

Issues in Islamization of Knowledge, Man and Education

قضايا في أسلمة المعرفة، الإنسان والتربية

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Abstract

Indeed, for all Muslims, the Almighty Allah is the source of all knowledge and He has granted two types of knowledge to man: revealed and acquired. This means that, therefore, all knowledge is sacred and inconceivable without values. Nevertheless, even though knowledge is sacred, its application can sometimes be mixed with human error, prejudice, passion and self-interest. Islam, therefore, sees the need to equip its believers with an understanding about the inter-relationship of knowledge with everything it encompasses. Furthermore, education in Muslim countries must aspire to bring forward learners who are morally and spiritually upright in their conduct as good citizens of their countries and who are highly intellectual and professional to contribute to the betterment of society, and humanity at large.

This paper aims to examine and attempts to shed some light on issues of Islamization of knowledge, man, and education. The writer used the analytical descriptive method; he depended upon the relevant literature in addressing this paper's issues. The paper concluded that there are variances among Muslim intellectuals regarding Islamization of knowledge. It also concluded that there are several reasons that significantly contribute to the critical need for Islamization of knowledge and education, and as such Islamization has become a matter of necessity. To this end, the paper proposed a number of relevant recommendations for Muslim intellectuals, education policymakers, stakeholders, and practitioners to approach Islamization holistically fervently and actively.

المخلص

إن الله سبحانه وتعالى هو مصدر كل معرفه. وقد وهبها الإنسان عن طريقي الوحي والعقل. فهي- اي المعرفة- مقدسة ولا يمكن سبر أغوارها بدون وجود القيم. ومع كونها كذلك. فإن تطبيقاتها تمتزج فيها أحيانا أخطاء الإنسان ومحاباته وأهوائه ورغباته. من هنا فإن الإسلام يرى ضرورة غرس فهم العلائق المتداخلة بين المعرفة وكل ما تنطوي عليه. من جهة ثانية. فإن على التربية الإسلامية ان تطمح الى إيجاد متعلمين يتصفون بالإستقامة الخلقيّة والروحيّة في سلوكياتهم. المثقفين فكرياً ومهنيّاً ليسهموا بتحقيق ما هو أفضل لمجتمعاتهم وللبنشريّة جمعاء.

تحاول هذه الورقة إلقاء الضوء على بعض القضايا المتعلقة بأسلمة المعرفة والإنسان والتربية. وقد استخدم كاتبها المنهج الوصفي التحليلي واعتمد على الأدب التربوي ذي العلاقة بموضوعها. ولقد تبين من خلال مناقشة القضايا المذكورة وجود آراء متباينة لدى المفكرين المسلمين فيما يتعلق بقضية أسلمة المعرفة. وتبين أيضاً وجود أسباب تدعو الى الضرورة الملحة لأسلمة المعرفة والتربية. وقدمت الورقة عدداً من التوصيات ذات العلاقة للمفكرين المسلمين ولصانعي القرار والقائمين على العملية التربوية لكي ينظروا في موضوع الأسلمة شمولياً. جدياً وفعلياً.

Introduction

“And that those who have been given knowledge may know that it (this Qur’an) is the truth from your Lord, and that they may believe therein, and their hearts may submit to it with humility. And verily, Allah is the Guide of those who believe, to the Straight Path” (al-Hajj: 54).

﴿وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادٍ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾ (الحج: 54).

Islam calls all Muslims to seek knowledge and considers the acquiring of knowledge to be of great importance for everyone. The Holy Book, the Qur’an, in numerous verses, attaches paramount importance to acquiring knowledge and enjoins its believers to make search of knowledge as their sacred duty. As a matter of fact the very first revelation that came to the prophet of Islam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was “*Iqra*” that is, read. The Almighty Allah says:

“Proclaim! (Read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher; Who created- Created man, out of a mere clot of congealed blood. Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful. He Who taught (the use of) the pen. Taught man that which he knew not” (al- Alaq: 15-).

﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ * خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ * اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ * الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ * عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ﴾ (العلق: 1-5).

Learning and teaching is an old human phenomenon. It came to existence since Adam, the father of all humans, peace of Allah be upon him, was created. He was created differently and unlike other creatures in life before him, in the sense that He was created for specific reasons and for certain goals, and thus He was endowed with assisting faculties and capacities that enabled him to become a different creature. He was created with the ability to learn and to teach. The Almighty Allah, after creating Adam as his vicegerent on earth, to which the angels had objected for fear of corruption on earth, taught him the names of all things. The Qur’an documents this fact when the Almighty Allah says:

“And He (Allah) taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said: «Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful. They (angels) said: Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-Knower, the All-Wise” (al-Baqarh: 31- 32).

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ * قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ (البقرة: 31-32).

Knowledge and education are inseparable from religion, and the Holy Qur’an, the first guidance in Islam, and Sunnah, the second source, right after the Qur’an, of Islamic Shari’ah of which both knowledge and education flow, are replete with many verses and sayings that clearly show that education, knowledge, learning and men of learning occupy an important

place. The Almighty Allah has honored and extolled the people who possess knowledge and raised their status high. He, the Most Exalted, reminds us of the very high status He is bestowing upon them saying:

“Allah exalts the believers [among you] in proportion, as well as the ones endowed with knowledge, and Allah is all-aware of what you do” (al- Mujadalah: 11).

﴿يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ﴾ (المجادله: 11).

The Almighty Allah also has clearly stated that those who possess knowledge and those who do not, will never be equal:

“Say (to them O Muhammad): Are those who know equal with those who know not? But only men of understanding will pay heed.” (az-Zumar: 9).

﴿قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ﴾ (الزمر: 9).

This point is also highlighted by the Holy Qur’an:

“And of men and beasts and cattle, in like manner, diverse hues, the erudite among His bondmen fear Allah alone. Verily! Allah is the Mighty, the Forgiving” (Fatir: 28).

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ﴾ (فاطر: 28).

The Prophet Muhammad, Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him, is asked in the Holy Qur’an to pray for an increase of knowledge. «And say, My Lord! Increase me in knowledge» (Taha: 114).

﴿وَقُلْ رَبِّي زِدْنِي عِلْمًا﴾ (طه: 114).

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, emphasized the value of knowledge and highlighted the importance of acquiring knowledge for both Muslim men and women when he made seeking knowledge a duty i.e., an obligation on every Muslim. He, Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him, explained that the superiority of the one who has knowledge over the one who merely worships is like the superiority of the moon over every other heavenly body. He said that the scholars are the heirs of the Prophets and that the Prophets did not leave behind dinars or dirhams (i.e. money), rather their inheritance was knowledge, so whoever acquires it has gained a great share (al-Tirmidhi: 2682, Abu Dawood: 3641, and others). He, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, “Whoever follows a path in the pursuit of knowledge, Allah will make a path to Paradise easy for him” (al-Bukhari, Kitab al-‘Ilm: 10). It is also frequently said, “Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave,” and “Seek knowledge even though it be in China.”

Indeed, for all Muslims, the Almighty Allah is the source of all knowledge and He has granted two types of knowledge to man via two sources: a) Knowledge that has been revealed to man through Revelation

and through the Prophets (Revealed Knowledge); b) Knowledge that is acquired when man strives with his mind and learns through experience (Acquired Knowledge). A further key point that all Muslims agree upon is that all knowledge is a sacred trust (amanah) which must be borne with responsibility, accountability, justice and wisdom. As such, only those who are ready, duly, worthy and well qualified and those who are intentionally searching for it receive it. Also, it goes without saying that true knowledge is the source of correct worship (belief and good actions), and as such Islam does not impose any limits on the acquisition of knowledge, but rather it urges its believers to obtain, not only what has been revealed to them through Revelation and through the Prophets, but also what they can obtain through experience. One final key point here is that Man's growth and educational development are seen in the context of his relationship with the Almighty Allah, and it is, through this primordial link, comes his relationship with others (humanity) and with the world of nature. Thus a hierarchy of knowledge is established according to which Monotheistic knowledge ('ilm at-Tawheed) occupies the highest priority, and then follows morality, intellectual disciplines, imaginative disciplines, technology, physical disciplines and so on.

Based on the foregoing, it has become clear that since knowledge is an attribute of Allah it is inconceivable without values. This is particularly relevant due to the fact that, human beings are created with a moral purpose and aim and that all of the Muslim's choices and actions involve ethics and intentions, and that to separate facts from ethics is to say that knowledge is neutral or value-free which is unthinkable in Islam. Nevertheless, even though knowledge is sacred, its application can sometimes be mixed with human error, prejudice, passion and self-interest. Islam, therefore, sees the need to equip its believers with an understanding about the inter-relationship of knowledge with virtue, actions, power, wealth, society and with the natural environment and everything it encompasses. This is what the Islamization of knowledge is all about. In essence, it is all about providing meaning and presenting knowledge based upon an Islamic epistemological framework utilizing methodologies derived from them (Haneef, 2005). Furthermore, it has come to light that, on the philosophical level, education in Muslim countries must produce learners who are morally and spiritually upright in their conduct as good citizens of their countries and who are willing to contribute to the betterment of society, and humanity at large. Moreover, on the intellectual level, education in Muslim countries must aspire to bring forward learners who are highly intellectual and professional to move forward the nation to greater heights of progress on par with the rest of the developed nations.

Perhaps among the most earnestly debated issues in Muslim countries nowadays are those of Islamization. Hence, this paper aims to examine and attempts to shed some light on issues of Islamization of knowledge, man, and education. The discussions on every aspect of this paper include proponents' as well as opponents' points of view on these issues. A comparative study on both points of view reflects the importance of Islamization and provides a better understanding on the need for Islamizing knowledge, and more earnestly, education. More particularly, and in order to be more clear with regard to the issue of Islamization, the relevant questions to be addressed are: Is the issue of Islamization of knowledge a matter for debate among the Muslim intellectuals and academia? What are the reasons as to why knowledge should be Islamized? What are the Muslim scholars' views on Islamization of knowledge? What is the most pertinent in the context of Islamization: knowledge, the human mind i.e. man, or education? The following sections attempt to address these questions.

The Debate over Islamization of Knowledge

The debate over the process of Islamization in general and the Islamization of knowledge in particular, has frequently shed more heat than light. Debaters often seem to be holding entirely different points of view, and talking past each other. More particularly, two differing perspectives with regard to whether or not knowledge should be Islamized have emerged. The liberalists, who are also known as adaptionists because they imitate secular vision of life, first by separating religion from politics, and second by reducing Islam to a realm of individual ethics, view all religious phenomena as social facts thus reject normative reduction of religion to reality. According to Tibi (1988), for instance, the Muslim backwardness in the development of science and technology is rooted in Islam itself. This is because, argues Tibi, Muslim societies have been structurally dominated by a pre-industrial culture, i.e. Islam. His solution to this problem, therefore, was through secularization of Islam. The liberalists reduced the world to rationality and considered it as a source and mean of knowledge.

Also, according to the traditional Muslim scholars – the traditionalists who are also called the rejectionists, because they oppose all Western ideas and values without any assessment and consideration (Ali, 2001), all knowledge is from Allah and when al-Qur'an was revealed, it had been Islamized then, so there is no need to re-Islamize it today. They are well versed in various branches of revealed knowledge, and are careful of their sayings and behaviors and these must be all in line with the Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions. With regard to their attitudes towards Western education, they have no interest at all. Rather, they claim that Western education spreads the laxity of morals among pupils through

indiscriminate mixing of boys and girls at school and unveiling of girls' heads, bosoms, and legs, in addition to the secular syllabus it brings about (Nasiru, 1997). They do not realize the necessity of modern education because they view the world depending on the Qur'an and prophetic traditions as both sources and means of knowledge.

In addition, the secularist-modernists argue that modern knowledge is universal, not related with any specific civilization and culturally neutral, thus cannot be infused with the value system of any particular culture (Hoodbhoy and Abdus Salam, in Hashim and Rossidy 2000: 20). Such positions are reinforced also by Fazlur Rahman, who argues that one cannot map knowledge; it is created by Allah in the human mind. So Muslims should not pay any heed for making maps and charts of how to develop Islamic knowledge (Fazlur Rahman, in Hashim and Rossidy 2000: 20).

On the other hand, the secularist-modernists' views of neutrality of science were debated and rebutted by contemporary Muslim scientists. Kirmani, in (Hashim and Rossidy 2000: 20), for instance, argues that in reality "there is nothing neutral or value free about modern science, its priorities, its emphases, its method and process and its worldview are dictated by the narrow concerns of Western society or culture." Sardar, in (Hashim and Rossidy 2000) concurs with this view and argues that by divorcing ethics and morality from its epistemology, Western civilization has produced a body of knowledge that does not concern itself with the Islamic concerns of trusteeship of man, sacredness of nature, social justice, public interest and seeking the pleasure of Allah. Their views are shared by Nasr, in (Hashim and Rossidy 2000: 20) who contends that "Muslims must seek to create their own science by incorporating what is positive in modern science into a world view where God reigns supreme..." Furthermore, and contrary to those who view knowledge as neutral and not specifically related with any civilization, culture, religion or race, proponents of Islamization of knowledge namely Al-Attas, Al-Faruqi, Abu Sulayman, Al-Alwani, among others, have argued that Modern knowledge is not neutral and can not be applied as it is to the Muslim community which has certain values and beliefs that are greatly different from that of Western civilization.

In light of the above, and in order to address this issue, I agree that the source of all knowledge is Allah, and since the revelation of al-Qur'an, knowledge was once Islamized. However and due to passage of time and because of the incorporation of foreign elements and ideologies, namely those Western ones, into the Muslim world and Muslim minds, the Islamic elements, the Islamic metaphysical foundation of knowledge,

the conceptions of truth, reason, wisdom, and reality and so on had undergone remarkable changes and been influenced by various elements of Western culture including, among others, rationalism, dualism, secularism, humanism, and naturalism. Consequently, it can be argued that knowledge no longer conforms to the acceptable framework of Islamic worldview and Islamic conception of knowledge. This is significantly true with respect to acquired knowledge subjects including sciences such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, medicine, engineering, economics and administrative sciences, and social sciences including history, geography, politics, psychology, sociology and educational sciences.

The Need for Islamization:

1. The Malaise of the Islamic Nation

The overarching reason for Islamization of knowledge is the deep malaise that Muslim societies had fallen into, which is mostly the result of other principal causes namely: secularization, dualism, and blind following. To put it more clear, we Muslims are living now in a predominantly Western age with its thought-pattern, culture and civilization and its intellectual make-up and educational training. This age of our history can rightly be called an age of intellectual and social enslavement. This intellectual and social enslavement of the people in Muslim countries, which is preceded by an age of political and military subjugation, is mostly the result of the long period of the imperialistic rule of the West over the Muslim world, and more importantly our present academic and educational system which is based on Western concepts of education, developed after Western fashions and supplied with textbooks, curricula and sciences which are Western in their appearance, contents and spirit, and run by men educated in Western tradition. Indeed, Al-Faruqi (1982: 1) clearly refers to this fact, i.e. the malaise of the Islamic nation, when he asserts that, no other nation has been subjected to comparable defeats or humiliation as the Islamic nation has, to the extent that it stands at "the lowest rung of the ladder of nations." He maintains that "Muslims were defeated, massacred, and robbed of their land and wealth. They were double-crossed, colonized, and exploited, proselytized, forced or bribed into conversion to other faiths. They were secularized, Westernized, and de-Islamized by internal and external agents of their enemies." Abu Sulayman (1989) concurs and argues that there exists a crisis in the Islamic nation involving the backwardness, the weakness, the intellectual stagnation of the Islamic nation, the absence, of *ijtihad* (sustained reasoning), cultural progress in the Islamic nation, as well as the nation's estrangement from the basic norms of Islamic civilization. All these issues indicate the intellectual crisis prevailing

in the Muslim world resulting in the decadence and impotence of the Islamic nation preventing it from contributing decisively or significantly to the culture and civilization of the modern world. Hence, the removing of the misconceptions of the Muslims' conception of contemporary knowledge through Islamization of modern knowledge is essential for any clarity of vision, effective reforms and redirection of the Islamic nation.

2. Secularization and Dualism

Al-Attas (1993: 17) in "Islam and Secularism" explained that "The term secular comes from the Latin *saeculum*, conveys a meaning with a marked dual connotation of time and location; the time referring to the 'now' or 'present' sense of it, and the location to the 'world' or 'worldly' sense of it. Thus *saeculum* means 'this age' or 'the present time', and it refers to the contemporary events of this world. Secularization is defined also as the deliverance of man "first from religious and then from metaphysical control over his reason and his language". It is the loosening of the world from religious and quasi-religious understanding of itself...." The predominance of the secular system in the Muslim world puts the society in a hazardous position exposing people to lose their Islamic identity and integrity. This is because the secular system gives great precedence to the temporal world and ignores the spiritual one. Al-Attas (1993) also argued that the weakening of the Islamic nation had made possible the Western colonization of significant part of the Muslim world from the 17th century onwards. With the colonization and cultural control, the West was able to inculcate the projection of its worldview in the Muslim mind and hence to dominate the Muslims intellectually. The dissemination of the Western worldview was gradually accomplished through the educational system based upon a concept of knowledge and its principle that would bring about the de-Islamization of the Muslim mind. According to al-Attas (1993), the education system becomes secular if: a) the education philosophy is not based on the teachings of Islam; b) the subjects being taught were detached from the Islamic foundations c) the curriculum was not founded on Islam and d) in the absence of the Islamic value system.

Moreover, the situation of most Muslim countries suffers the so-called educational dualism or dichotomy. The existence of educational dualism is the visible outcome when the Islamic nation was in the dark period of colonization in the 14th century. Mostly affected are the predominantly Muslim countries where residues of oppression exist during the colonization. At the end of World War II, most

of educational systems, which colonizers introduced, became the national systems of education in the colonized countries. Although colonization had ended, after long years, the type of education from colonizers still prevails in the Muslim world until today. This makes educational dualism present in Muslim countries. That is, two conflicting systems of education exist in the Muslim world. These two systems are the traditional-religious which was introduced with the coming of Islam, and the Western secular system which was a result of colonization and modernization (Hashim, 2004). These two types of education have produced graduates of different outlooks who could not understand one another; and in competing for influence in society, they contributed to its tension and division. "A duality such as this will produce two trends. In the first, it will create two conflicting forms of knowledge based on premises that differ fundamentally from each other, while in the second concept or idea will consist of a blend of the two conflicting forms" (Abu Sulayman, 1993, p.12). Indeed, this is really happening in the Muslim world.

The problems of division and dichotomy seem have sharpened, and most scholars today define the crises of education in terms of this dichotomy. Al-Alwani, (1989: 45-) talks about dualism in the present state of knowledge and the present state of Muslim education. He maintains that there are two types of knowledge imparted to the students in the Muslim countries. Firstly, there are contemporary social sciences and humanities as well as the technical and applied sciences. Every aspect of this knowledge is closely bound up with the Western form of civilization – the secular or non-religious system of education. Secondly, there is the knowledge which is described variously by Muslims as *Shari'ah* (Islamic sciences) or which can be referred to as transmitted knowledge – the traditional Islamic system of education. The problems posed by this dual system of education in Muslim countries have sparked a major crisis in Muslim education. Muslims are unhappy with the present state of education and they are dissatisfied with both educational systems. They feel that the teaching of Islamic religious knowledge is ineffective because this knowledge is taught only for examination purpose rather than for moral development and practice. Muslims consider Islamic knowledge to be inadequately taught for modern era and has no relation with contemporary life. Muslims are also unhappy with the content and the curriculum of the Islamic educational system considering it as limited and outdated. Muslim scholars point out that the methodology employed in instructions does not encourage or stimulate inquiry and critical thinking

(Hashim, 2004). On the other hand, the secular system advocates an un-Islamic orientation and has assumed tremendous proportions, elbowing out the Islamic system from the field. As a result of the dichotomy, the system of education became a means of dividing the Ummah and draining its energy (Al-Alwani, 1989: 5).

Because education is secularized, the basic assumptions of this education along with modern life-style it has introduced have resulted in conflicts between Islamic thought and the traditional life-style. With this, not only educational duality persists, but also cultural duality has come to exist in the Muslim world. Muslim scholars, thinkers, nation leaders, intellectuals and educationists from all parts of the globe had gathered together for the First World Conference on Muslim Education held in Makkah in 1977. The objectives of the conference were plenteous, but the most important one was to address the problems of secularism and dualism in the Muslim system of education. Moreover, Muslim thinkers believed that the secular system of education and the Western life-style are dominant and the Muslim world is in danger of losing its identity, therefore, to present a solution to the problem a true Islamic education must be reformed, they contended.

3. Blind Following (Taqlaed)

By blind following I mean following others' sayings and more particularly, actions as though these are not protected from error or when they are not in accordance with one's own worldview or values. In today's globalization era, and with the ever growing Information Communication Technology (ICT), gaps of interaction among different societies have been reduced through dissemination of knowledge in many fields of study and disciplines. Access to world wide information of all kind; useful, of no worth, pseudo, half-true, exaggerated and mutilated, have been made possible. As a result of this information explosion, which, for the most part, comes from the West and non-Islamic societies, people in Muslim countries are deluded with this knowledge and are made to think that their potentials are less valuable, and they are incapable to contribute and hitherto they should depend on others for knowledge and even ideas, and then started blindly following them. In doing so, they think that they would be able to meet the challenges of modern life. The Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said, "You would tread the same path as was trodden by those before you inch by inch and step by step so much so that if they had entered into the hole of the lizard, you would follow them in this also. We said: Allah's Messenger, do you mean, (by your

words those before you) Jews and Christians? He said: Who else (than those two religious groups)?"

Views of Scholars' on Islamization of Knowledge/ Education

Al-Attas aptly argues that knowledge is not neutral, but can indeed be infused with the nature and content which masquerades as knowledge (Hashim and Rossidy 2000: 24). He strongly asserts that knowledge, as it is understood today, has been interpreted from the Western point of view. He argues that due to the fact that the Western conception of knowledge ignores the concept of the fixed and permanent and focuses on change, present-day or modern knowledge, which many people perceive as knowledge, has become problematic, and is the greatest challenge that has to be faced by man today. Al-Attas (1993: 133) states that Western knowledge "has lost its true purpose." The true purpose for seeking knowledge, states al-Attas (1993: 148) is "to inculcate goodness and justice in man as man and individual self and not merely in man as citizen or integral part of society." In other words, states al-Attas (1993: 148), man's spiritual aspect is emphasized rather than "his value as a physical entity measured in terms of the pragmatic or utilitarian sense of his usefulness to state and society and the world."

The present-day, or contemporary knowledge needs to be Islamized, asserts al-Attas (1993) because it has certain characteristics that do not conform to the Islamic worldview. Such characteristics include, among others: the reliance upon the powers of human reason alone to guide man through life so that the other means of acquiring knowledge such intuition (which includes Revelation) is not acceptable; the adherence to the validity of dualistic vision of reality and truth; the affirmation and projection of a secular worldview; and the espousal of the doctrine of humanism.

Hence, Islamization of contemporary knowledge, according to Al-Attas (1999: 36), is "the deliverance of knowledge from its interpretations based on secular ideology; and from meanings and expressions of the secular." According to Al-Attas, the aim and objective of Islamization of contemporary knowledge is to protect Muslims from corrupted knowledge that misguides and leads to confusion and skepticism of Muslim minds. It is also to produce true knowledge that can develop and mould Muslim minds and bring them to proper acknowledgement and recognition of God. Knowledge, which is in conformity with its true purpose, fitrah and the Islamic worldview, will bring salvation to man in this world and hereafter (Al-Attas, 1993). Islamization of contemporary

knowledge will result in peace, goodness and justice and strengthening of the faith (Hashim and Rossidy, 2000). Al-Attas (1993) also points out that two interrelated steps involved in the process of Islamization of present-day knowledge. First, the isolation process of Western elements and concepts from the body of knowledge, and second the infusion process of Islamic elements and key concepts into the body of knowledge. In other words, knowledge must be imbued with Islamic elements and key concepts after the foreign elements and key concepts are isolated from its every branch. Indeed, the Islamic elements and key concepts which, in view of their fundamental nature as defining the fitrah imbue the knowledge with the quality of its natural function and purpose and thus makes it true knowledge, argues Al-Attas (1993). He applies this isolation-infusion methodology to the concept of education. According to him, the aim of Islamic education is to produce a good man and not a good citizen as it is understood in the West.

Al-Faruqi (1921 -1986) in his seminal paper in (1982) still captures the essence of that process of Islamization, especially from the standpoint of those currently involved in the Islamization of the social sciences. To Islamize, to him, is to «recast knowledge as Islam relates to it; i.e. to redefine and reorder the data, to rethink the reasoning and relating of the data, to reevaluate the conclusions, to re-project the goals - and to do so in such a way as to make the disciplines enrich the vision and serve the cause of Islam» (Al-Faruqi, 1982: 15). As he elaborates on the process through which these objectives could be attained, Al-Faruqi (1982: 3947-) describes the necessary steps that must be taken, and these could be restated as follows:

- * Mastery of modern disciplines and the critical assessment of their methodologies, research findings, and theories within the Islamic perspective;
- * Mastery of the Islamic legacy and the critical assessment of Islamic scholarship against: a) a pristine Revelation perspective; b) current needs of the Ummah, and c) modern advances in human knowledge; and
- * Creative synthesis of the Islamic legacy and modern knowledge; a creative leap to bridge over the gap of centuries of non-development.

Abu Sulayman (1989) believes that the only genuine solution to the crisis of the Muslim Ummah lies in the Islamization of knowledge which means for him “the critical examination of modern and contemporary disciplines in light of the vision of Islam and recasting them under categories consistent with that

vision. Reclassifying Al-Faruqi’s workplan, Abu Sulayman suggested Islamization of knowledge as a process in the life of the Ummah has to pass through two elementary stages: The first stage consists of (a) mastery of the modern sciences and (b) mastery of legacy. The second stage comprised of (a) defining the main issues confronting the Ummah and (b) Islamic creativity and initiative i.e. using analytical, critical methodologies to integrate the Islamic vision and outlook with the facts of contemporary life. His essential focus was on political science. He argued that Islamization of Political Science is very important simply because the political system represents the concerns, the philosophy and the direction of the society. “If that is not Islamized, you do not really know who you are, where you are going and what your priority is” (Moten, 2000).

Al-Alwani concentrated on devising a strategy to best realize the objectives of the Islamization of knowledge. He points out that:

“The Islamization of Knowledge may be brought about by the combined readings of the two books and the establishment, on the basis of their similarity and complementarily, of a methodology for research and discovery... One reading is reading the unseen, in which revelation is accompanied by the interpretation and the attempt to discover its universals and the ways these manifest themselves in nature; while the other is an objective reading of the real-existential in the light of the universals expounded in the verses of revelation” (Al-Alwani, 1995:11).

Thus, what is required in this new methodology is to identify and articulate the relationship between revelation and the real-existence. This, accordingly, necessitates six steps i.e. six discourses from which the concept of the Islamization of knowledge may proceed (Al-Alwani, 1995). These six steps are as follows:

- 1- Articulating the Islamic Paradigm of Knowledge.
- 2- Developing Qur’anic Methodology.
- 3- Methodology for Dealing with the Qur’an.
- 4- Methodology form Dealing with Sunnah.
- 5- Reexamining the Islamic Intellectual Heritage.
- 6- Dealing with the Western Intellectual Heritage.

Al-Alwani (1989 : 3) identified three basic approaches that can be identified when talking about the present state of thought among Muslims. The traditionalist approach which holds that the Ummah’s intellectual life can be formed and organized, and that the structure of its civilization can be built on this basis. The modernistic approach

which considers the contemporary Western thought to be universal, and without it a modern culture and civilization cannot be built. The eclectic approach that contends that one must select from traditional thought what is most sound, and from modernistic thought which one considers and proves to be correct. This approach is the output of welding the two former approaches to form an intellectual structure which will provide a guaranteed basis from achieving what is required.

The alternative thought should be comprehensive and free from all psychological pressures, whether historical or contemporary. It should be carried out with the purpose of correction, self-criticism and serious quest for scientific alternatives which are governed by theoretical and intellectual principles. Issues, that have occupied the Muslim mind and prevented it from being positive, effective and influential, should be examined. We must correct the inherited historical cultural structure of the Ummah and rid it of the weakness and lack of reality which hamper its efficiency and effectiveness. We must go for the achieving of correct perspectives of life, the universe and man. In addition we must agree on the sources of these perspectives and work to design Islamic systems and institutions, and define a role for each of them so that they may be able to attain the aims of Islam. (Al-Alwani, 1989: 8).

Islamization of Knowledge or Islamization of Man

To approach this issue, I will refer to two prominent scholars in the field of Islamization of knowledge, namely Fazlur Rahman and al-Attas. The former, Fazlur Rahman, (1988) in his article, "Islamization of Knowledge: A Response" strongly argues that there is nothing wrong with Western knowledge. Therefore, that all what Muslims need to do is to Islamize the mind and not knowledge. Also, according to him what is needed to be addressed is the man's moral responsibility. He says:

"The question is: how to make man responsible? This is the basic problem that those of us, who entertain this subject, Islamization of Knowledge, have in mind. The feeling is that the modern world has been developed and structured upon knowledge which can not be considered Islamic. Actually what we should be saying is that the modern world has misused knowledge; that there is nothing wrong with knowledge, but that has simply been misused" (Fazlur Rahman, 1988: 4).

In other words, it is more pertinent, according to Fazlur Rahman (1988) to make man responsible for his knowledge rather than to Islamize knowledge. This

is because he believes that in most cases, man fails to act accordingly, even though he possesses great cognitive faculties. He refers to verses from Qur'an to support his point that man has not yet developed a complete adequate sense of responsibility and therefore, unable to discharge his trust when the test comes:

"Surely We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains (i.e. the entire creation), but they refused to hear it and were frightened of it-but man bore it: he is unjust and ignorant" (al-Ahzab: 72).

«إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا» (الاحزاب: 72).

And, "Nay! Man has not as yet fulfilled what Allah had commanded him" (Abasa: 23).

«كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَا أَمَرَهُ» (عبس: 23).

As have been mentioned above, Al-Attas defines Islamizing contemporary knowledge as *"the deliverance of knowledge from its interpretations based on secular ideology; and from meanings and expressions of the secular."* This definition represents the logical consequence and extension of his more general idea of Islamization which seems to be a response to secularization and Westernization. Epistemologically, then, Islamization refers to the liberation of man first from magical, mythological, animistic, national-cultural tradition, and then from secular control over his reason and his language" (Hashim and Rossidy, 2000: 27) and "from doubt, conjecture and vain argumentation to the attainment of certainty of the truth concerning spiritual, intelligible and material realities" (Wan Daud, 1998). This liberation of man's spirit or soul bears directly influence upon his physical being. It brings about peace and harmony within himself, and also between him and other men and nature. Thus, man has set his course towards the attainment of his original state. It is also liberation from subservience to his physical demands which are inclined toward the secular and prone to injustice to his true self or soul since man has a tendency towards forgetfulness of his true nature, becoming ignorant of his true purpose and unjust to it (Hashim and Rossidy, 2000: 27- 28).

Looking through the above mentioned views concerning Islamization, it can be observed that although Al-Attas would generally agree with Fazlur Rahman that developing minds is of fundamental importance, yet he is more consistent and concrete in his conceptualization because he strongly asserts the importance of the individual and his soul as the substratum of human intellectual and societal development. This is why Al-Attas's life-long Islamic activities have been centered on the improvement

and development of the individual: his intellect, psychology, ethics and happiness (Wan Daud, 1998). While he stresses the importance of the individual and his soul, he, at the same time, considers that the chief cause to the general dilemma among Muslims is the confusion and error in knowledge, and in order to break the vicious circle and remedy this grave problem, Muslims must first come to grips with the problem of loss of adab, since no true knowledge can be instilled without the precondition of adab in the one who seeks it and to whom it is imparted. He further argues that knowledge must be approached reverently and in humility, and it cannot be possessed simply as if it were there available to everyone irrespective of intention and purpose and capacity. This is because knowledge, for him, is a form of worship that interconnects with justice, trusteeship and public interests in Islam. When knowledge is corrupted, the Islamic nation is not able to realize trusteeship of justice and public benefits. Muslim mind becomes desiccated through imitating Western model of education. Consequently, Muslims can not improve their self efficacy to control their lives and actualize Islamic values in this world.

While I agree with Fazlur Rahman that developing man is extremely important, I disagree with his view of marginalizing or even neglecting Islamizing the contemporary knowledge. I strongly believe that the deterioration of the Muslim community is the end result of the secularization, i.e., the de-Islamization of knowledge and education. This inevitably means that I strongly agree with Al-Attas in making it to priority to Islamize the individual personality. Indeed, this could be achieved through Islamizing present or contemporary knowledge. Seen in this sense, there is no contradiction or dichotomy between Islamization of knowledge and Islamizing the human being. To be more specific, it is essential to Islamize man, the seeker of knowledge, before the contemporary knowledge or the respective discipline of science. Allah, the Almighty, says: «*Surely God does not change the state in which a people are until they change that which is in themselves*” (ar-Ra’d: 11).

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ» (الرعد: 11).

For Al-Attas, knowledge is not something outside yourself, but knowledge is something inside you which stems from the meaning of knowledge itself that is ‘the arrival in the soul of the meaning (of the object of knowledge)’. In other words, the soul (in this case the mind) that first needs to be Islamized failing which no matter how much the discipline of knowledge is Islamized, yet the understanding, interpretation of the knowledge is still not Islamic for it originates from un-Islamic or secular mind of the man.

Honestly, we have to admit that due to colonialism, many Muslim minds have been secularized as such they could not discern between what knowledge that conforms to the Islamic worldview is and what is not. For these kinds of people, their minds need to be Islamized first by restructuring and remodeling them to be in accordance with the Islamic metaphysical and philosophical framework or worldview (Wan Daud, 1998).

Human being has a meaning and purpose on earth. According to Islam, he is the emissary i.e., vicegerent or caliph (Khaliffah) of Allah on earth:

«*Just recall the time when your Lord said to the angels, «I am going to appoint a vicegerent on the Earth»* (al-Baqarah: 30).

«وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً» (البقرة: 30).

Man is created with the free will to choose between right and wrong. Two inherent but contrasting natures are imbedded within him, the ability to do good or evil “...*And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right*” (ash-Shams: 8)

«فَالْتَهُمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا» (الشمس: 8).

This is an immense test for him. But man is also born in nature (fitrah), the nature of submission to the will of his Creator. According to a tradition from Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him «every child is a born Muslim...» This is a trust and a heavy burden on every human being. In Islam also, a mark of the believer is belief in the unseen world, «*Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them*» (al-Baqarah: 3).

«الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ» (البقرة: 3)

According to Islam, no information can be considered true knowledge or worthy of acceptance without evidence from Revelation or from the tangible universe. The two fields of which man should have some knowledge and understanding are: the ‘Unseen’ world (alam al-ghayab), i.e. all that is beyond the reach of a created being’s perception (the world of angels, the jinns and the Hereafter); and the ‘Seen’ world (alam al-shahadah) which is all that can be witnessed by a creature’s senses or mind. The primary source about the ‘Unseen’ world is Revelation. The basic source about the ‘Seen’ world is the tangible universe. Experiments and perception, which may support one another, provide evidence about the ‘Seen’ world through a variety means. My point here is, in Islamizing the mind – the human being – we can promote his/her belief to the level that makes him/her know something about his/her Creator and about

the unseen world. Islamization of the contemporary knowledge may not adequately achieve such task. In contexts of education, curricula in Muslim world therefore, need to make students critically aware of the limitations of formal reasoning, and the blindness of dogmatic scientism and reductionism which teach that observable reality is the only reality and that there is only one level of description applicable to all phenomena.

By emphasizing the fact that Islamizing the human being is vitally important, we should aim at cultivating 'man' as a thinker who uses mind in its, not only, cognitive sense but spiritual as well i.e. "mind-heart" sense. In this sense of a cognitive-spiritual activity, the rational mind, emotion and spirit are combined. It is through Islamization of the mind first that we can touch the spiritual state of man which is, to a greater extent, not less than the mental one. Although the development of the rational mind has had obvious consequences in terms of scientific and technological progress, it has also inhibited man from progressing further to the attainment of spiritual insight, and even undermined those capacities which he/she naturally possessed at earlier stages of development, such as the capacity for awe and wonder in the face of mysteries which are inaccessible to the mind. These latter faculties, in their higher sense, are, of course, more than <thinking> in the sense that the Western (non-Islamized mind) often understands thinking as an exclusively mental activity distinct from the workings of the heart. Essentially, this is the contemplative state of Islamic worship, in which the truth of revelation is verified through the organ of spiritual cognition or knowledge. Allah, the Almighty, says: *«Soon we will show them Our signs in the utmost horizons of the universe and within their own souls until it becomes manifest to them that this revelation is indeed the truth»* (Fosselat: 53).

«سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْإِفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ» (فصلت: 53).

It is also frequently said, "An hour's contemplation equals a year's (mechanical) worship," and «It is better to contemplate one hour in the night than to pray the whole night.»

From Islamization of Knowledge to Islamization of Education

We are living in a time where perhaps our main task is not to compete in consuming more goods and building concrete tower blocks, but to do as the first guided community did, to invite others to the knowledge we have. We should be more intelligent, strong in faith and of good morality; looking to improve the condition of humanity first and

foremost with the greatest gift we have been given. Education therefore is probably the most powerful single instrument of change that we own and need to employ (Yusuf Islam, 2005).

Although the term "Islamization" was initially used in the context of knowledge, i.e. Islamization of knowledge, it has been gradually extended to be applied to general categories of sciences, as in the case of Islamization of the social sciences, or the Islamization of single disciplines within the social sciences as in Islamization of sociology or psychology, or even Islamization of curricula of such individual disciplines (Ragab, 1996). It could be said that the Islamic education movement started as a reaction to the 'secularization' of education in Muslim countries and the consequent marginalization of the traditional Islamic sciences based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. Starting with the landmark World Islamic Education Conference held in Makkah in 1977, efforts were made to define and develop an Islamic education model based on the basic tenets of 'Aqidat al-Tawheed' which prepares young Muslims to undertake the mission of vicegerency 'khalifah' through their contribution to the building and sustenance of a civilized society. The vision statements for the education system envisaged by Islamic scholars and academics had both originality, and contemporary relevance.

Islam offers man a complete code of life in the Qur'an and the Sunnah which, followed wholeheartedly, will lead man towards the realization of the greatest glory that Allah has reserved for him as Khalifah (Allah's vicegerent). In order to adequately follow the code of Islam and attain consciousness of himself as Khalifah, man needs training from his childhood, both at home and in the society in which he lives. This training should encompass his total personality, his spirit, intellect and rational self, imagination and bodily senses should not be of one part at the expense of others.

The First World Conference on Islamic Education in 1977 had identified the aims of education as follows:

1. Education should aim at a balanced growth of the personality through training of the spirit, intellect, rational self, feelings and bodily senses of man. The training imparted to a Muslim must be such that faith is infused in the whole personality and creates in him an emotional attachment to Islam and enables him to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah and be governed by the Islamic system of values, willingly and joyfully, so that he may proceed to the realization of his status as Khalifah to whom Allah has promised the authority of the universe.

2. Education should, therefore, cater for the growth of man in all aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively and motivate these aspects towards goodness and attainment of perfection. The ultimate aim of education in Islam is realization of individual's complete harmony with the Will of Allah at the personal, communal and human levels.

3. The education system in the Muslim world must be so shaped that it facilitates social mobility. All barriers must be removed to provide equal opportunity to all Muslims to attain the highest qualifications per their intellect.

4. Education should promote in man the creative impulse to rule himself and the universe as a true servant of Allah, not by opposing and coming into conflict with nature but, by understanding its laws and harnessing its forces for the growth of a personality that is in harmony with it.

5. Education, by precept and example, should instill piety and encourage self-purification and self-discipline as a means of penetrating into the mysteries of the universe and opening the heart to the fear and love of Allah (Erfan and Valie, 1995). For al-Attas (1999), the purpose of seeking knowledge and of education in Islam is to produce a good man rather than a good citizen. In the following section, I am going to explain as to why I fully agree with moving a step forward from Islamization of Knowledge to Islamization of education. By doing so, I will refer to Abu Sulayman's view concerning this issue.

Why Islamization of Education

The ultimate aim of education in Islam lies in the realization of the complete submission to and harmony with the will of Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large. Allah says: "Say, *Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, Are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds*" (al-An'am:162).

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (الأنعام: 162)

"Also, Allah, the Almighty, says *And I did not create Jinn and man except to worship me.*"

(al-Dhariyat: 56)

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (الذاريات: 56)

This is the goal which all the Prophets and the Messengers worked towards in their Call. Every Messenger began his call by saying: "Oh my people worship Allah, you have no other God but Him" (al-A'raf: 65).

يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ (الأعراف: 65)

Islamization of knowledge as a methodological foundation for cultural and social reform brings the Muslim world and Muslim intellectuals and political

leaders to the step of second-stage of effective and comprehensive reforms to rebuild the Ummah's life and institutions. At this stage, the central question is where to begin rebuilding — in the economic, political, scientific, or military sectors? Indeed in education lies the answer, and hence, Muslims should coordinate their efforts and establish their priorities, where education comes at the top. The more Muslims give to the cause of education and development at this stage to create sound Muslim mentality and psychology, the more Muslims acquire higher capabilities in all other fields (Abu Sulayman, 1999).

Education is defined as a process in which we discover and develop this ability. According to Langgung (2002), education can be seen from three aspects: a) Individual: Human is seen to have a bunch of potentials and abilities that are unknown either to the individual themselves or to others in general. Therefore, through the education process, all these potentials and abilities will be discovered and developed to benefit the individuals as well as the societies. b) Society: Education is seen to play its role as an instrument to internalize and transmit the culture from one generation to another. c) Interaction between individual and society: Education as a process of transaction between the individual and the society that is the development of potentials of the individuals will contribute to the betterment and improvement of the societies.

A wise Education is what everybody deserves. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, is reported to have said, «Whenever Allah wishes good for a person he makes him understand the Religion.» The first place to start reformation is with ourselves: again let me refer to what Allah says in the Qur'an: *Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change what is with themselves* (ar-Ra'd:11).

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ (الرعد: 11)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, «By Him in Whose hand my soul is, you must enjoin what is reputable (ma'ruf) and forbid what is immoral (munkar), or God will certainly soon send punishment from Himself to you then you will make supplication and not receive an answer.» The Qur'an is for all times. These days we need to understand it according to the time and circumstances we live in. Actually, the word <modern> is a Latin word which means <now>. So, in fact, Islam is the most Modern Religion for Mankind, because it is the last revealed way of life God has showed mankind to follow. It confirms the permanent principles of all Divine Revelations sent to previous Prophets such as Jesus, Moses, David, Abraham, and also provides an intellectual basis for the development of laws and customs suitable for any time and circumstance that people may find themselves.

If our schools and other educational institutions are to

become places of light which nurture love of learning, then we must closely analyze the process of education and synthesize the aim of Islam— submission and service to the Ever-Living God and Master of the Universe. If we are going to achieve any meaningful Islamization in the Muslim education, then we really need to find out what actually works. For this, we need a clear vision of the role of the teacher, the school, the home and the society in which we live. More specifically, in order to achieve the aims of Islamic Education, as mentioned above, we must strive to create the mental, spiritual and physical Islamic atmosphere in our educational institutions promoting them to enjoin the good and forbid the evil.

Abu Sylayman, as mentioned before, focused on behavioral sciences, particularly on political science. In “The crisis of Muslim mind” Abu Sulayman (1993), highlighted the present backwardness of the Ummah’s culture, its political degradation, and its human suffering, the very heart of the Ummah’s crisis. According to him, it is inevitable that such a backward and aimless existence should be of major concern to the spirit of the Muslim Ummah which has always represented the conscience of a pioneering and constructive people. It is therefore only natural that the Ummah seeks to reform, renew, and revive itself. What he meant by reformation, renewal and revival is going a step forward from a mere process of Islamization of knowledge to a practical process of Islamization of education. The Islamization of political life really means the Islamization of ideas and education; and the Islamization of the fundamental polity, its leadership, and its organization. The meaning of Islamization is adherence to the fundamental values and purposes of Islam by means of practical, sound, and realistic shura (consultation), and by educating the Ummah and the political base in the fundamentals of that adherence and its forthright ways (Abu Sylayman, 1993).

Abu Sulayman’s focus on Islamizing education is explicit in his words when he said “If we ever expect to put the politics of the Ummah back on the right course, we must realize that the key to all this is the kind of education and upbringing that we provide for our youth” (Abu Sulayman, 1993: 133). According to Abu Sulayman, the task that lies ahead of Muslims in the 21st Century is a formidable one that requires them to fight, not a military war, but an educational one. Muslims involved in education need to arm themselves and the younger generation with the proper sources of knowledge. Based on the wisdom contained in the Qur’an and the Sunnah, they can obtain the correct worldview, in accordance with tawheed. This will help them avoid the confusion created by secular knowledge, leaving them bereft of values. The correct orientation will allow them to

live serene, balanced lives, and make them an asset to their own communities and the communities of others, like their forbearers. “...a single unitary path stemming from the vision of Islam and integrating all of man’s tendencies and activities into one integral surge toward Islamic self realization in History.” (Abu Sulayman, 1989: 29).

Abu Sulayman, who was one of the founders of the International Islamic University in Malaysia, and served as its rector for ten years (1988-1998-), put a great deal of emphasis on Islamizing university education. As a result of his great efforts, the Faculty of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human sciences where Islamized disciplines are taught in all departments was established in 1990. This emphasis shifted from the university education in general to children education. This change was a result of Abu Sulayman’s belief in the importance of education as a major vehicle for instilling correct values, principles and fundamental Islamic concepts in students. Stressing the importance of children’s education, and school curricula, Abu Sulayman argues that the sidelining of religion in schools was a dangerous phenomenon which leads to an inconsistency in the Islamic personality between what it claims and what it actually does or capable to do. This consistency can be corrected only by the right type of education (Moten, 2000). Thus, for him, if Muslims want to change their current status; they have to direct their attention to education and children. The task before Muslim scholars is to reform the school system so that it imparts education laced with Revealed Knowledge and the methodology of behavioral sciences. Consequently, he took interest in establishing the International Islamic School in 1998 with the utmost aim to develop a Muslim generation capable of analytical and critical thinking and become Muslims by conviction and who will fulfill their role as Allah’s vicegerents on earth (Moten, 2000).

Abu Sulayman argues that the movement for Islamization of Knowledge has provided Muslim thinkers with the capabilities and potential for the reform of contemporary thought and methodology. It has identified and distinguished Islamic sources of knowledge and established a comprehensive, analytical and systematic methodology, free of time-space problems in dealing with historical and contemporary challenges. It has succeeded in sowing the seed – meaning proper thinking – but the civilizational fruits (political, economic, technological and all other contributions) are not forthcoming. “The seed –Islamization of Knowledge – once planted, needs to develop a robust trunk and a system of branches – the education (tarbiyah) system – which will bear the fruit of increased capability and progress” (Abu Sulayman, 1998 in Moten, 2000).

Islamization of education, according to Abu Sulayman, is the Islamization of the Muslim child and the coming

Muslim generation. It is the process of liberating them from a culture of fear and superstition to recapture and reestablish the Muslim spirit of tawheed i.e., the oneness of Allah and istikhlaf (trusteeship). It is the spirit of righteous and selflessly pursuing noble goals (islah), right knowledge (ma'rifah), and good and useful development (taskhir and imran) (Abu Sulayman, 1993 in Moten, 2000).

Positive educational and nurturing way and methodology, the tarbiyah system, requires scientific reformulation of the aqidah discourse, comprehension of the nature and psychology of human being, and an understanding of facts, laws, conditions and variables of life. The Muslims must go beyond the system of sermons and daydreaming. They must produce educational literature, tarbiyah directions and school textbooks to help and guide parents and teachers in their efforts at grooming a strong Muslim generation. It requires evolving a method of instilling-values, principles and fundamental Islamic concepts appropriate to the mentality and level of development of the children. In all of this the example of the Prophet, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, needs to be emulated. The correct starting place for Islamic education is not admonition and intimidation but caring and love as was done by the Prophet Allah's peace and blessings be upon him. The education system should create men of strong character with sense of independence and self-reliance, those who are motivated to fulfill their mission in life with pride and the desire to excel (Abu Sulayman, 1993 in Moten, 2000).

He promises that the International Institute of Islamic Thought, the Association Muslim Social Scientists and the American Journal of Islamic Social Science will provide all kinds of help in the effort to Islamize education. It should be noted that Abu Sulayman is not "disappointed" with the Islamization of knowledge project. He considers it to be successful first stage with "Islamization of Education" as the necessary second stage. Still, he would not like to see individuals and institutions engaged in Islamization of Knowledge abandon their programs. The Islamization of Education is not an alternative but "an effort to emphasize one of the important areas of Islamic intellectual work, which should enliven our ideas, triangulate our views, and push our experiences forward" (Abu Sulayman, 1998 in Moten 2000).

Conclusions and Recommendations

On the basis of what has been discussed in the previous sections, a number of key conclusions can be drawn and a number of relevant recommendations can be put forward:

First, there is a conflict among Muslim intellectuals regarding Islamization of knowledge and there are

variances among their attitudes towards this issue. I can only hope that this intellectual disunity among Muslim scholars will be totally discarded because of the confusion it brings about.

Second, there are several reasons that significantly contribute to the critical need for Islamization of knowledge and education. These reasons include, among others, the deterioration, humiliation, and backwardness of the Muslim community, and the reality that this community is characterized as being detached from the essence of Islamic civilization and Western civilization as well, and adhering to the blind following instead of selectivity, creativity, vitality and productivity. Added to this the confusion and error in knowledge within the Muslim community because of partiality and superficiality, as well as the conflicting issues of secularization and duality that beset the Muslim world today. Hence, and in order to address the problems and all these threats for Muslims and educational systems in the Muslim countries, Islamization of knowledge and education has become a matter of necessity. Islamizing the individual personality is of great importance, but this can be attained through Islamization of knowledge and education. Indeed, the essence of education is to bring about perfect individual human beings.

Third, the challenges of modern times call the Muslim community for restructuring, rebuilding, and reconstructing its educational systems in accordance with the tenets of Islam, and fulfilling its existing needs as well. Islam does address our modern life and it can offer effective solutions that address the contemporary problems and challenges encountered by today's Muslims. Today we need educational systems which can produce integrated Muslim individuals, who are capable of dealing with life situations as a whole. We Muslims need systems of education that integrate Islamic principles into education in the most effective and integrative manner and facilitate development in our societies as well. For this to happen, we need to avoid both blind imitation as well as outright rejection of secular Western knowledge and education, particularly in the fields of science and technology. Instead, we need to decide what knowledge is most important for us to know and how to go about acquiring it selectively and critically. The West has much to offer Muslims in the fields of modern science, technology, economy, intellectual expertise, and many others, but Western knowledge is characterized as being value-free, so Muslims should carefully select that which is compatible with the Islamic worldview and framework and Islamic teachings and values, and modify or reject that which is not. With this in mind, the split between secular knowledge and Islamic knowledge must be repaired. That is, the Western knowledge and worldview need to be Islamized and then integrated into the corpus of the Islamic

legacy by eliminating, amending, reinterpreting, and adapting its components as the world-view of Islam and its values dictate (Abu Sulayman, 1989). Islam is like a filter - everything which is good is maintained and only that which is bad is discarded. It is a dynamic religion and a complete way of life and is capable of accepting new trends of every sphere of life without losing its very profound Islamic values. Muslims should strive to meet the challenges posed by modern knowledge and culture and offer Islamic alternatives. When knowledge, educational programmes, textbooks, and methods of teaching are all value-laden, secular Western knowledge will not pose any threat to the Islamic religion, to our Islamic cultural values or religious commitment. Aside from integrating Islamic values, the mission statement and vision of these areas should be based in tawheed i.e., the oneness of Allah (Baba, 2000).

Finally, it should be noted that the Islamization of education or the reformation of Islamic principles in education must be pursued rigorously, and the Islamic notion that man is Allah's vicegerent on this earth and that he should carry on his shoulders certain duties and responsibilities should also be emphasized. That being said, the whole Muslim community should support the move of the Islamization of education. All Muslim education policymakers, stakeholders, practitioners, and anyone involved in the dissemination of knowledge and education should work hand in hand, fervently and actively, for this noble endeavor i.e., the Islamization of education and approach it holistically. To this end, world conferences on Muslim education must be held again and again to address the educational issues that beset the Muslim world, identifying the problems in the Muslim education and suggesting relevant solutions for them. All in all, the existing curricula should be reviewed, new textbooks should be constructed, and teachers should be trained, in a way that reflects the Islamic values and core principles of Islamic worldview. The fact that Allah is the source of all knowledge must be impressed to learners and acknowledged by them, and His attributes and favors to man must be stressed. Islamic ethics, moral values, and attributes must be inculcated in the learners, who should be motivated to model themselves on our beloved prophet Muhammad, (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). It also must be stressed that all lessons and classroom activities should be linked to the key tenets of Islam, and relevant references from the Holy Qur'an, and prophetic traditions should be integrated in these lessons and activities.

Allah gives us success and guidance to the truth.

We would not be persons who are guided aright, had Allah not guided us.

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