

ISLAMIC ECONOMICS EDUCATION
IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN UNIVERSITIES

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This book discusses and analyzes an area of contemporary Islamic economics and finance that is relatively under-written, i.e., Islamic Economics Education. It provides a conceptual introduction by experts in Islamic Thought and Education on the urgent need for curriculum reforms in university education that is represented by integration between Islamic heritage (*al-Turath al-Islami*) and modern knowledge/disciplines. In this context, the Islamization of knowledge agenda, properly understood and undertaken by qualified academics, is a legitimate process required in the teaching of economics. *Islamic Economics Education in Southeast Asian Universities* presents the case studies and experiences of selected universities in Malaysia and Indonesia offering Islamic economics programs, reflects critically on these experiences, identifies important issues and challenges, and offers recommendations for the future progress of Islamic economics education.

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Centre for Islamic Economics, IIUM

In line with the vision and mission of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), the *Centre for Islamic Economics* (CIE) was established to promote the discipline of Islamic economics at both theoretical and policy levels. One of the focus areas of the centre is Islamic economics education, related specifically to curriculum and human resource issues. For further information about the CIE, please visit www.iium.edu.my/cie.

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PART I
CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN ISLAMIC ECONOMICS
EDUCATION

Chapter 2

Islamization of Human Knowledge

Mohd Kamal Hassan

1. The Importance and Role of Human Knowledge in the Worldview of Islam

It is clear from a comprehensive study of the Qur'an that it emphasizes the special position of human beings as Allah's most honored creation who are destined to construct a holistic civilization, by managing and developing the world's resources based on the guidance and knowledge from Divine revelation (*al-wahy al-Ilahi*) as well as the exertions of the human intellect (*al-'aql al-insani*) and will. While reaffirming the supremacy of Divine revelation, the Qur'an teaches that the sound human intellect has been entrusted by Divine revelation to play crucial roles in the confirmation of revealed truths and the development of all fields of human knowledge necessary for effective and wholesome human vicegerency on earth. Thus, there should not be any conflict between Divine revelation and sound human reason.

The Islamic postulate that human beings have to seek and pursue knowledge within the epistemology and ethic of *Tawhid* (affirmation of the uncompromising oneness of Allah) and servitude (*'ubdiyyah*) to Allah (S.W.T.) can be traced back to the very beginning of the descent of Divine revelation to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.A.S) – "*Iqra' bi-ismi Rabbika alladhi khalaq...*" (Q. 96:1-5). Knowledge, being a very special gift and trust bestowed by the Creator, Master, Ruler and

Sovereign of mankind to the best of His creatures, would only serve its true purpose – to serve the will of the Sovereign Master – if it is imbued with the servant’s deep and abiding faith in the Master; consciousness of dependency upon the Master’s munificence and absolute power; awe and fear of incurring the displeasure of the Compassionate Master lest the servant becomes ungrateful, forgetful, negligent of his/her duties or misuse the knowledge obtained, or falls sway to the influence of base desires, fleeting pleasures of worldly life, false gods or temptations arising out of Satanic insinuations, while fulfilling his/her responsibility in the life of this world.

The human beings’ role and responsibility as servants and vicegerents of the Master and Sustainer of the universe necessitate the use of divinely revealed knowledge as represented by the sacred scriptures of Allah (S.W.T) and the proper utilization of the God-given human intellect. The intellect (*‘aql*) is one of Allah’s greatest gift as well as a Divine trust (*amanah*) to mankind to be used to serve Allah (S.W.T.); to complement Divine revelation; to discover the bounties and resources embedded by Allah (S.W.T.) in nature, in man and in the universe; and to further the frontiers of human knowledge, in the spirit of gratefulness (*shukr*) to the Compassionate Master for the boundless bounties, in harmony and consistent with the ultimate goal of obtaining His pleasure, and the attainment of goodness in the temporary but crucial abode in this world, and goodness in the Hereafter – the ultimate destiny of human beings as His obedient and grateful servants. The title given to the best example of people or human beings who use their God-given intellect, reason or intelligence in the proper way as intended by its Creator is *Ulūl-albab* (the possessors of sound reason) (Q.3:190-194).

2. Responsibilities of the True Believers

The Believers in Islam (*al-mu’minun*) are assigned special responsibilities by Allah (S.W.T.). As followers and lovers of the Final

Messenger of Allah (S.W.T.) they are part and parcel of a unique ideological Community or Nation (*Ummah*) which has been designated as the Best Community or *Khair Ummah* (Q.3:110) for mankind to follow, because, with all the intellectual, spiritual and material resources put at their disposal by the Compassionate Master, they become a model of excellent servanthood and vicegerency: they are to invite people to the One True God, enjoin what is good, forbid what is bad and strive with their material and non-material resources – including the knowledge they have gained – to construct the whole of human life as a comprehensive servitude to Allah (S.W.T.). Their motto in life, as stated in the Qur'an is: "*Inna salati wa nusuki wa mahyaya wa mamati li-Allahi Rabb al-Alamin*" (Q.6: 162). They also need to remember that all the God-given means of acquiring knowledge, particularly their intellects, will be questioned by Allah Most Gracious on the Day of Judgement: "*And pursue not that of which you have no knowledge; for surely the hearing, the sight, the heart all of those shall be questioned of.*" (Q.17:36).

From the perspective of the Believers as defined by the Qur'an, commitment to Islam necessitates the responsibilities of social change (*al-taghyir al-ijtima'i*), comprehensive and holistic reform (*al-islah al-shumul wa al-mutakamil*), renewal (*al-tajdid*), purification of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs, al-qalb*), attainment of excellence (*al-ihsan*) and good conduct (*husn al-khuluq*), and performance of good deeds (*al-'amal al-salihat*). The mission of constructing knowledge and systems in conformity with worldview of Islam should be understood by the Believers as part of the process of implementing Allah's commandments. Other Divinely ordained responsibilities of the Believers, who are working in educational and professional institutions in Muslim countries, which have a direct bearing on the development of human knowledge and human systems, are the following:

1. Implementation of the commandment of “Read in the name of your Lord” (Q.96:1-5);
2. Remembrance of Allah (S.W.T.) (*dhikr*) with reflection and contemplation of His of Signs in the whole universe (*tafakkur*);
3. Establishment of the truth (*al-haqq*), the true religion (*al-din*), justice (*al-‘adl*), and moral-spiritual excellence (*al-ihsan*);
4. Constant mindfulness of the displeasure and pleasure (*taqwa*) of Allah (S.W.T.) and love (*hubb, mahabbah*) of Allah (S.W.T.), the Prophet (S.A.A.S.) and striving for the cause of Allah (S.W.T.) (*jihad fi sabil Allah*) above everything else;
5. Enjoining what is good and prohibiting what is bad (*al-amr bi al-ma’ruf wa al-nahy al-munkar*);
6. Adoption of wisdom (*hikmah*) and cooperation with other human beings in all that is good and not contradicting the tenets of Islam.

3. The Eminent Position of Scholars (*al-‘Ulama*) in the Qur’an

The preeminent value of knowledge in Islam and Islamic civilization is a well-known fact which has been discussed and elaborated by hundreds of scholars including several prominent Orientalists (Rosenthal, 1970). Muslims have been taught and reminded by religious scholars that the Prophets of Allah (S.W.T) did not bequeath material wealth but knowledge to mankind, that the religious scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets, that the seeking of knowledge from the cradle to the grave is an obligation on every Muslim, and word “*Iqra*” being the first command of Allah (S.W.T) to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.A.S), thus signaling and underscoring the supreme value of acquiring and transmitting Divinely- revealed knowledge in the vocation and mission of Prophethood. It follows that human beings are to acquire, develop and disseminate knowledge from the perspective of faith (*Iman*) in Allah Most Gracious as the provider of true knowledge.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the Qur'an uses various forms of the root word *'ain lam meem* in hundreds of places. The verb *ta'lamun* ("you [plural] know"), for example, is used 56 times, while *ya'lamun* ("they know") is used 85 times, and *'allama* ("he taught") is used 47 times. The adjective *'alim* (knower) is used with the definite article as indefinite form 140 times, while the word *'ilm* (knowledge) in its indefinite and definite forms is used 80 times. On the meaning of knowledge (*'ilm*), al-Raghib al-Isfahan defines it as follows:

Knowledge is the comprehension (idrak) of something in accordance with its true nature (bi-haqiqatihi). It is of two kinds. The first is the comprehension of the essence of something (this is what the scholars of logic call "perception"). The second is the judgement of the existence of something that exists or the denial of something that does not exist (this is what the logicians call 'confirmation'...) (Al-Qaradhawi, 1996: 71-72).

The Qur'an points to the preeminence of knowledge in several ways, the most prominent being the following: a) the Qur'anic assertion that "the people who know" (*alladhina ya'lamun*) are clearly not of the same status as "the people who do not know (*alladhina ya'lamun*)" (Q.39:9). It distinguishes and elevates "the people of knowledge" (*ahl al-'ilm*) from "the people of ignorance" (*ahl al-jahl*), by comparing the former to "those who have sight", "light" and "the living" while the latter is compared to "those who are blind", "darkness" and "the dead"; b) the Qur'anic judgement that "It is only those who have knowledge (*al-'ulama*) among His servants that fear Allah", because, they truly understand His power, wisdom and design in the workings of nature. They know His greatness and give Him the recognition that He rightfully deserves. Hence, the logical and organic bond between the capacity to know, the nature of things and the spiritual attitude of reverential awe (*khashyah*) and fear of the displeasure or wrath of Allah (S.W.T) (Q.35:28; Q.98:8); and c) the

Divine revelation that “Allah bears witness that there is no object of worship other than Allah, and the angels, and those endowed with knowledge (*al-‘ilm*) also give this witness that He is always maintaining His creation in Justice.” (Q.3:18). Commenting on this verse, al-Ghazali observes how Allah (S.W.T) begins with Himself, followed by the angels and the people of knowledge. This is enough to show the high honor and excellent position of the latter. (*Ihya’ ‘Ulum al-Deen* Beirut: Dar al-Ma’rifah, Vol. 1:4-5).

The Qur’an pays tribute to the excellent qualities of the people of knowledge. “Those who are endowed with knowledge” (*alladhina utu al-‘ilm*) are praised in the Qur’an for their virtues and their ethical, intellectual and spiritual qualities. The knowledge that they possessed bore the fruit of faith and their faith bore the fruit of humility before Allah (S.W.T) (Q.34:6; Q.22:4; Q.17:106-109; Q.29:47-49).

Those endowed with knowledge who are praised in the Qur’an and those who are not deceived by externalities to neglect the essence, or by quantity to neglect quality, or by outer skins to neglect the kernel, or by matter to neglect the spirit. That is why when Qur’an, the possessor of fabulous treasures, went out to his people with his dazzling ornaments, lavish pageantry and enchanting pomp and splendor, those who were desirous of this-worldly life said, ‘Oh! Would that We had the like of what Qur’an has been given! Verily he is endowed with tremendous good fortune!’ But the attitude of those among the ‘people of true knowledge’ (ahl al-‘ilm al-haqiqi) was completely different. They were not deceived by all the glitter, and the mirage, which others thought was water, did not nourish them. The Qur’an captures their splendid attitude in the following description: ‘But those who had been granted true knowledge said, ‘Woe unto you! The reward of Allah for him who believes and does what is right is better, but none save the patient in adversity can

ever achieve this (blessing) (Al-Qaradhawi, 1996: 90). The Qur'anic verses referred to are Q.28:79-80).

These people of knowledge are joined together in the Qur'an with those who have faith, and together Allah (S.W.T) elevates their status by many degrees: "...Allah will exalt those who believe among you and those who have been endowed with (true) knowledge to (suitable) ranks and degrees (Q.58:11)." The worldview presented by the Qur'an enjoins the harmonious integration of Divinely revealed knowledge and the intellectually acquired knowledge – or unity of the Book of revelation and the Book of the universe – as the fundamental method for the sound and holistic development of man, society, state, culture and civilization in order to realize the "good life", the just and virtuous society, "a land fair and prosperous, in the care of a Forgiving God", a balanced and theocentric civilization leading ultimately to the life of everlasting felicity in the Hereafter.

The failure to follow the Way of Allah (S.W.T.) as revealed in His Book would result in real loss (*al-khusran*) in this world and in the Hereafter. This is the worldview of *Tawhid* (affirmation of the uncompromising oneness of Allah) which molded the brilliant holistic Islamic civilization which unified faith, ethics and religion with the natural and experimental sciences, technology, governance of the state, economic activities and education. The education system of this civilization embodied the Qur'anic vision of the unity of religion and science, religious knowledge and worldly knowledge, morality with professional disciplines, and the physical and the spiritual. It underscored the inseparability of the character of the scholar and the quality of his/her scholarship, both being governed by the principle of seeking the pleasure of the Gracious Master, not the favors of human beings. After all, true scholars or people endowed with knowledge, are supposed to be the most conscious of the displeasure or wrath of Allah (S.W.T.) in the way their knowledge or expertise is utilized: "*Of all His servants, only such as are endowed with knowledge stand [truly] in*

awe of God: [for they alone comprehend that] verily, God is almighty, much-forgiving." (Q.35:28). This attitude of *khashyah* (reverential fear, awe, hope) with regard to Almighty God needs to be reinforced in today's academia in which, unfortunately, self-centered values appear to be most predominant.

4. The Qur'anic Paradigm of Unified and Integrated Knowledge

The present era of globalization is witnessing the rising tide of the commercialization of higher education, an issue that has engaged the attention of several Western critics (e.g. Readings, 1997; Postman, 1995). In this regard, we should be grateful to Harry Lewis, a Harvard dean of 32 years who decided to expose the other side of Harvard in his book *Excellence without a Soul: How a Great University Forgot Education* (Lewis, 2006). Since this phenomenon of the corruption of higher education is not confined to the famous universities in the West but has spread to Asian countries, it is only proper and commendable that Muslim leaders and Muslim educationists give a more urgent and serious attention to the Qur'an paradigms of true human development and of integrated knowledge. As the Qur'an is the primary source for Muslims to seek Divine knowledge which reveals absolute truths concerning the true nature of man, the correct methodology of holistic human development as well as the epistemology and ethics of *Tawhid*, a sincere and deep study of the Holy Book is never more urgently needed today than ever before, especially by the Muslim elites and policy-makers in Muslim countries.

At a time when humanity as a whole is witnessing not only the failures of modern education (Chomsky, 2004) but what Immanuel Wallerstein, the eminent American sociologist, describes as "The End of the World as We Know It: Social Science for the Twenty-First Century" (Wallerstein, 1998) or "The End of Certainty" as described by the Nobel laureate in chemistry, 1977, Ilya Prigogine (Prigogine,

1977), the Muslim countries – beset with their own internal crises and chronic ailments – cannot afford to continue on the path of modernization or development modeled upon the secular paradigm of development or perpetuate the system of national education in which religious education and worldly education are still in the dualistic or dichotomistic mode.

Under these circumstances the development of the holistic personality of “the possessors of sound reason”, the *ulu’l-albab*, *ulu’l-nuha* or *ulu’l-absar* as the Qur’an calls it, in Muslim institutions of higher learning should receive urgent attention by Muslim intellectuals, scholars and educationists who are sincerely striving to erect the human pillars of an alternative development model and sustainable civilization – a civilization based upon the servitude and gratitude of human beings to their compassionate living Creator, their beneficent, omniscient and omnipotent Master, and their just and caring Ruler of the cosmos and all that exists.

The production and growth of more Islamicized intellectuals, scholars, scientists, professionals, political leaders and educated classes who combine or unify scientific and worldly knowledge with religious values, thinking and contemplation (*fikr* and *tafakkur*) with spiritual remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allah (S.W.T.), worldly means with other worldly ends, reason with Divine revelation, professionalism with *taqwa* [that deep ethical consciousness of the pleasure and displeasure of Allah (S.W.T.)], and are not afflicted with the diseases of the spiritual heart which al-Ghazali (d.1111) called *al-muhlikat* (destructive elements). These holistic and God-fearing human resources and intellectual capital are the need of the hour to transform the ailing Muslim nations and communities, and help to reconstruct contemporary human civilization mired in the moral crises of secular modernity.

The verses in Q.2:164, Q.45:5, Q.13:4 and Q.16:12, 66-67 clearly indicate that Allah desires that human beings should use the intellect

to understand the laws of nature and the benefits such knowledge brings as Allah's generous provision to mankind. The intellect is also to be used to draw moral lessons from the history of nations or civilizations which were destroyed by Allah (S.W.T) because of their injustices and iniquities. Those who do not use their God-given intellect to derive such lessons and consequently turned their backs against the Messengers of Allah are described as people who have "hearts by which they could comprehend" (*qulubun ya'qiluna biha*), but instead they refused to learn from historical events because their hearts, rather than their eyes, were blind: "Have they not travelled in the land, and have they hearts by which they could comprehend (and gain wisdom), and ears by which they could hear (the truth)? For indeed it is not the eyes that have become blind, but it is the hearts, which are within their bosoms, that grow blind." (Q.22:46). The Qur'an also uses the word *al-fu'ad* for the intellect, in singular and plural forms, as one of the three basic means of attaining knowledge – hearing (*al-sama'*), sight (*al-basar*) and heart (*al-fu'ad*) (Q.17:36; Q.16:78). In many verses, the word *qulub* (hearts) is mentioned instead of *fu'ad*. The verses show that "hearts" have the faculty of intellection (*qulubun ya'qiluna biha*) and understanding (*qulubun la yafqahuna biha*) which is the function of the intellect (*'aql*) although the word *'aql* itself is not used in the Qur'an (Q.2:7; Q.7:179; Q.16:108; Q.17:46; Q.18:57; Q.22:46).

From a study of the 16 verses in which the term *ulu'l albāb* is used in the Qur'an, it is possible to summarize the quality of the mind of the truly integrated knowledge and integrated intellectuals – as the intellect that is pure and uncontaminated which is ever in need of consciousness of *taqwa* to Allah (S.W.T.) – the deep consciousness of the presence and sovereignty of Allah (S.W.T.) such that the Believer is always mindful lest any of his/her actions, thoughts or behavior would incur His displeasure or wrath. It is this spirit of *taqwa* that will lead the Believers as well as the Muslim scholars to *al-falah* (real

success in this world and in the Hereafter). *Taqwa* then becomes the necessary ingredient in the formation of the mind of Islamic intellectuals, leaders, scholars, professionals and the ordinary believers. It should be reiterated that in the Islamic worldview, the principle of *taqwa* constitutes the common spiritual core value in the proper development of the life of the individual, family, institutions, community, nation, and civilization. (Q. 5:100; 10:65). Scholars, leaders, intellectuals and professionals in this “Age of Turbulence” (Greenspan, 2007), global crises and rampant corruption are, in our humble opinion, in greater need of *taqwa* than ever before.

The mind or intellect of the Islamicized intellectuals derive their knowledge of the One True God and of His power, wisdom, mercy and presence not from one source, i.e. the written book of Allah (S.W.T.) but from two sources, the other being the unwritten and observable book of the cosmos and the world of nature. In several places, the Qur’an urges the “people who use their reason” to study and contemplate on the multitude of Allah’s creation in nature, on the wonders in nature and on their usefulness and indispensability for the physical sustenance and wellbeing of human life, with the condition that human beings show their gratitude and their dependency on the infinite grace and blessings of the One Living Lord and Sustainer. (Compare Q. 2:164 and 3:190). The most frequently quoted verse which refers to the *ulu’l albāb* is the following:

Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the succession of night and day, there are indeed signs for the Ulu’l albab, who remember Allah when they stand, and when they sit, and when they lie down to sleep, and thus reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: ‘O our Sustainer! You have not created all this without meaning and purpose. Limitless are You in Your Glory! Keep us safe, then from suffering in Hell! O our Sustainer! Whomsoever You shall commit to the fire, verily will You have brought him to disgrace,

and such evildoers will have none to succor them. O our Sustainer! Behold, we heard a voice calling us unto faith, 'Believe in your Sustainer! And so we believed. O our Sustainer! Forgive us, then our sins, and efface our bad deeds, and let us die the death of the truly virtuous! O our Sustainer! Grant us that which You have promised us through Your Messengers and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection! Verily You never failed to fulfill Your promise! (Q. 3:191-194).

It is clear that the above verses of *Surah Al 'Imran* reflect the God-centered and *taqwa*-rooted attributes of the integrated scholar in Islam. The deep study, reflection, contemplation and analysis of the workings and intricacies of the world of nature together with faith in the One Creator and Sustainer leads the sincere and humble scholars to the awareness of the ultimate end and the continuity of human life in the eternal abode of the Hereafter, the knowledge of which is given by the Prophet (S.A.A.S) to mankind and to the believers. This implies that believing scientists who are imbued with the spiritual-moral consciousness of *taqwa* realize that if they were to misuse the knowledge of the workings of nature which constitute great benefits for human beings, or if they were negligent, ungrateful to the Creator, or strive with the blessings they obtained from their mastery of natural resources to cause injustice, suffering, oppression, imbalances and to dominate over others, to perpetuate their economic or political hegemony over weaker or poorer people, they know that they would surely meet the wrath of their Master in the Hereafter, and that would be the height of ignominy and shame (*khizy*) for these intellectual and intelligent servants of Allah (S.W.T.)

The verses in Q.6:97, 30:22, 29:43, 35:27, 28, 10:5, 27:50-52, 7:32,28 and others point to this assertion. Even the term "*al-'ulama*" which occurs in verse Q.35:7-28 does not imply only the scholars of religious knowledge. The content and the context of the verses point to those who study the signs (*ayat*) of Allah (S.W.T.) as contained in

the natural phenomena. This requires the specialized knowledge of geology, astronomy, mathematics, biology, chemistry, earth sciences, life sciences, anthropology and others. This interpretation becomes all the more persuasive when the above verses are compared with many other verses of the Qur'an which refer to various aspects of the natural phenomena, including the human body, as representing the signs of the One True God. The following verse which has the same basic meaning as Q.3:191 but may be considered as an expanded version of Q.3:191 should be cited here:

Verily, in the creation of the heavens and of the earth, and in the succession of night and day; and in the ships that speed through the sea with what is useful to man; and in the waters which Allah sends down from the sky, giving life thereby to the earth after it had been lifeless, and causing all manner of living creatures to multiply thereon; and in the change of the winds, and the clouds that run their appointed courses between sky and earth: in all these there are signs indeed for people who use their sound intellect (qawm ya'qilun) (Q. 2:164).

Verses of this nature have convinced several Muslim scholars since the last century that the cosmos and nature constituted another "Book" of Allah (S.W.T.) that has to be studied by human beings to derive useful scientific and technological knowledge which are necessary for the servants and vicegerents of God to play the active civilizational role on earth, while at the same time being guided by the Book of Divine revelation as represented by the Divine scriptures which culminated in the Qur'an. Thus, the most desirable form of Muslim education is one which combines the "readings of the two books" (*al-jam' bain al-qiraatain*): the "Open Book" of nature as Sayyid Qutb calls it and the "Book That Is Read" namely the Qur'an. The mind that is fully integrated and uncontaminated is most capable of integrating the knowledge acquired from the scientific study of the

natural phenomena with the knowledge, wisdom and norms acquired through Divine revelation.

The Muslim scholar *par excellence* then is not to be evaluated based purely on his or her field of specialization – religious or worldly – but on the dominant attitude of his/her personality vis-a-vis the Sustainer, i.e. on what the Qur’an calls the profound awe (*khashyah*) of Allah’s omnipotence. Thus the term “*al-‘ulama*” in Q.35:28 has been interpreted by Sayyid Qutb as “scholars (or experts) who know how to “read” the natural phenomena deeply – they are the ones who truly fear the wrath of Allah” (Qutb, 1971: vol.6, 698), because the complexities, intricacies and systematic order in the cosmos “could not be comprehended except by those who are truly knowledgeable of this Book” (*la yudrikuhu illa al-‘ulama’ bi-hadha al-kitab*). In interpreting Q.35:28, al-Qaradhawi says it quite confidently that “from what is clear in the context of the verse, [the word] “*al-‘ulama*” does not mean scholars of religious sciences or scholars of Divine law, although they do possess important merit and position.” (al-Qaradhawi, 1996: 151). To al-Qaradhawi, the scholars of geology, astronomy, biology, physics and the like are the people who are capable of knowing deeply Allah’s secrets in the natural phenomena (al-Qaradhawi, 1996: 151).

The Muslim scientists, physicists, astronomers, engineers, architects, chemists and mathematicians of the glorious period of Islamic civilization, from Baghdad to Spain in the West and to Central Asia and India in the East were well-known for their scientific studies and discoveries of the secrets of nature and the human body, but unlike the secular-minded scientists or social scientist of the modern era, they were people who were staunch believers in the religion of *Tawhid*. Today, the new generation of Muslim scientists and intellectuals, in both the natural sciences and social sciences could also represent the model of the *ulu’l albab* if they decide to pursue, develop, construct and disseminate their scientific or intellectual

products based on the epistemology of *Tawhid* and the axiology of true Believers while the Muslim religious scholars and intellectuals, on their part, could appreciate more profoundly the Divine knowledge and wisdom embedded in the cosmos, nature, society and the human body through the disciplines of biology, anatomy, astronomy, physics, mathematics, medicine, etc. Informed and illuminated by some degree of familiarity – if not proper grounding – in modern scientific knowledge, minus the biases of secularism, materialism or naturalism, the Muslim religious teachers, scholars and leaders would have a far more positive impact on moral and religious education of the younger generation of Muslims as well as the educated classes. To be able to harmoniously blend the understanding of the two Books of Allah, requires, however, the holistic development of the human personality which integrates the physical, rational, emotional, spiritual and intuitive faculties of the human self in accordance with the first principles of the unity of God, the unity of the human self and the unity of knowledge (al-Faruqi, 1982; 1989).

5. The Rise and Decline of Islamic Civilization

History testifies to the great contributions of pioneering Muslim scientists, thinkers and scholars in the Muslim centers of learning in Andalusia to the rebirth of Western knowledge, science and technology as a result of this holistic and revelation-inspired civilization. The distinctive shape and complexion of Islamic civilization was molded by the integration of faith in *Tawhid* and human knowledge, be it in the area of religious or worldly disciplines. Franz Rosenthal says in his excellent study of the concept of knowledge in medieval Islamic history, “In fact, there is no other concept that has been operative as a determinant of Muslim civilization in all its aspects to the same extent as *‘ilm* (Rosenthal, 1970: 2).

The Muslim *Ummah* and civilization, unfortunately, succumbed first to internal political divisions and intellectual crises as religious

authority distanced itself from political power, and second, to the fragmentation and corruption of the religious sciences – which prompted al-Ghazali to launch a devastating critique in his *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* – followed by the decline in the cultivation of the worldly sciences, thus making the Muslim countries an easy prey to the militarily and technologically superior forces of Western imperialism and colonialism from the 18th century onwards.

The advent and dominance of the secularistic and materialistic Western culture, systems and civilization over the Muslim countries and societies up to the middle of the 20th century led to the massive and broad-ranging secularization and Westernization of Muslim mind, culture, education, politics, economics and law. As scientific advancement of the West was seen as the main key to worldly power and progress, many Muslim reformists and thinkers who were against the continued dominance of Western imperialism, were undoubtedly impressed with the scientific and technological accomplishments of the modern Western civilization. They therefore urged the Muslim societies to regain the medieval Muslim scholars' passion for scientific inquiry and pursue modern scientific knowledge in order not to become forever dependent upon Western countries in material development. The negative aspects of the modern secular sciences and secular modernity, which are evident in the second part of the 20th century, have not yet become apparent to them in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The dichotomy and separation of religious knowledge and worldly knowledge in the colonial educational systems and the ascendancy of secular modernity had a profound impact on the Muslim psyche, society and culture. The rise of scientism in 19th century Europe and the display of the awesome power and might of the West's scientific and technological prowess in the greater part of the 20th century have in fact emboldened a God-defiant civilization which deified man and his autonomous reason.

The result is the catastrophic imbalance between unprecedented technological and material progress on the one hand and widespread moral decay, gross political and economic injustices of global dimensions and environmental degradations of alarming magnitudes, on the other hand. At the root of this cruel, unjust and immoral modern civilization lies the scientific worldview of secular modernity, secular humanism and agnostic rationality which, together with the marginalization or political manipulation of religion by the nation state, has spawned the new paradigms of modern scientific education and knowledge which are now being condemned and parodied by the Western post-modernists themselves for having miserably failed to overcome the evils of inequalities, social injustices, oppression and exploitation of the Third World (Tarnas, 1993). The following judgment of the Qur'an appears to be most relevant to the present-day mindset of materialistic and secular modernity: *"They know but the outer (things) in the life of this world: but of the Hereafter they are heedless."* (Q.30:7).

6. The Collapsing Pillars of the Secular Western Paradigm of Development and Modernity

In this era of economic turbulence and political uncertainties, coupled with the specter of environmental catastrophes and widespread social unrest, the current model of development – even after becoming more comprehensive in scope via the MDGs and HDIs – seriously lacks the spiritual and transcendental mechanisms to deal with the inward ailments of the human soul left unattended by the reigning paradigms of secular humanism and Godless modernization strategies. The inability to envision a holistic material-spiritual human growth and wellbeing is a direct consequence of a worldview grounded in the naturalistic ontology and positivistic epistemology of modern science. It took the postmodernist philosophers of the late 20th century to unceremoniously deconstruct the worldly and power related

underpinnings of modern Western science and technology to make many contemporary intellectuals more aware of the limits and dangers inherent in the ethnocentric or national biases of the modern constructs of knowledge and systems.

The Western social sciences from which the grand Western narratives of development or progress are constructed are even more value-loaded and problematic than the natural or hard sciences. Pulled in many different directions by the conflicting schools of thought and theoretical orientations of all shades and colors, the contemporary social sciences are not in a position to provide lasting and stable foundations for a more humane, peaceful and meaningful existence of human beings and societies in a highly pluralistic, mobile and globalised world. Immanuel Wallerstein, the former president of the International Sociological Association (1994-1998), believes that Western social scientists “are in the midst of wandering through dark woods and have insufficient clarity about where we should be heading.” (Wallerstein, 1999: ix). The modern world-system according to him, “has entered into a terminal crisis and is unlikely to exist in fifty years...we do know that the period of transition will be a terrible time of troubles, since the stakes of the transition are so high, the outcome so uncertain...”(Wallerstein, 1999: 1).

Questioning whether the world has really “progressed”, Wallerstein concludes that “the belief in certainties, a fundamental premise of modernity, is blinding and crippling”. He agrees with the critique of Ilya Prigogine, the Nobel laureate in chemistry, who maintains in his latest book *La fin des certitudes* (The End of Certainty, 1997) that the universe is a highly complex system and that the human social systems are the most complex and “the hardest to analyze” (Wallerstein, 1999: 3). From these new views a “science of complexity” is emerging. There are many signs; he asserts that humanity has now “entered a time of troubles. The outcome is uncertain. We cannot be sure what kind of historical system will

replace the one which we find ourselves. What we can know with certainty is that the very peculiar system in which we live, and in which the states have played a crucial role in supporting the processes of the endless accumulation of capital, can no longer continue to function” (Wallerstein, 1999: 75).

Wallerstein argues that the grave ecological catastrophes the world is in now – the greenhouse effect, depletion of the ozone layer, poisonous toxic waste in the water, the air and the earth, unpredictable global warming and climate change – are “directly the result of the fact that we live in a capitalist world-economy.” (1998: 82). In his view, the present historical system is in fact in “terminal crisis” (Wallerstein, 1998: 85). He argues for the creation of “not only a new social system, but new structures of knowledge, in which philosophy and sciences will no longer be divorced, and we shall return to the singular epistemology ...prior to the creation of the capitalist world economy.” (Wallerstein, 1999: 86). He thinks it is possible and desirable to bring about in the twenty-first century, “the epistemological reunification of the so-called two cultures, that of science and the humanities; the organizational reunification and redivision of the social sciences, and the assumption by social science of centrality in the world of knowledge” (Wallerstein, 1998: 243).

7. The Concern of Muslim Reformists, Revivalists, Renewalists, Scholars and Thinkers for Islamization of Human Knowledge

The shameful malaise which has afflicted and paralyzed the *Ummah* for decades, coupled with the unjust Western domination and hegemony over Muslim countries, have been the primary factors behind the rise of Muslim revivalist and nationalist thought and movements which began with the Pan Islamism of al-Afghani and the reformism of Muhammad Abduh. The great poet-philosopher of early 20th century, Muhammad Iqbal, mounted his profound intellectual critique of both the lethargic state of the Muslim communities and the

domineering secular and materialistic Western civilization, and presented the worldview and civilization of *Tawhid* as the alternative to it. For the lethargic Muslims, his panacea was the restoration of the activism and dynamism of the Prophetic era.

Iqbal was very critical of the negative impact of liberal education in his time. He expressed his criticisms of the Westernized system of education and the need for Islamic reform mainly in his inspirational and emotionally charged poetry. However, in a letter to K.G. Saiyidain, Iqbal makes it clear that the scientific and technological knowledge produced by the secular civilization of the West has to be Islamicized. He says:

By 'ilm I mean that knowledge which is based on senses. Usually I have used the word in this very sense. This knowledge yields physical powers which should be subservient to deen (i.e. the religion of Islam). If it is not subservient to deen then it is demonic, pure and simple... It is incumbent to Muslims to Islamize knowledge (underline added). "Abu Lahab should be metamorphosed into Haider". If this Abu Lahab becomes Haider-e-Karrar, or in other words, if it (i.e. knowledge and the power it wields) become subservient to deen then it would be an unmixed blessing unto mankind. (Saiyidain, 1942: 99 cited in Ahmad, 1962: 15).

Muhammad Asad's analysis of the West and Islam as two different *Weltanschauungs* at odds with one another invigorated the intellectual foundation of the revivalist and reformist Islamic discourse which originated during the colonial period. The revivalist movements led by Mawdudi and Hasan al-Banna offered a comprehensive Islamic reform agenda as an alternative to the Western systems of politics, education, economics and culture. Their emphasis on *ijtihad*, *islahi*, *tajdid*, comprehensive *jihad* and "going back to the authority of the Qur'an and Sunnah" constituted the methodology of social change

aimed at the political, educational and intellectual reform of the Muslim *Ummah* itself. Both Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb had also expressed their strong criticisms against the secular economic systems, the secular legal systems, and the contemporary social sciences and humanities.

The intellectual discourse of Mawdudi and Sayyid Qutb exposed the dangers and sinister implications of the contemporary systems of *Kufr* (disbelief in *Tawhid*), *Shirk* (polytheism and idolatry), *Taghut* (false deities) and *Jahiliyyah* (arrogant denial of real Truths) represented by the dominant Western culture and civilization. In *Towards Understanding Islam* and *Ta'limat* (On Education), Mawdudi argued and explained the need for putting the social sciences and humanities on the foundation of *Tawhidic* faith and worldview as well as the reform of traditional religious education, thus paving the way to the more philosophical and academic critique or discourse on Islamic perspectives in the different disciplines and branches of modern knowledge which emerged in the second part of the 20th century.

Mawdudi's critical thought on Muslim education since the late 1930s has been compiled in Urdu in a book form entitled *Ta'limat* which has run into several editions. The English rendering and edition of this book was undertaken by Prof. Sayyid Muhammad Abdur Rauf in 1988 with the title *Mawdudi on Education*. This book is a clear proof that Mawdudi, after Iqbal, is one of the earliest Muslim thinkers in the 20th century to propose the overall reform of Muslim education, including the new model of an Islamic university, from the perspective of Islamic worldview which currently is one of the main goals of the Islamization project. Mawdudi refers to the need to "Islamize" in several parts of his book. We reproduce below some of the important quotations from the book:

1. The Maulana's analysis of the moral and spiritual decadence of Muslims cannot be questioned. The baneful impact of secular education is manifest all around us (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 11).
2. As early as 1935 there was increasing concern among the Muslim intelligentsia of the subcontinent about the pernicious influence Muslim educational institutions were having on the community of students, undermining their religious faith to the point where they were gradually becoming atheists or advocates of alien ideologies (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 13).
3. It is therefore time that Muslims get rid of both traditionalism and modernism and rebuild their educational structure along a purely Islamic pattern which conforms to the needs and requirements of the modern world. The administrators and teachers on whom the success of an education system depends must be imbued with the true spirit of Islam (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 19).
4. To ensure the Islamic character to Aligarh University, the first and foremost task is to review the western humanities and sciences and to bring them into line with the teachings of Islam (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 21).
5. Law, economics, philosophy, history and the other branches of knowledge being taught at Aligarh should be reoriented in accordance with the fundamental principles of Islam. Furthermore, teachers should be thoroughly immersed in the Qur'an and the *Hadith* (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 22).
6. All the specialized fields of humanities and science should be approached from an Islamic point of view. Western learning *per se* is beneficial, and Islam is not hostile to it. Insofar as respect for knowledge is concerned, there is no discord between Islam and the West. Islam's animosity is against Westernization rather than Western knowledge. Western thinking is by and large hypothetical; it reflects the ideological bias of its people who view the problems of life from distinct standpoint. Western knowledge

is not based on established truths. The West has developed a particular cast of mind, an intuition matrix in which hypothetical premises are incubated. On the basis of these unestablished truths it has built a special system of life, which the West regards as credible and valid. Islam is against this myopic approach to the facts of life. Islam is not hostile to the established truth of knowledge but to the unreliable intuition which moulds and distorts these truths. Islam views the problems from a different perspective; it has its own distinct concepts, an angle of vision, a starting point, an intuition matrix, all of which are diametrically opposed to the West. Islam deprecates Western knowledge not because scientific truths are being borrowed from it but because the Western intuition matrix is also being adopted. On account of this the students drift from the anchor of Islam and become vulnerable to the deleterious influences of Western ideology. The teaching of philosophy, science, history, law, political science, economics and other subjects, is so conducted as to persuade the students that the Western theories are gospel truth. Research and reasoning also follow Western lines. How is it possible then to bring them up as ideal Muslims in the face of such conflicts of interest? What can religious education based on abstract principles which have no correspondence with scientific truths or the problems of life accomplish? How can Islamic education be effective when students are consistently fed on thinking and philosophies that run counter to its principles? Here lies the genesis of the problem. When students are able to view this universe and the problems of life from the Qur'anic point of view it may then be claimed that the Islamic spirit has been instilled in them. If not, they will be driven towards heresy, accepting the Western knowledge unquestionably and their faith in Islam will be confined to mere observance of some rituals (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 35-37).

7. Teachers are the principle architects of education. On them depends the training of students along Islamic lines and the generating of an Islamic spirit in them. It is an incontrovertible fact that more of the academic staffs of this University are oriented towards the West and the embodiment of anti-Islamic values. It is foolhardy to expect them to build the edifice of an Islamic education and to generate an Islamic awareness among the students. Under the circumstances, the handful of the teachers in the department of the Islamic Studies cannot work miracles. They alone cannot give Islamic direction to the students when the academic staff in all other disciplines is either non-Muslim or pseudo-Muslim. The students are thus exposed to the influence of atheistic and morally decadent teachers and become mentally subservient to un-Islamic thinking and philosophy. While recruiting members of the academic staff Muslim University should ensure that they are not only experts in their respective fields but also practicing Muslims. Under special circumstances, however, the University could requisition the services of non-Muslim teachers in the particular field. But normally the University should prefer teachers who, besides, being experts in their respective fields, are also committed to the objectives of this institution (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 32).
8. The task of compiling and re-evaluating scientific data bequeathed by the preceding generations has been undertaken by forces hostile to Islam. No attempt whatsoever has yet been made in this direction from a religious perspective. It is again the dissenters and research in the domains of physics, chemistry, electronics, psychology, etc., for their own benefit. It is again they who prescribed their use in the cultural life of the community according to their own code of ethics and morality. Likewise, the ideologies envisaging the structure of communal life and its practical implementation were conceived by non-believers. Their ideologies, therefore, reign supreme in the present world, since no

ideology devoted to the sovereignty of Allah subsists today even in theory, not to speak of practice, answering contemporary needs and offering solutions to the everyday problems of life. Under the circumstances a person adhering to the godly school of thought faces enormous difficulties in discharging his practical responsibilities of life. In spite of his good intentions, he follows a course of life which is repugnant to Muslim ideology. With the explosion of scientific knowledge it is difficult for him to sift facts from heresy – a blind spot which prompts him to accept facts along with the scientific point of view and deductions without even bothering to think of the incalculable damage it might do to his faith. In the discharge of his everyday responsibilities he is equally at a loss to discriminate between right and wrong. He accepts many social usages simply because they have gained currency, albeit they run counter to Islam. Sometimes he deliberately has recourse to unlawful practices since he cannot conceive of anything different. Sometimes he is obliged to tread the wrong path because there is no alternative path open to him (Abdur Rauf, 1988: 61-62).

8. The Need for an Alternative Paradigm of Contemporary Education and Knowledge

The secular epistemological and educational paradigm of the Western world which was transplanted in the Muslim world by colonial and neo-imperialist forces, facilitated by the Westernized (“the Brown Sahibs” of British India) or secularised indigenous elites, helped to generate and mobilized the powerful Islamic intellectual responses of scholars and thinkers like Muhammad Iqbal, Muhammad Asad, Malek Bennabi, Sayyid Nursi, Abu’l A’la Mawdudi, Abu’l Hasan Ali al-Nadwi, Sayyid Qutb, Muhammad Qutub, Muhammad al-Bahi, Mohammad Natsir, Hamka, Sayyid Hossein Nasr, A.K. Brohi, Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas, Isma’il al Faruqi, Taha Jabir al-

Alwani and many others, each with his own style, emphasis and orientation. It was quite natural that the intellectual discourse on the reform of Islamic education was among the earliest discourse championed by the reformist and revivalist movements in the Muslim world. Islamic economic principles as an alternative to capitalism and communism was also high on the Islamic intellectual agenda of the Islamic movements since the 50s, not least because of the forceful condemnation of *riba* and unjust exploitative economic practices in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Islam was presented, for the first time, by the Muslim thinkers and activists in the Arab world, Indo-Pakistan subcontinent and Indonesia as the third alternative, or at least as a via media between liberal capitalism and Marxist socialism. Thus the discourse on the need for Islamic economics since Mawdudi presented his address in 1941 at the Aligarh Muslim University on "The Economic Problem of Man and Its Islamic Solution" is quite substantial. This is followed by the contemporary discourse on "Islamization of Contemporary Knowledge", as first articulated and propagated by Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas in Malaysia and Ismail al-Faruqi in U.S.A. in their seminal works of high intellectual quality and depth. This post-colonial Islamic discourse, it should be pointed out, was preceded, in the 11th century C.E., by Imam al-Ghazali's pioneering intellectual efforts in critiquing Hellenistic philosophy profoundly and masterly as the new intellectual obsession of the Muslim elites during the Abbasid Dynasty in his *Tahafut al-Falasifah* (Incoherence of the Philosophers). It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that al-Ghazali's formidable intellectual critique of Hellenistic philosophy in the 11th century C.E. laid not only a strong foundation but also provided a major authoritative theoretical framework for the Islamic intellectual exposition of mainstream Islamic epistemology and ethics that forms the fundamental constituent of the Islamization agenda in the 20th century.

Driven by the *Tawhidic* civilizational vision as well as its metaphysical or epistemological assumptions about knowledge, science and education, the Islamic intellectual discourses on education, economics, politics, law, literature, architecture, psychology, sociology, science and technology developed by the reformist-renewalist Islamic intellectuals in the first part of the 20th century together contributed to the construction of an alternative paradigm of contemporary knowledge popularly known as “Islamization of Knowledge” since the 80s. The emergence of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists which was formed in U.S.A in 1972 (and joined by the present author while he was studying at Columbia University, New York), followed by the establishment of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in Herndon, Virginia in 1981, headed by the late Isma’il R. al Faruqi, the establishment of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in 1983, and the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) headed by Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas in 1987 in Kuala Lumpur, played major roles in developing the intellectual agenda of Islamization of human knowledge on an international scale.

9. The Concept of Islamization of Human Knowledge: Some Meanings and Emphases

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

1. “The deliverance of knowledge from its interpretations based on secular ideology; and from meaning and expressions of the secular”; “dewesternization of knowledge”, “desecularization of knowledge”. (al-Attas, 1978).

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”. (al-Faruqi, 1988)
3. “Reforming contemporary knowledge” and the Muslim mind. (Abu Sulayman, 1994)
4. “The foundation of the *tawhidi* 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 *tawhid*, proper, discerning, and purposeful knowledge may result”. (al ‘Alwani, 1996)
5. “*Dekufurization* of human knowledge”. (Malik Badri, as mentioned verbally by him in 2005 in IIUM)
6. “Practicing (i.e. discovering, compiling, piecing together, communicating and publishing) intellectual activity based on the Islamic concept of the universe”. (Imad al-Din Khalil, 1991)
7. “The process by which the whole body of human knowledge is particularized, classified, organized and systematized in conformity with Islamic epistemological principles” (Osman Bakar, as found in ISTAC (2008: 9). See also Bakar (1997))

10. An Alternative Model of Muslim Higher Education: The Case of IIUM

The International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) was established in 1983 as an alternative to the secular model of higher education based on the *Tawhidic* paradigm of knowledge and education. The following statement is mentioned in the original

concept paper which was assigned to the present author by the then Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohammad:

The Islamic philosophy of knowledge and education shall be the basis of instruction of all the disciplines. The Islamic worldview concerning God, man, nature and history shall be the foundation of the university education and curriculum. Muslim as well as non-Muslim instructors shall be required to know the Islamic philosophy of knowledge and Islamic worldview well enough to integrate them in the course of their instruction and research. To this end special orientation courses shall be introduced. (See Hassan, 2009a: 33).

Bearing in mind the nature, policies, curriculum structure and constraints of IIUM, we would like to offer our humble understanding and meaning of “Islamization of Human Knowledge” (IOHK) as stated in the university’s Constitution as one of the major missions of IIUM, as follows:

IOHK is an alternative paradigm for pursuing, constructing, developing, adapting, sifting, critiquing, organizing, disseminating, reconstructing, utilizing and evaluating contemporary human knowledge – as distinct from Divinely revealed knowledge – in accordance with the worldview, fundamental principles, ethical values and norms of Islam.

This alternative paradigm, based on the theology, ontology, epistemology, axiology and ethics of Tawhid, views critically the different branches of contemporary human knowledge, particularly as represented and constructed by the secular Western behavioral sciences, social sciences and humanities, including the philosophical foundations and ethical orientations of the natural, physical and applied sciences – insofar as they are imbued with worldviews, underlying assumptions, or

theories which are contrary to or not in conformity with the Islamic worldview.

Therefore, “Islamization of Human Knowledge” (IOHK) is enshrined in the university’s Constitution as an important component of its sacred mission: “To promote the concept of Islamization of Human Knowledge in teaching, research, consultancy, dissemination of knowledge and the development of academic excellence in the University;” (IIUM, 2002: 5(iii)). It is this mission which distinguishes IIUM from other universities. As such it must remain as the fundamental feature of the university which should never be marginalized or regarded as unimportant as compared to other goals or objectives.

Approaches in implementing the university’s IOHK mission, however, vary from kulliyah to kulliyah. The approach of complementing the conventional curriculum with “Islamic input” of ethical, moral and spiritual values and practices has been the practice in the Kulliyah of Medicine, Engineering, Architecture and Environmental Design, Allied Health sciences, Pharmacy and Dentistry. The Kulliyah of Laws seems to follow a combination of the comparative, the harmonizing and the conventional approach, while the Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences appears to adopt a combination of the integrative, comparative, reformative, conventionalist and critical constructivist approaches, depending on the priorities of respective departments. The Institute of Education (INSTED) has an integrative, comparative and reformative mission, combined with important research programs for educational reforms. The Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (IRKH) division of the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences has adopted the approach of “Relevantization” which is a combination of Islamic reform, renewal, contextualization and balancing between the imperatives for change and the need to preserve the fundamentals and the constants in religious orthodoxy and practice. The human sciences

(HS) division of the Kulliyah endorses the mission of IOHK by adopting the modes of integration, or harmonization, reorientation or islamicization, together with some critique of conventional theories and concepts, particularly in the departments of political science, sociology, psychology, communication and history.

It should be mentioned here as well that the original model of IIUM did not envisage a separate Faculty of “Islamic Studies” or a separate Faculty of “Social Sciences”, Arts or Humanities.

However, the second Rector, Dr. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman who joined IIUM in 1987, felt the need to establish a faculty in which the religious sciences would be integrated with the social sciences and the humanities. Thus the Kulliyah of Islamic revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS) was established in 1990 (with the present author being appointed as the first dean of the new kulliyah) to spearhead the integration of Islamic religious sciences on the basis of IOHK to produce the integrated and Islamicized set of graduates to become agents of change and new leaders in their respective societies. This was a bold and visionary step taken by the Rector, resulting in a major conceptual modification of the original vision. (Hassan, 2009b: 111-124).

While adapting to the mission of IOHK in their respective ways, the professional disciplines in IIUM such as engineering, medicine, allied health sciences, pharmacy, architecture, town planning, quantity survey, accountancy and the like, have been able to maintain their professional standards set by national professional bodies to remain officially recognized and periodically accredited by the respective governing professional bodies outside of the university. In addition to the integration and Islamization process in the curriculum, the mission of IOHK is also promoted through various publications, research, seminars and conferences.

Recent developments saw renewed efforts by the university to strengthen the IOHK mission. A major policy decision was made

recently by the current Rector, Dato' Seri Prof. Dr. Zaleha Kamaruddin when she declared in the 2nd *al-Liqa' al-Shahri* in March 2012 that “*Islamization is not one of the nine strategic pillars of the university. It is, in fact, the foundation of all the eight pillars*”. Another major breakthrough was the establishment of the Centre for Islamization (CENTRIS) in May 2012 as a new centre under the Rector's office. This Centre would be responsible for coordinating, evaluating and promoting the mission of Islamization across all the Kulliyahs, Centers, Departments and Divisions. The convening of the 1st World Congress on Integration and Islamicization of Acquired Human knowledge organized by IIUM in August 2013 further reflects this commitment. It would be expected that IOHK efforts would gain greater momentum in the coming years with these new initiatives.

Another dimension to the process of intellectual and ethical reform of this alternative educational model involves the inculcation of Islam's spiritual and moral values, proper intellectual outlook and ethics in the personality and conduct of the Muslim academics, scholars, administrators and students as expected in an Islamic university. This dimension of Islamization in IIUM is called “Islamization of the Self” which includes the process of spiritual purification of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*), and refinement of character (*tahdhib al-akhlaq*) in conformity with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. It is worth noting that the dimension of “Islamicization of the self” and refinement of character is unfortunately not given the attention it deserves in much of the literature or discourse on the contemporary IOHK project, perhaps because the focus seems to be on the justifications to develop or construct human knowledge on the basis of *Tawhidic* epistemology.

Consequently situations have arisen in Islamic academic institutions or organizations wherein the eloquent and impressive intellectual articulation of “Islamization of human knowledge” is not always complemented with the requisite spiritual and moral qualities

befitting the character of Islamic scholars as defined by the Qur'an and the Sunnah; whereas, the great Islamic scholars of the past, including al-Ghazali, provide the best role models for integrating profound scholarship with excellent moral and spiritual attributes such as piety, humility, and aversion to the fatal diseases of the spiritual heart such as *self-glorification, self-admiration ('ujb), conceit, egoism, desiring human recognition, adulation or flattery, fame, position, as well as wealth and power.*

11. The Way Forward

The need for alternative paradigms of human learning and development of knowledge appears to be more vital now than ever before, in the face of multiple crises faced by Muslim countries and societies, and the alarming symptoms of major failures of the dominant liberal secularist world systems. Nevertheless, given the different schools of thought regarding IOHK which, if not wisely managed, could lead to counterproductive and divisive consequences, the stance and attitude towards realizing the mission should be driven by the following guidelines:

1. Emphasize the common ground, taking the best ideas from all sources and deemphasizing or discarding the irreconcilable differences, because no one school of thought could claim to have all the answers and all the resources to accomplish the noble and comprehensive mission of IOHK, which is beyond the capacity of one organization or one group of scholars.
2. Keep the discourse of IOHK open to new and useful ideas as long as they are based on authoritative Islamic sources of knowledge, since human knowledge continues to grow and even some aspects of Western-originated sciences could also undergo major paradigmatic changes in the future, while the door of legitimate *ijtihad* is open to the qualified scholars and intellectuals. Any

tendency to be dogmatic in this project would be unjustifiable and premature, bearing in mind that the real success of this multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary enterprise depends on what the experts, specialists and practitioners choose to emphasize in their respective disciplines in light of contemporary challenges and situational imperatives. Besides, one should be aware that shortcomings and weaknesses could be found or detected in the works of even the best scholars in the field. Humility and willingness to learn and benefit from other scholars are an important part of the attributes of Islamic scholars, let alone the Qur'anic *ulu'l albab* or '*ulama*'.

3. Regard this effort as a most noble intellectual and ethical *jihad*, sanctioned by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*; a collective *Ummatic* responsibility which benefits from and welcomes all the sincere efforts and contributions from all scholars and institutions which share the common vision and mission of IOHK.

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