secular Western behavioural sciences, social sciences, humanities as well as the natural, physical and applied sciences -- insofar as these sciences or parts thereof are imbued with, or constructed upon, worldviews, metaphysics, philosophical presuppositions,

epistemologies, underlying assumptions, theories or principles which are **contrary** or **repugnant** to the Islamic creed of *Tauḥīd*, the ultimate objectives of the *Sharī'ah*, and Moral principles, values and norms (*Akhlāq*).

- iii. By the same token, this alternative paradigm considers any kind of knowledge, theories, practices, skills or systems coming from the West or the East, which are **in harmony** or **congruent** with the Islamic creed of *Tauḥīd*, the ultimate objectives of the *Sharī'ah*, and moral (*Akhlāq*) principles, values and norms of Islam, to be acceptable and adaptable.
- iv. The process of intellectual reform and transformation that this alternative paradigm implies, presupposes the process of “**Islamicisation of the Self**”, which refers to the sound development of the personality and character of the Muslim academics, scholars, professionals or administrators – particularly in an Islamic university. This process involves the inculcation of Islam’s spiritual and moral values, proper intellectual outlook and work ethics as contained in the Qur’an, the Sunnah and the works of great Muslim scholars of the past.

**2.10.** A shorter definition of IOHK which is also used in IIUM is as follows:

The process by which aspects of acquired human knowledge -- as products of human reasoning, experimentation or sense experience -- are produced, constructed, developed, utilised and interpreted to be in accordance with the Beliefs, Tenets, *Shari'ah* and Ethics of Islam [or WORLDVIEW OF ISLAM].

### **3. RATIONALE FOR IOHK FROM THE QUR’AN AND FROM THE MISERABLE STATE OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD**

#### **3.1. Major teachings of the Qur’an**

It is among the major teachings of the Qur’an that human beings are being urged to seek for knowledge of God from the Signs (*āyāt*) of Allah SWT in the Divine Books (*āyātu’Llāh fī al-Qur’ān*), the Signs of Allah SWT in the book of universe and nature (*āyātu’Llāh fī al-Kaun*) and the Signs of Allah SWT in human life and society (*āyātu’Llāh fī al-anfus al-insāniyyah*).

Secondly, the human quest for knowledge and wisdom has to be in harmony with the Divine purpose of creating human beings that Allah SWT has predetermined, namely to know, to worship and to love Allah SWT.

- i. The first Divine imperative to the Prophet (s.a.w.) and, by extension, to all human beings of “*IQRA’ Bismi RabbiKa’ LLadhī Khalaq...*” (Read [or “Acquire knowledge”] in the name of your Lord Who created....), implies the necessity of human beings to acquire knowledge, with the God-given intellect (*‘aql*), of the above three types of knowledge “in the name of your Lord Who created”, i.e. in harmony and in conformity with the will of the One Who Created human beings to be His virtuous servants.
- ii. The verse no. 6 in *Sūrah al-‘Alaq* which states “*kallā, inna’l-insāna layatghā ar-ra’āhu’s-taghnā...*” (“Nay, verily human beings are going to transgress all bounds whenever they believe they are self-sufficient”) stresses Allah’s foreknowledge and warning that human beings are bound to transgress the limits imposed upon them by Allah SWT Who, because of their sense of self-sufficiency and autonomy. Therefore, Allah SWT sternly reminds human beings that they shall, whether they like it or not, have to return finally to their Lord to be accounted for all their transgressions and deviations from the Divine norms (Q. *al-‘Alaq* 96: 1-8).
- iii. It should be noted that the word for knowledge used in the Qur’an is “*al-‘Ilm*” which means The Knowledge of Allah SWT and the knowledge and the information revealed by Him. The Qur’an uses the word “*Zann*” (conjecture, opinion, assumption) to refer to the false claims of having “true knowledge” made by the disbelievers. The Qur’an makes it very clear that Allah SWT and Divine Revelation, not human beings or human reason, are the sources of absolute and true knowledge. Allah’s Revelation (*al-Wahy*) is the highest, most authoritative and infallible knowledge but human beings are endowed with the intellect – which is subservient to Revelation -- by which they can acquire rational and empirical knowledge in developing the world as His servants and vicegerents. However, their use of reason and the intellect must be in accordance and in harmony with Divine Revelation and Divine purpose. Otherwise -- as indicated by a careful analysis of verses 6 – 8 of *Sūrah al-‘Alaq* in light of the great existential crisis in modern civilization as a result of the rejection of modern science of Divine Revelation and religious wisdom -- human beings are bound to transgress the limits imposed by Divine Revelation because they are carried away by the false sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency of human reason.

### 3.2. Derived from the Tauhidic Worldview of the Qur’an

The rationale for IOHK is also derived from the Tauhidic worldview of the Qur’an, the holistic transformative mission of the Messengers of Allah SWT and the high status and role assigned by Allah SWT and the Prophet (s.a.w.) to the true scholars (*al-‘Ulamā’*, *al-Rāsikhūna bi’l-‘Ilm*) and the “people who have been given knowledge” (*alladhīna ūtu’l-‘ilm*) and the

“possessors of sound intellects” (*Ulu’l-Albāb*). *‘Ilm* in the Qur’an also refers to the Truth and, as such, is absolutely correct as opposed to human *Zann*. Hence Allah’s praise of the scholars who possess the “profound fear and awe of Allah’s displeasure” (*khashyatu’Llāh*) [Compare with modern secularized, agnostic, atheistic or materialistic modern scholars, God-denying and God-defiant natural sciences, secular humanistic social sciences and nihilistic humanities].

The Qur’an also reveals that all the Messengers of Allah SWT introduced the ontology, cosmology and epistemology of *Tauhīd* to their respective communities who were following the ontologies, cosmologies, epistemologies and axiologies of *Jāhiliyyah* or *Shirk* or *Kufr*. Of course, the Messengers did not use the terminology of *Aslamah al-Ma`ārif al-Insāniyyah* or *Islāmiyyah al-Ma`ārif al-Insāniyyah* (IOHK). But their mission challenged the prevailing positivist, *Jahili* or humanist epistemologies and they had to bear a lot of suffering for the sake of spreading the true knowledge and wisdom. That is why the late Dr Muḥammad `Imārah called *Islāmiyyat al-Ma`ārif* as “New Slogan for an Ancient Substance” or “*Shi`ār Jadīd li-Maḍmūn Qadīm*” (Muḥammad `Imārah (1999). *Islāmiyyat al-Ma`ārifah: Mādhā Ya`nī? al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Sharq al-Ausat li al-Nashr*, pp. 1-2).

### 3.3. The Divine Purpose in the Creation

In addition, a clear rationale comes from the Divine purpose in the creation of human beings as *‘Ibādu’Llāh* (servants of Allah SWT) and assigning them the role of *Khulafā’ al-Arḍ* (including the responsibility of *‘Imārah al-Arḍ*).

- i. As believers (*al-Mu`minūn*) of Allah SWT too they are to use the intellect (*‘Aql*) as Divine trust (*amānah*) and gift, being careful not to let their reasoning or thinking be infected with their base desires (*ahwā’*) or Satanic insinuations (*waswasah*). This is in order to gain goodness in the world (*ḥasanah fi’d-dunyā*), goodness in the Hereafter (*ḥasanah fi’l-ākhirah*) and true success (*al-falāḥ*), and to avoid Divine chastisement in the Hereafter and true failure and loss (*al-khusrān*).
- ii. The Qur’an instructs the believers that in carrying out their Divinely mandated responsibilities as Muslims and as members of the Muslim community (*ummah*), they have to expect all sorts of opposition from the forces of evil and to withstand the challenges or hostilities coming from the cultures and civilizations of *Kufr*,

which abused the trust and gift of the Divine intellect to defy the sovereignty of the Creator and Sustainer of their intellect. The cultures and civilisations of *Kufr*, the Qur'an asserts, will continue to assert their paradigms of false and harmful knowledge while the true scholars of Islam will resist the intellectual invasions (*al-ghazw al-fikri*) from their enemies by strengthening the Islamic paradigms of knowledge and schools of thought.

- iii. The proper operationalization of the many religious responsibilities of Muslims - such as vicegerency (*khilāfah*) which includes good governance, sound development of the world (*iṣlāḥ al-arḍ*), enjoining that which is right and prohibiting that which is wrong (*al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wa'n-nahy 'ani'l-munkar*), purification of society (*tazkiyah al-mujtama`*) and striving in the path of Allah SWT (*jihād fī sabīli'LLāh*), cannot be actualised as long as the pillars of true knowledge and wisdom are propagated and established while the nationalist or pseudo leaders of Muslim nations and societies ignore the paradigm of God-fearing leadership.

#### **3.4. The miserable state of the Muslim *ummah***

The miserable state of the Muslim *ummah* and the depressing crises within the community worldwide, needless to say, require comprehensive and major reform plans and strategies. Muslim scholars and intellectuals generally agree that such reforms have to be based principally upon educational transformation of Muslim societies, in accordance with the Islamic worldview, which underscores the integration of Divinely revealed knowledge and reason-based human knowledge, the integration of revelation and intellect, the integration of religion and science, the integration of this world and the Hereafter, and the integration of the human beings' roles of servanthood and vicegerency of Allah SWT.

The dualism and dichotomy of the religious and the secular into water-tight compartments following the Western model of education is repugnant to the Islamic worldview and epistemology and, therefore, have to be replaced with the Islamic integrated model of education. The unwarranted educational dichotomy and the crisis of the Muslim mentality and personality accruing from the poor quality of Muslim educational institutions is another important rationale for the pursuit of IOHK and the parallel pursuit of all the useful knowledge or technology from outside of Muslim culture, which are not contrary to the teachings of Islam.

It is the conviction of the concerned Muslim scholars and intellectuals that the continued dominance of secular, atheistic, agnostic or materialistic Western thought, systems and civilization will only lead to more crises, disasters and injustices in the world. The serious moral, political, economic and environmental crises of the contemporary world testify to the validity of the Muslim conviction.

### **3.5. Source of inspiration from the great intellectual achievements of early Islamic civilization**

It is well-known that the early Islamic civilization epitomized the genius of Islamic scholars in constructing the intellectual pillars of a world-affirmative culture and civilization based on the harmonious integration of religion and science. Inspired by the Qur'anic exhortations, the early Muslim scholars looked for scientific knowledge and wisdom (*hikmah*) beyond the frontiers of Muslim culture and came across, first, the rich intellectual and scientific legacies of Greek knowledge and wisdom, and later of Indian sciences. Their careful study, selection and sifting of the foreign sciences led them to the adaptation and synthesis of the useful and Islamically compatible aspects of foreign sciences.

The adaptation, reconstruction, synthesis and indigenization of foreign knowledge and wisdom at the hands of Muslim scholars and philosophers may be regarded as the ancient modes of "Islamicisation" as we have defined in IIUM. In this regard Imam al-Ghazali was certainly one of the most creative pioneers of the Islamicisation of human knowledge with his *Maqāsid al-Falāsifah* and *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, although he and other classical Muslim philosophers never used the term Islamisation. The Islamic civilization of al-Andalus then became one of the active and most productive centres of Islamicisation of human knowledge based on the Qur'anic worldview, which integrates reason with revelation. Consequently, the natural sciences, medicine, astronomy including foreign sciences which were developed in the great centres of Islamic civilisation such as al-Andalus, Baghdad, Alexandria, Damascus and later Istanbul and Delhi were the pre-modern products of Islamicised human knowledge, science and technology.

### 3.6. Source of inspiration from the intellectual struggles of the Islamic reformist thought against Colonisation, Westernisation and Secularisation of Muslim societies.

With the advent of Western imperialism and colonisation of Muslim countries, Muslim personality, culture and society began to undergo the process of systematic secularization, de-Islamisation and Westernisation. The dichotomization of education produced on the one hand the Westernised indigenous elites who lost their Islamic religious identity and the religious elites whose education in their own independent village Islamic religious madrasas, *pondoks* and *pesantrens* were mainly confined to the study of religious subjects without exposure to the modern sciences or mathematics. In the universities, Muslim students were being taught natural sciences, social sciences and humanities from Western, secular perspectives. They were being alienated from the Islamic worldview and way of life by the colonial systems and perpetuated later by the colonized system of post-independence nationalists.

As a response to colonisation and Westernisation, the Islamic reformist and renewal movements of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century reformed Muslim education with the integration of science and religion in the new educational system – the *madrasah* system, and introduced the use of newspapers and journals to spread Islamic reformist ideas. *Al-Urwah al-Wuthqā* of Jamaluddin al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh was established in Paris in 1884, while the journal *al-Manār* was founded by Shaikh Abdul Rashid Ridha in 1897. The influence of the reformist thought of Abduh and Ridha spread to the Malay world under British and Dutch colonialism. Reformist Muslim thought in British Malaya was imparted by the first Islamic reformist magazine to be established in Nusantara i.e. *Majalah al-Imam* established in 1906 in British Singapore. Its influence spread to Sumatera, Java and Peninsular Malaya. The “Kaum Muda” (The Young Generation) movement became more dominant in Sumatera than in British Malaya. The emergence of Muhammadiyah founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan in 1912 led as the biggest Islamic religious, social and educational organization. It was a great boost for Islamic reformist thought and education in the Dutch East Indies.

The emergence of Islamic reformist and renewalist movements in Egypt with al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun (1928) led by the charismatic Shaikh Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949) and the establishment in the Indian subcontinent of Jamaat-e-Islami (1941) led by Sayyid Abu'l-A`la Maududi (1903-1979) who had been in contact with Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) -- the famous Islamic thinker and philosopher-poet of the modern Muslim world and the spiritual founder of Pakistan -- had great and lasting impact on post-colonial Islamic thought and

movements in Independent Malaya and the Republic of Indonesia. After independence of Indonesia in 1945 and Malaya in 1957, the decolonisation and nationalist discourse was propagated mainly by Indonesian-Malay intellectuals, scholars and movements. Later, in Malaysia the discourse was further developed and refined by Malaysian university scholars, the most prominent among them being the late Professor Ungku Aziz, the late Professor Syed Hussain Alatas and Professor Syed Naquib al-Attas who became the intellectual pioneer and leader of the Islamisation of contemporary discourse in Malaysia. His Islamisation ideas had a great and lasting on the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM) which was led by Anwar Ibrahim in the early years.

### **3.7. Challenges and opportunities from the contemporary crises of modern civilization**

Major list of global and civilisational crises:

1. The UN Agenda 2030, with 17 SDGs.
2. The Global Climate Emergency.
3. The Collapse of Communism and Capitalism.
4. The Global Economic Crisis.
5. The Moral decadence in LGBTQ phenomena and same sex marriages. The destruction of the traditional family
6. The crisis of human knowledge, the commodification of knowledge and education dominance of neo-liberalism on higher education and the universities.
7. The Hypocrisy of Western Nations
8. The Hypocrisy of Liberal Democracy
9. The Hypocrisy of Muslim National leaders and the Inferiority complex and dependency on the goodwill and financial support of powerful Western nations
10. The misinformation, deception and post-truth of ICT and social media
11. The global Islamophobia, persecution and genocide plans of Zionist Israel against the Palestinians, Communist China, Extremist Hindu India, Islamophobic and Secular Extremism of France, Islamophobic Russia, Myanmar, Southern Philippines suppression of Muslims in Mindanao, etc.
12. The confusion and loss of moral compass of the younger generation of Muslims

All the above multiple crises of the world are in dire need of Divine guidance, knowledge and wisdom. Western philosophies and ideologies have failed to provide viable and

sustainable solutions or alternatives, while Islamic intellectual and higher learning institutions have yet to attain the level of excellence and expertise to be able to deliver the remedies to the various ailments affecting the contemporary world as well as Muslim communities. These challenges are at the same time opportunities for the introduction of Islamic or Islamicised solutions as we are seeing in the field of Islamic finance, but the discipline and the Islamic financial institutions which are doing well in Malaysia and Indonesia are too small and too young at the present time to be able to bring about significant changes.

#### **4. POLICY AND CATEGORIES OF IOHK.**

##### **4.1. Policy**

IIUM did not have a written policy on Islamisation of Human Knowledge although it was introduced as the primary mission of IIUM since the late al-Marhum Dr. Abdulhamid AbuSulayman became the second rector of IIUM from 1988-98. It was Professor Dr. Zaleha Kamaruddin who was the fifth rector of IIUM who proposed that a written policy on IOHK should be produced. The task was given to CENTRIS which managed to produce and print the *IIUM Policies and Guideliness on Islamisation* in 2013. The 45-page document<sup>1</sup> contains the university's Philosophy, Vision and Missions (pp. 16-19), Eight Policy Statements (pp. 22-27) and Guidelines (pp. 26-45). A brief summary of the policies is given below:

4.1.1. Islamisation, as a process of actualising the Divine imperatives of human development based upon the Islamic worldview and its philosophy of knowledge and education, is the soul of the University. (Policy No. 1)

4.1.2. Islamisation, as one of the most important missions of IIUM, is the foundation of all IIUM strategic pillars and, as such, all strategic plans and future developments of the University shall be in conformity with it. (Policy No. 2)

4.1.3. As an international Islamic University, IIUM shall encourage, promote, propagate and implement the mission of Islamisation/Islamicisation and Integration, through its teaching and learning, research and publications, international and ummatic collaborations, alumni networks and ummatic-oriented activities, towards assisting

---

<sup>1</sup> See IIUM Policies & Guidelines on Islamisation (2013), Kuala Lumpur: CENTRIS, IIUM.

Muslim communities around the world to overcome their educational, economics, social, cultural and civilisational challenges. (Policy No. 3)

4.1.4. The concept of Islamisation in IIUM is comprehensive and holistic in scope and meaning, covering both academic and non-academic affairs involving university governance, campus administration, financial and assets management, environmental development, human resource development, student life and character development, co-curricular activities and business enterprises. (Policy No. 4)

4.1.5. The mission of Islamisation/Islamicisation of Human Knowledge is an alternative paradigm of knowledge construction based upon the worldview of *Tauhīd*. It shall view and assess critically the contemporary human knowledge which are based upon the secular, agnostic, naturalistic or atheistic paradigms of social sciences, professional disciplines and humanities. As far as the natural sciences, applied sciences and medical sciences are concerned, the critical perspective of the mission of IOHK shall be directed primarily at the philosophical foundations, presuppositions, assumptions, theories and practices which are contrary to the teachings and worldview of Islam. Those aspects of contemporary human knowledge which are considered to be compatible, acceptable, necessary, useful, harmless, in harmony or in accordance with the teachings and worldview of Islam shall not be subjected to the critical assessment or evaluation of the mission. (Policy No. 6)

4.1.6. Islamisation/Islamicisation of the Self is part and parcel of Islamicisation/Islamisation of Human Knowledge (IOHK) in IIUM. It entails a continuous process of development and strengthening of *ʿIlm* (knowledge), *ʿImān* (faith), *Yaqīn* (beneficence and moral excellence) and *Husnul al-Khuluq* (good character) in the personality and life of a *Muʿmin* (Believer) through the process of *Jihād al-Nafs* (striving against the influence of base desires, passion and moral vices as well as temptations of worldly pleasures), *Tazkiyat al-Nafs* (process of purification of the spiritual heart and soul from a variety a spiritual and moral “diseases”). (Policy No. 5)

4.1.7. Islamisation of Human Knowledge mission does not mean the imposition of Islam upon non-Muslims, nor does it mean that Islam is opposed to, or refuses to acknowledge, the much-needed and useful scientific, intellectual and technological

contributions or achievements of non-Muslim individuals, institutions, organisations, countries or civilisations. An important Islamic principle to be observed is in the famous saying of the sages: “Wisdom is the lost property of the believer. Wherever he or she finds it, he or she has a right to take it.” (Policy No. 7)

4.1.8. It is to be noted that the disciplines or sciences of Islamic revealed knowledge are to be subjected to a continuous process of relevantisation, involving change, review, reform, revision and reinterpretation. (Policy No. 8) This policy of “relevantisation” will be discussed in the section on Integration and Relevantisation below.

## 4.2. Categories

The *IIUM Policies and Guidelines on Islamisation* includes Four Categories of Islamisation/Islamicisation efforts, namely

- 1) Low Necessity Category,
- 2) Medium Necessity Category,
- 3) High Necessity Category, and
- 4) Highest Necessity Category.

The Four Categories cover 21 Modes of IOHK efforts which represent different stages of academic development, beginning with two Lowest Priority Modes, followed by four Medium Priority Modes, ten High Necessity Modes and finally five Highest Necessity Modes.

The aim of coming up with the idea of categories or modes of IOHK efforts or activities is to impress upon the new and younger academic staff that the mission of IOHK is a gradual process of intellectual and spiritual development which commences with the lowest level and leads, over time, to the highest level. It is akin to the development of religious faith or *īmān* in the life of a Muslim, which begins with the *Kalimah al-Shahādah* and gradually progressing to reach higher and higher levels of *īmān*. The Muslim academic can begin his/her new career in IIUM with the Low Necessity Modes, whereby he/she would find it convenient to accommodate or highlight the conventional perspectives without trying to be critical as he or she has been trained or obtained his or her fresh PhD working or specialising in the aspects of the conventional (alias secularised) disciplines.

With several years of teaching and researching experience, and coupled with increasing knowledge of the teachings of Islam and Qur’anic worldview and perspectives, he/ she could

develop the High Necessity Modes, and eventually – with greater knowledge, competency, expertise, collaboration, maturity and confidence – produces the Highest Necessity Modes, which reflect his/her capability to reach higher levels of IOHK efforts which includes transformation, reconstruction or new construction of human knowledge.

The 21 Modes of IOHK efforts can be simplified and summarised to 13 major approaches beginning with (i) the less challenging modes such as COMPARISON, INTEGRATION, HARMONISATION, ADAPTATION, SYNTHESISATION, NATURALISATION, INDIGENISATION, CRITICAL APPRECIATION, and proceeding to (ii) the more challenging CRITICAL REFUTATION, REORIENTATION, REJECTION, DECONSTRUCTION to (iii) the most challenging mode of RECONSTRUCTION and COMPLETELY NEW CONSTRUCTION of knowledge, discipline, techniques, school of thought, major theories, etc.

## Guidelines in Terms of Modes of Islamisation of Human Knowledge

In order to facilitate, coordinate and encourage the implementation of IOHK mission in IIUM – through teaching, research, publication, consultancy, public service or social work – across all the Kulliyahs, four categories of IOHK efforts have been identified:

- a LOW NECESSITY CATEGORY
- b MEDIUM NECESSITY CATEGORY
- c HIGH NECESSITY CATEGORY
- d HIGHEST NECESSITY CATEGORY

Get a copy of your  
IIUM Islamisation Policy at:

<https://www.iium.edu.my/centre/centris/iium-policies-and-guidelines-on-islamisation>

## (A) LOW NECESSITY CATEGORY

a

**Meaning:** Permissible efforts but of low necessity from the perspective of knowledge construction on the basis of the worldview of Islam

b

**Specific Tasks**

**I. Accepting, appreciating, acknowledging, affirming, promoting, supporting, or perpetuating**

- whatever is regarded as useful or important to know, coming from the conventional or secular systems of knowledge, without making serious efforts to develop, integrate or incorporate relevant Islamic perspectives pertaining to foundational issues, theories, methods or concepts.

**II. Undertaking, doing or involving**

- In normal, ordinary quality research, publication, consultancy, public service or social work, in harmony with the worldview, principles, ethics and values of Islam.

## (B) MEDIUM NECESSITY CATEGORY

a

**Meaning:** Acceptable and appreciated efforts from the perspective of knowledge construction on the basis of the worldview of Islam

b

**Specific Tasks:**

**I. Enjoining, encouraging or adopting**

- which is considered excellent, good, praiseworthy or useful in contemporary human knowledge, professional disciplines or in conventional systems.

**II. Improvising or adapting**

- acceptable or compatible conventional courses, professional programmes, systems, skills, practices, methods, theories, or ideas, etc.

**III. Describing, explaining or analysing in a scholarly and objective manner**

- any conventional course, programmes, subjects, systems, theories, laws, conventions, institutions, methods, concepts or ideas.

**IV. Undertaking, doing or involving**

- in useful, or good quality, or desirable standard research, publication, consultancy, public service or social work.

## (C) HIGH NECESSITY CATEGORY

a **Meaning:** Desirable, commendable and much needed efforts from the perspective of knowledge construction based on the worldview of Islam

b **Specific Tasks:**

### I. Correcting, amending, removing, weeding out or deleting

- some aspects of contemporary or conventional knowledge, disciplines, systems, theories, methodologies, practices, or ideas.

### II. Comparing or contrasting

- the secular-based conventional disciplines, systems, knowledge, theories, worldviews, values, philosophies, idéologies, schèmes, concepts, etc.

### III. Presenting, promoting or articulating

- Islamic perspectives on aspects of human knowledge in various fields, systems, methods, institutions, contemporary issues, etc.

### IV. Serious critiquing and/or critical assessment or evaluation

- of aspects of contemporary or conventional human knowledge originating from secular, materialistic, rationalistic, agnostic or ethnocentric paradigms in the social and human sciences, humanities, natural sciences, applied sciences, or professional sciences

### V. Integrating, incorporating or injecting

- Divinely revealed tenets, teachings, principles, laws, values or norms, related to Islamic *'Aqīdah*, or *Shari'ah*, or *Akhlāq*, or those positive aspects of Muslim intellectual legacy

### VI. Refuting, rejecting, prohibiting, discouraging, objecting, countering, repelling, or deconstructing

- all aspects of human knowledge which are *munkar* (wrong, disagreeable, detestable), *khabīth* (bad, evil, harmful), *zulm* (unjust), *sharr* (evil), *ḥarām* (forbidden), *mazmūmah* (blameworthy), *bāṭil* (false, untrue, absurd), *ḍarar* (injurious, harmful, detrimental), Satanic, *ghurūr* (deceptive, illusory) *ḍalāl* (erroneous, misleading, fallacious); or all that is opposed to Islamic *'Aqīdah*, *Shari'ah*, *Akhlāq*, worldview, values and norms.

### VII. Defending, protecting or supporting

- Islamic perspectives, concepts, theories, systems, values, norms, precepts, ideas, schools of thought, etc.

### VII. Reorienting

- aspects of acquired human knowledge courses, disciplines, theories, theoretical frameworks, paradigms, methodologies or concepts.

### IX. Synthesizing or harmonizing or enriching

- the positive and acceptable aspects, systems, elements, theories, laws, discoveries, techniques, approaches or methods

### X. Undertaking, doing or involving

- in very useful, or high quality, or very desirable standard research, publication, consultancy, public service or social work

## (D) HIGHEST NECESSITY CATEGORY

**a** Meaning: Highly desirable efforts, most significant and very highly recommended knowledge construction effort based on the worldview of Islam

**b** Specific Tasks:

#### I. Discovering, revitalizing, operationalizing, or reinterpreting in a positive way

- the useful knowledge, theories, ideas, inventions, systems, wisdoms, methods or solutions from the rich Islamic intellectual or civilisational legacy

#### II. Producing important and highly desirable new inventions

- in the form of academic or scientific tools, machines, techniques, systems, technology, gadgets, etc.

#### III. Reconstructing of, or providing significant alternatives

- to major or dominant conventional thoughts, ideas, systems, methods, disciplines, culture, practices, etc.

#### IV. Constructing

- new and highly significant human knowledge, theories, practices, systems, methods, products, curricula, programmes, courses, etc.

#### V. Undertaking and excelling

- In outstanding, or extremely useful, or very high quality, or highly desirable standard research, publication, consultancy, public service or social work,

## 5. INTEGRATION AND RELEVANTISATION

### 5.1. The Issue of Integration

If by “integration” we mean the combination of Divine Revelation with Human Reason, or IOHK with IOS, or Islamic Revealed Knowledge with Acquired Human Knowledge, or *Ulum Naqliyyah* with *Ulum `Aqliyyah* within an Islamic university curriculum, this effort is not an issue because the worldview of tauhid requires such integration. Such integration does not preclude the application of the Islamic critical perspective derived from the normative values of the Qur’an or the Sunnah. The principles of justice and of *al-amr bi’l-ma`ruf wa’n-nahy`an al-munkar* require the application of the legitimate Islamic critique including rational refutations or rejection of ideas or theories which are contrary to Islamic teachings and worldview. Therefore, in IIUM we have always considered integration as a necessary aspect of IOHK, and the establishment of the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in IIUM was based on the necessity of integration under the IOHK mission.

The integration **does not exclude** the critical review of the contemporary social sciences and humanities, nor the relevantisation or reform of Islamic revealed knowledge disciplines. **But integration becomes a new issue if the larger discourse of IOHK is to be abandoned.** We can understand if this proposal is being put forward in the current Western cultural and political context. It is unwise to perpetuate the articulation of the discourse of IOHK in the US, the UK or Europe which regard the rise of Islam, the increasing number of Muslims in the West and the intellectual agenda of IOHK which IIIT had started since the 80’s as completely unacceptable. “Islamisation” has become a taboo in the West and Muslim scholars and institutions would do well not to speak the language of Islamisation in the public. They have to craft new Islamic concepts or discourses or agenda which are acceptable or intellectually palatable to the non-Muslim majority population of the West. Therefore, we can agree to the proposal coming from Muslims living in the West that the term “Islamisation of knowledge” or its cognates be discontinued. Instead only the term “integration” is to be used for the discourse on Muslim intellectual and educational reforms in Western contexts.

However, we feel that such a proposal is not proper in the context of Malaysia or in Muslim majority countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, etc. because Muslim majority countries need to be transformed on the basis of the Islamic

paradigms and worldview. We understand that some non-Muslim citizens in Muslim majority countries like Malaysia and Indonesia may have reservations or misgivings about the Islamisation agenda, but in the case of Malaysia and Indonesia we can explain to the non-Muslims that the agenda has to do with Muslims trying to live by the Islamic way of life which, in the context of Malaysia and Indonesia, does not impinge upon the rights of the non-Muslim communities as fellow-citizens of a democratic country. As far as IOHK or IOS are concerned, the way IUM has articulated and developed the discourse over the last three decades should make the non-Muslim sceptics realise that there is no justification for their fears about Islamisation of Human Knowledge or Islamisation of the Self. If we in Malaysia or Indonesia decide to abandon the discourse of “Islamisation” in favour or using the discourse of “integration” only, then we believe we will be doing injustice to the injunction of *al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa'n-nahyu`ani'l-munkar* and other normative injunctions, values and norms of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Abandoning the discourse of Islamisation in the Muslim-majority countries, we feel, could lead to the unwarranted attitude of tolerating the existence of prohibited, reprehensible and blameworthy elements in Muslim thought, education, culture and politics.

## 5.2. The Issue of Relevance

A question may be asked that “if IOHK is the process that the acquired human knowledge disciplines need to undergo, should the Islamic religious sciences, studies, knowledge or disciplines which Muslim scholars have founded and developed on the bases of the Qur'an and the Sunnah undergo the same process? We maintain that they need to be subjected to continuous reform process as well but we do not call it IOHK. We prefer to use the term “relevance” as a convenient single word which represents the process of sound development, reform, renewal and improvement of the Islamic revealed knowledge disciplines. We maintain that the term “Islamisation” is not appropriate for IRK disciplines because those disciplines known variously in the past as *Ulūm Naqliyyah*, *Ulūm Shar'iyyah*, *Ulūm Dīniyyah* were originally derived and grounded on the belief system, theology, epistemology and normative values of Islam themselves. They are not of the same category as, the modern social sciences, humanities, natural sciences and applied sciences which developed in modern Western civilization and are grounded in secular epistemologies nor are they contrary or repugnant to the Islamic creed or the Divine Law or ethics of Islam.

In other words, the IRK disciplines are already Islamic by virtue of being based on and derived from the worldview, theology, epistemology, *`Aqīdah*, *Sharī`ah* and *Akhlāq* of Islam, as well as the mainstream religious and intellectual legacy of Islamic civilization. That does not mean, however, that they are not to undergo the process of change, reform or revision in terms of substantive content, approaches, methodologies, applications, pedagogy, research, publication, consultancy, public service or social work. As IRK courses are concerned with the correct understanding, practice and actualization of the *Dīn al-Islām* in the contexts of human personality, culture, society, state and civilization, they have to be subjected to the processes of regular *taghyīr* (change), *iṣlāḥ* (reform and improvement), *tajdīd* (renewal, revitalization, restoration and reconstruction), *ihyā'* (revival, regeneration, revivification) and *ijtihād* (exercise of independent legal reasoning in facing new issues not covered by the revealed texts) to remain relevant and applicable to the changing times and cultural contexts as well as to be able to bring about the necessary changes in Muslim and human societies. Authoritative religious scholars make it clear, however, that all forms of legitimate change are only applicable to the changeable aspects (*mutaghayyirāt*) of Islamic teachings, systems, practices, ideas and thought while the immutable aspects (*thawābit*) of Islam are not to be subjected to any kind of reform or amendments. It is expected, however, that the content of the courses, the pedagogy, the curriculum and the way the programmes of IRK courses are structured should be reviewed from time to time.

Included in the Relevantisation efforts of IRK disciplines are the academic and intellectual efforts of *re-examination*, *re-assessment*, *re-evaluation*, *restoration* or *revival* of selected classical or ancient Islamic thought and works, with the aim of highlighting their contemporary relevance, usefulness or otherwise, novelties or uniqueness. In addition to these efforts in the Departments of Islamic Revealed Knowledge, the methods of teaching, research, consultancy, studying, assessment, student-teacher communication and quality of research and publication shall be constantly improved, updated or modernized (*taḥdīth*), using the latest or most up-to-date techniques, available from different parts of the world.

The efforts of *integration* (*takāmul*) or *synthesis* of useful and beneficial ideas, methods of research, analysis, perspectives or theories from the natural sciences, applied sciences, social sciences or human sciences – **insofar as they are not contrary to the *`Aqīdah*, *Sharī`ah* and *Akhlāq* of Islam** – may also be undertaken in the five departments of Islamic revealed knowledge (i.e. *Usuluddin* and Comparative Knowledge, *Fiqh* and *Usul al-Fiqh*, Al-Qur`an

and Sunnah, Fundamental and Inter-Disciplinary Studies and Arabic Language and Literature). This requires the ability to communicate and collaborate across the unseen walls dividing the different disciplines and different kulliyahs for mutually beneficial inter-relationships and innovative cross-fertilisation of ideas, concepts, theories and methods to provide the necessary solutions or answers to a variety of complex issues of contemporary societies. It should be reiterated that for Islamic revealed knowledge and heritage disciplines to play their transformative social, cultural and civilisational roles in contemporary society, they need to be articulated, communicated, related, anchored or actualized in the context of changing cultural, social, political and economic realities which cannot be fully explained or understood from the point of view of religious ideals alone.

Therefore, the work of *reconstruction* or *construction of new knowledge* or disciplines or *producing new inventions* or *doing high quality or excellent research, publication, consultancy, public service and social work* in accordance with the worldview, epistemology, religious principles, ethics, values and norms of Islam towards making the message and teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah better understood, appreciated and authentically applied to the different socio-political contexts, are expected of IIUM staff involved in IRK disciplines. This last type of intellectual effort constitutes the HIGHEST NECESSITY CATEGORY as far as IRK disciplines are concerned, while the attitude of maintaining the status quo, refusing to make necessary changes in the content of curriculum, methodology or pedagogy, or staying in the comfort zone of the dormant and static (*jumūd*) mindset of religious conservatism would be doing a serious disservice to the image of Islam and Muslims, beside putting obstacles to its mission of civilisational transformation. It should be noted that the KIRKHS (covering both the human sciences and Islamic revealed knowledge disciplines) had agreed in 2008, during the deanship of Dr. Hazizan Noon to adopt the four terms of INTEGRATION, ISLAMICISATION, RELEVANTISATION and RESEARCH AND INNOVATION as its niche and mission, with the understanding that the term ISLAMISATION/ISLAMICISATION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE was primarily meant for the intellectually acquired human knowledge and sciences

## 6. CONCLUSION

IOHK is, undoubtedly, a continuous process of “moving towards a moving target” as mentioned by Prof Emeritus Dr AbdulHamid AbuSulayman and confirmed by many scholars in IIUM. As

the door of *ijtihād* on this important intellectual discourse is wide open, one can expect new findings and new wisdom to flow from the works of scholars working on different aspects of IOHK in different countries.

We have explained that IOHK is not a rigid one-dimensional paradigm; it is inclusive of several approaches, beginning with the positive approaches such as: 1) THE COMPARATIVE, 2) THE INTEGRATIVE, 3) THE HARMONISING, 4) THE SYNTHESISING, 5) THE NATURALISING, 6) THE ADAPTATION, 7) THE CRITICAL APPRECIATION -- and proceeding to the negative approaches which require: 8) COMPREHENSIVE CRITIQUE, 9) CRITICAL RATIONAL REFUTATION, 10) COMPLETE REORIENTATION, 11) DECONSTRUCTION, 12) RECONSTRUCTION, and 13) NEW CONSTRUCTION. These approaches of Islamicisation were adopted by Muslim scholars in classical Islamic civilisation in their construction of new knowledge. They began by studying, adapting and appreciating the new knowledge(s) from foreign civilisations, and ended by their own constructions of human knowledge in harmony with the Islamic worldview of *Tauhīd* (absolute and uncompromising monotheism). We would reiterate that IOHK, properly understood, is inclusive of integration and harmonisation, and has nothing to do with attempts to convert others to Islam or with political goals. It is, after all, the Muslim believers' quest for knowledge, morality and spirituality in accordance with the worldview of the Qur'an, as commanded by their Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign, while appreciating and adopting/adapting whatever is good (*khair, ma'rūf, ṭayyib*), useful (*nāfi', ṣāliḥ*), beneficial (*maṣlahah*) or acceptable (*ḥalāl*) from other people's knowledge, skills, cultures or civilisations.

No one can predict how the social sciences, the humanities, the natural sciences, the applied sciences, the medical sciences and Islamic revealed knowledge disciplines are going to develop in the future as they undergo the processes of Islamicisation, integration, synthesis, reconstruction, harmonisation, revision, etc. IIUM is poised to extend its international network to several Western and European universities and this engagement with non-Islamic universities is bound to affect its articulation of Islamic intellectual discourse in the paradigm of IOHK. It is hoped that the approach proposed by Shaikh Taha Jabir al-Alwani regarding the need to integrate the "Two Readings", that of the Signs of Allah SWT in Qur'anic revelation and that of the Signs of Allah in nature and the universe would yield new knowledge which would provide the necessary solutions to mankind's existential problems and global crises. This integrative and unifying approach would hopefully remove the barriers dividing the two

groups of scholars and bring those who specialise in the religious sciences and those who specialise in the natural sciences, the applied sciences, the medical sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities to work together on many societal and international issues and problems. The efforts of Islamicisation, integration, unification, synthesis, harmonisation and reconstructions can be most exacting, but they may provide the hope for more constructive engagements, collaborations and cooperation between the Muslim world and the Western world as both worlds are caught in the same global crises, calamities or catastrophes. The Sustainable Development Goals of the UN is one example of a common global agenda which brings together the Muslim world and the rest of the world, in spite of differences in worldviews and beliefs.

CENTRIS, IUM.

## REFERENCES

1. Abu Sulayman, A. H. (1989). *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Workplan*. Herndon, VA: IIIT.
2. AbuSulayman, A.H.(1994).*Islamization:ReformingContemporaryKnowledge*.Herndon, VA:IIIT.
3. Al-Alwani, Taha Jabir (1995). *Islamization of Knowledge: Yesterday and Today*. AJISS, 12 (1): 81-101.
4. Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1978). *Islam and Secularism*. Kuala Lumpur: ABIM.
5. Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1980). *The Concept of Education in Islam: A Framework of an Islamic Philosophy of Education*. Kuala Lumpur: ABIM.
6. Al-Faruqi, I. R. (1982). *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Workplan*. Herndon, VA: IIIT.
7. Aslam Haneef (2005). *A Critical Survey of Islamization of knowledge*. Kuala Lumpur: IIUM.
8. Husain, S. S. & Ashraf, S. A. (eds.). (1979). *Crisis in Muslim Education*. Jeddah: King Abdulaziz University.
9. *IIUM Policies and Guideliness on Islamisation* (2013). IIUM, Gombak: CENTRIS.
10. Nik Ahmad Hisham, I., Nik Suryani, N. A. R., Mohd Sahari, N., & Ahmad Marzuki, H. Z. (2003). "Integration and Internalization in the Inter-Group Relations in Institutions of Tertiary Education: A Case Study of the International Islamic University Malaysia." *Muslim Education Quarterly*, vol.20 (1&2):52-66.
11. Rosnani, H. & Imran, R. (2000). "Islamization of Knowledge: A Comparative Analysis of the Conception of Al-Attas and al-Faruqi". *Intellectual Discourse*, 8 (1): 19-44.
12. Ssekamanya, S. A., Suhailah H. & Nik Ahmad H. I. (2011). "The experience of Islamization of Knowledge at the International Islamic University Malaysia: successes and challenges." In *New Intellectual Horizons in Education* (ed.YedullahKazmi). Gombak:IIUMPress, pp. 91-110
13. Wan Mohd Nor, W. D. (1997). "Islamization of Contemporary Knowledge: A Brief Comparison between al-Attas and Fazlur Rahman." *Al-Shajarah* , 2(1):1-19.
14. Wan Mohd Nor, W. D. (1998). *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: An Exposition of the Original Concept of Islamization*. Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC.
15. Yasien Mohamed. (1993). "Islamization: A Revivalist Response to Modernity." *Muslim Education Quarterly*, 10 (2): 2-23.