

ISLAMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the epistemological framework of Islamization of knowledge, in light of its contextual and philosophical ideals and discursive history and current debates of Islamization of contemporary knowledge. It looks into the role of its major proponents and institutions in articulating the ideas of IOK and the principle of tawhid in late 1970-80s and its impact in spearheading the movement for intellectual renewal and reassertion of tawhidic and ethical consciousness. This was consistently undertaken by IIUM and IIIT in promoting the doctrine of Islamization of human knowledge and assimilation of knowledge and value. The research was qualitative in nature in the form of integrative library research and documentation technique. It conducts comprehensive survey of related primary and secondary sources and analyzed it through inductive and deductive method. The finding shows that the principal ideas of IOK was constructed based on the tawhidic worldview and its epistemological framework while the fundamental issues and concept of Islamization continued to be articulated that addresses its challenge and paradigm and basic methodology and workplan.

Keywords: Islamic Education, Islamization of Knowledge, Science and Religion, Philosophy of Science

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini membuat tinjauan dasar tentang faham Islamisasi ilmu serta latar sejarahnya dan meninjau isu-isu pokok dalam konteks perdebatan Islamisasi pengetahuan semasa. Ia melihat peranan beberapa tokoh dan institusi penting dalam menggerakkan idea Islamisasi ilmu sepanjang dekad 1970-80an dan pengaruhnya dalam mencorakkan visi intelektual dan kesedaran tauhid dalam praktik dan tradisi keilmuannya. Ini digerakkan di UIAM dan IIIT yang membawa gagasan pembaharuan dalam pemikiran pendidikan menerusi proses Islamisasi pengetahuan dan integrasi ilmu dan nilai. Kajian ini bersifat kualitatif dari jenis penelitian kepustakaan. Materi kajian dilacak dari sumber-sumber primer dan sekunder yang terkait berupa buku, tesis, artikel, majalah dan dianalisis secara deskriptif dan analitis. Temuan kajian menemukan bahawa isu-isu dasar tentang Islamisasi pengetahuan ini telah diungkapkan secara konsisten dengan perdebatan yang signifikan dan terus berlanjut terkait dengan falsafah dan rangka metodologi dan prinsip umumnya.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Islam, Islamisasi Pengetahuan, Sains dan Agama, Falsafah Ilmu

A. INTRODUCTION

One of the major crises in higher education in the Islamic world is the secular policy that is being pushed into its educational practices, which stems from colonial legacy that emphasized on dualism and dichotomy of knowledge. The system which denies divine origin of knowledge, separating the autonomy of revelation and reason, moral values and ethics which has created chaos and confusion resulting in severe moral and intellectual crisis of the ummah. The deconstruction of this failed system and value was debated in the first international educational conference held at Mecca in 1977, which concluded that the underlying crisis afflicting the ummah is an intellectual crisis. The malaise and contemporary problems of education have been dealt with

by the consensus concluded in the conference to set up an Islamic university. This was realized in 1983 with the establishment of the International Islamic University of Malaysia that aspire to lead the movement of Islamization in terms of inculcating Islamic values and morality and implementing reform in the educational system, through its projects of IOK and the incorporation of knowledge and values.

To this end, this paper aims to analyze the origin of the doctrine of IOK and its higher ideals within the scope of Islamic intellectual history and the scientific tradition of knowledge. It specifically highlights the roles and contribution of Ismail R. al-Faruqi and S.M. Naquib al-Attas and their pioneering works in the formulation of the concept, and the development of its integrative approach, which has provided a valuable reference for aspiring students and scholars wishing to develop further on contemporary projects from an Islamic perspective. In modern development and context, this idea was inextricably linked to the role of leading institutions such as IIUM and IIIT in spearheading the movement for reform and gearing intellectual renewal and reconstruction of the ummah, by focusing on Islamization of knowledge (*Islamiyyah al-Ma'rifat*) and the unification of science (*Takamul al-Ma'rifi*). It discussed the underlying methods that governed this initiative at theoretical and practical level that was synthesized throughout all the Kulliyah. The study also highlights the development of integrative approach at IIUM that introduced such cutting-edge initiatives in term of the relevantization of Islamic revealed knowledge, Islamicisation, and carrying Islamic input in the secular science. It also analyzed the form of integrated aspects such as integration of knowledge and values, curriculum, scientific discipline,

knowledge and practice, revelation and reason and highlights its contribution in term of reviving its scientific tradition and intellectual heritage, and producing informed and wholesome, and encyclopedic person (*mutafannin*). This study is crucial to identify the dynamic and perennial impact of IIUM and IIIT in raising the ummatic consciousness and standard of education in the Islamic world and developing its progressive tradition.

Previous studies that survey the idea and doctrine of Islamization and the integration of knowledge at IIUM inevitably focused on the methodology and its implementation in the curriculum, and relevant scientific discipline. Abu Baker Mohmed¹ in his thesis examining the principles of IOK and the method of integration of knowledge (*takamul al-ma'rifi*) in the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS), IIUM concluded that the ideas and philosophy of integration formed an integral foundation in the instruction and learning process in the Kulliyah at both theoretical and practical level, and this experience has contributed to its expansion as the archetype for higher education to overcome the crisis of education. But this work is considerably limited in its scope and fieldwork that does not cover the early development of IOK and its historical significance, which will be critically furnished in our study of this significant gap.

Previous premises and finding on the philosophy of IOK and its

¹Abu Baker Mohmed, A. M. I., "Mafhum al-takamul al-ma'rifi wa tatbiqatuhu fi al-manahij al-Jami'iyah: dirasat fi tajribat Kulliyah Ma'arif al-Wahy al-Islami wa'l-'Ulum al-Insaniyyah bi'l-Jami'ah al-Islamiyyah al-'Alamiyyah - Maliziyya (1990-2000)," unpublished Ph.D thesis, Institute of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia, Gombak, 2004.

practical implication has been summarized by Ibrahim Mohamed Zein² in his paper which highlighted the impact of the ideas projected by al-Faruqi's on UIAM, by pointing out that the KIRKHS which was inspired by AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, the second Rector was established to support the integration of religious sciences and social sciences, and produced Muslim professionals who can realized the vision of Islam, by noting that: “even some might argue that the best way to achieve that goal (to reform Islamic education and producing Muslim professionals) would be through integration of knowledge. This became the main principle around which the Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences was set up to facilitate the goal of integrating social sciences with Islamic Revealed Knowledge”. But his study is characteristically limited that exclusively focused on the discipline of religious studies offered at KIRKHS without looking into its recent development and progress based on al-Faruqi's approaches and methods.

Ibrahim's premises was further developed by Mohd. Kamal Hassan³ in his insightful essays about the policy and direction of integration at IIUM by providing a clear definition of the doctrine and ideas of change and reform (*islah*), renewal (*tajdid*), revivication (*ihya'*), relevantization, modernization (*tahdith*) and integration (*takumul ma'rifi*), as well as other intellectual and academic endeavors and initiatives that was geared to realize the vision of Islamization of

²Zein, I. M., “Religions as a “life fact”: Al-Faruqi's impact on the International Islamic University Malaysia,” *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 28 (3), hal. 53-74, 2011.

³Hassan, M. K., “Malay intelligentsia's quest for an Islamic University and the future of “Islamisation of human knowledge” in International Islamic University Malaysia,” dalam *IIUM the premier global Islamic University*, Zaleha Kamaruddin, Abdul Rashid Moten, Eds. Kuala Lumpur: UIAM Press, 2013, hal. 23-45.

human knowledge and integrative mission: "integration or incorporation of Divinely revealed values and norms/Islamic worldview/ Islamic or Qur'anic perspectives/positive aspects of Muslim religious and intellectual legacy with the contemporary social sciences, human sciences, humanities, natural sciences, applied and professional sciences." This has been laid out in a planned and strategic manner, by expanding and gearing up creative initiative through working a limited integration model in the Kulliyah of Science and Medicine, that: "A form of limited integration called "Islamic Input" has been going on for some time now in the Kulliyah of Medicine."

In terms of theoretical framework and conception, the idea was also analyzed by W. Mohd Azam Mohd Amin ⁴ in his article highlighting the epistemological foundation and philosophical essence that gave birth to the concept of knowledge integration, forthcoming from the works of classical Islamic jurists and philosophers such as Muhammad Idris al-Shafi'i (d. 204/820) in his book, *Jima' al-'Ilm*, al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111) in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, Ibn Khaldun (d. 806/1406) in *'Ilm al-Sana'i'*, and al-Dihlawi in *al-Funun*. It set forth the ideas and terminology of knowledge in these works showing that the basic structure and framework of the integration of knowledge has been developed by them emphasizing on the meaning of *ruh* (spirit), *ma'rifah* (gnosis) and its interpretative aspects. This principle was later advanced in modern context by contemporary Muslim thinkers by expressing the terms of Islamization (*aslamah al-ma'rifah*), Islamicization (*Islamiyyah al-ma'rifat*) and unification of human

⁴W. Mohd Azam, M. A., "A preliminary analysis of the classical views of the concept of integration of knowledge," *Revelation and Science*, 4 (2), hal. 12-22, 2014.

knowledge (*al-takamul*) that essentially reinvented and continued previous effort at Islamization. But the paper short of providing contemporary insights on issues of IOK and efforts to recover Islamic roots in modern science, which will be filled out in our study.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on library research and fieldwork. It qualitatively and quantitatively gathered extensive literature that outlines the theory and philosophy of IOK and the integrative method (*takamul al-ma'rifi*) it projected, summarizing the ideas and views presented through inductive (*istiqrā'*) and deductive (*istinbat*) method. The study also carried out an interview and distribute questionnaire to the University leadership responsible for articulating and drafting the policy paper for the setting up of IIUM, and conceiving the initial plan and blueprint of the policy of Islamization and integration of science. They form the backbone and architect of the doctrine of IOK (*Islamiyyat al-Ma'rifat*), such as Prof. Emeritus Dato' Dr. Abdulhamid Abusulayman (1936-18 August 2021), Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed Zein, and former colleagues and students of al-Faruqi and al-Attas.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The paper discusses the basic principles of IOK and the mission of unification of knowledge and values. This was analyzed from broad historical and philosophical framework that was consistently developed and reinforced in the modern context in order to realize the goals of Islamization (*aslamah al-ma'rifah*), Islamicization (*Islamiyyah al-ma'rifat*) and unification of sciences (*al-takamul*). Basically, it

discusses the penetrating and comprehensive ideas of IOK, as a venture that represents the response of Muslim scholars and philosophers to modernity. The intellectual response, beginning in the late 1960s and became an important feature of scientific debates and discussion in late 1980s and early 1990s. Thus, it attempts to bring this to light by presenting a comprehensive review of IOK, discussing the views of its leading advocates and critics and summarizing issues relating to its definition, rationale, and process of Islamization itself.

Islamization of Knowledge (IOK) arguably the most pertinent intellectual movements of the recent century since 1960s, and turns out to be one of the most reliable and lasting responses to intellectual currents of modernity. It is crucial to note that like most of the scholars discussed in this article, IOK should be seen invariably as a construct concern with problems of epistemology and methodology. Since the last 30 years, many decisive works attempted to defined and analyzed the foundational ideas of IOK. Nevertheless, the works invariably restricted to individual ideas or institutions, and by comparisons, these were quite inadequate in extent and measures. The advocates of IOK saw the underlying cause of the predicaments due to knowledge and science that has been interpreted through the Western perspective and outlook. It is imperative at this point to note that all intellectuals claiming to advance the premise of IOK, should by definition, irrevocably support incorporation with modern science rather than taking a rejectionist position.

By rule, IOK implies espousing the position that resolutions to current malaise demand a synchronization between Islamic legacy and

modern science⁵. Since late 1970s and early 1980s, there has been growing interest on the formation of the concept of Islamization, in late decades of 1980s and early 1990s, saw the unprecedented proliferation of “enthusiasm” and “active expression” and attempts towards “product development” i.e., “Islamic textbooks.” However, towards the ends of 1990s, many began to question the “Islamic product” offered, and even questioned the entire project. What were their strengths, weaknesses and could IOK project survive another decade.

Historically, there have been quite a few works on IOK published over the last twenty years. There were proponents of IOK with various approaches and viewpoints on what it involves; there were critics of IOK; a number of authors have tried to review the writings of individuals or institutions; while others tried to make comparisons between scholars and their ideas. IOK's experience, over the last twenty years, especially since early 1980s saw the establishment of institutions such as the IIIT, IIUM, ISTAC which was formed to spearheading IOK's projects. These institutions were indispensable in such a way that it have been designed as the physical places and entities where IOK's efforts have grown over the last two decades.

The main ideas and writings about IOK were initiated by two major figures. First and foremost, S. M. Naquib al-Attas, whose main works were books and monographs published in late 1970s, mostly by Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM) and later by ISTAC, which was established in 1987, where he presided as its Founder-Director and

⁵Rahman, F., *Islamic methodology in history* (Karachi: Central Institute of Islamic Research), 1965, 75-76.

the First Holder of Distinguished Al-Ghazali Chair of Islamic Thought. Other main figures or groups of individuals were those connected to the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), established in 1981 and based in Herndon, Virginia as its headquarters. Major writers from IIIT including Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, Taha Jabir al-Alwani, Jamal Barzinji and all IIIT Presidents at various times, who by their works have formed the “IIIT School of Thought” to its current state.⁶

IIIT sought to reform Muslim thought and reassert their higher potential to reclaim their rightful position in its historical and intellectual realm by investing in communal and educational sector that could halt their declining condition and present malaise. With the achievement of political independence, the rising Muslim populations began to escalate their pressure on their respective regimes for greater “indigenous solution” to their despicable condition and predicaments. Perceiving the failure of the capital and social systems, combined with the newfound wealth of Muslim regimes connected with rich oil reserves led to greater appeals for Islamic resolutions and alternatives.

Many factors are on stake, including educational, cultural and economic progress. On the scholarly realm, Islamic economics was the first beneficiary of the newfound wealth and intellectual awakening resulting in the unprecedented first world conference on Islamic Economics organized in Mecca in 1976. The consecutive year, first world conference on Islamic Education was also met in Mecca, discussing inter alia the prerequisite for reform of the educational

⁶Haneef, M. A., *A critical survey of Islamization of knowledge* (Kuala Lumpur: Research Centre IIUM), 2005, 1.

system in Muslim countries in addition to the articulation of IOK. In spite of the historic conference finally bring to the set-up of clear-cut “Islamic” universities, i.e., in Islamabad (1981) and Kuala Lumpur (1983), the project of IOK could probably be traced back to the mid-sixties.⁷

1. Proponents of IOK

Two major advocates of IOK, viz. al-Attas and al-Faruqi/IIIT, mentioned two basis that provided the rationale for IOK, in spite of different in emphasis and argumentation. The first rationale that can be considered as external was the predicament and appalling condition of the ummah. Al-Faruqi, particularly, stated in the section of ‘Problems’ in his 1982 *Workplan*, the “malaise of the ummah,” i.e. the backwardness and subdued condition of the contemporary ummah in all fields⁸, politics (divided, fragmented, military rule), economy (underdeveloped, dependence on the West, illiteracy even with newly-discovered oil wealth) and religion-culture (westernization, separated from its indigenous culture).

While all these factors may demonstrate the real states in the Muslim population, Umar Hassan⁹ in his brief reprisal to the IOK cautioned al-Faruqi's excessive emphasis on these peripheral roots and what he saw as constant benchmarking to the West, alarming that it could lead to trap into Western standard, themes which many

⁷Safi, L., *The foundation of knowledge: a comparative study in Islamic and western methods of inquiry* (Washington: The International Institute of Islamic Thought), 1996, 5.

⁸Al-Faruqi, I. R. *Islamization of knowledge: general principles and work plan* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought), 1982, 1-6.

⁹Umar, H., “Islamization of knowledge: a response,” *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)*, vol.5, no. 2, hal. 327-333, 1988.

critics such as Ziauddin Sardar, Nasim Butt and Yasien Mohamed¹⁰ also raised. The main cause of the lethargy seen to be grounded on the current backward educational condition and short of vision and political will on the part of Muslim leaders. In fairness and to do justice to al-Faruqi, this is essentially an internal cause and typically recognized by him. The former was a catastrophe since it is bound by dual forms of system, the other religious and traditional predicament, while the latter was not sufficiently attended by al-Faruqi. Pointing out to the educational system, he regretted that lacking of vision has denied the system to reflect the paradigm of Islam and thus creates a situation of mediocrity among teachers and pupils who are not willing to resist foreign ideology encountered in the campus.

AbuSulayman, who took over the Presidency of IIIT from al-Faruqi, saw the main cause of the malaise as the misconception of knowledge that has created "crisis of the mind"¹¹ that was responsible for their predicament and permissiveness and subservient to the West. Both AbuSulayman and al-Alwani¹², the third President of IIIT, claimed what they call the "historical fragmentation" of science into syariah and other sciences, which leads to barbaric and excessive intensity and narrow specialization in the former and negligence in the latter. Other knowledge of social sciences and humanities, remained in the pattern of the

¹⁰Yasien, M. "Islamization: a revivalist response to modernity," *Muslim Education Quarterly (MEQ)*, 10(2), hal. 2-23, 1993.

¹¹AbuSulayman, A.H., *Islamization: reforming contemporary knowledge* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought), 1994, 2.

¹²Al-Alwani, T. J., "Islamization of methodology of behavioral sciences," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)*, 6(2), hal. 227-238, 1989.

modern/secular system of the West. Abu Sulayman reasserted the need to improve the intensity of the “revelation-reason” relation, redefining the scope of knowledge and streamlining Islamic educational system and infrastructure.

Al-Attas, meanwhile, the other main originator of the IOK discourse, while recognizing that the dilemma facing the Muslim community invariably connected to external cause, especially the historic clash with Western secular heritage and the political impact of colonialism, traces the main basis for this despicable condition due to internal grounds, more definitely what he termed as the “loss of *adab*” within the Muslims people themselves. By *adab*, al-Attas implying the “loss of discipline – discipline of body, mind, and soul; the discipline that assures the recognition and acknowledgment of one’s proper place in relation to one’s self, society, and community; the recognition and acknowledgment of one’s proper place in relation to one’s physical intellectual, and spiritual capacities and potentials; the recognition and acknowledgment of the fact that knowledge and being are ordered hierarchically. Since *adab* refers to recognition and acknowledgement of the right and proper place, station, and condition in life and to self-discipline in positive and willing participation in enacting one’s role in accordance with that recognition and acknowledgement, its occurrence in one and in society as a whole reflects the condition of justice. Loss of *adab* implies loss of justice, which in turn betrays confusion in knowledge.”¹³

¹³Al-Attas, S. M. N., *Islam, secularism and the philosophy of the future* (London & New York: Mansell Publishing Limited), 1985, 99-100.

Such confusion and error of knowledge was unmistakably owed to the moral dislocation of the Muslim world and the loss of capacity and ability of Muslims to distinguish the “true knowledge” from knowledge that has been corrupted and absorbed by profane secular views.

The internal factor or rationale for the call of IOK derived from the basic premise that current knowledge is not neutral, which required some interpretation, as there were difference opinion concerning its connotation. Notwithstanding this, the question concern essentially revolved around meaning and scope as to what is being signified to when IOK is stated. In his works which spanned between 1978-1996, al-Attas focused mainly on the relationship between the Islamic worldview/vision and science and made a relatively profound comparison with Western philosophy and outlook (especially Christianity). Both al-Faruqi and al-Attas referred to the vision/scope in which contemporary science is interpreted and demonstrated. While al-Faruqi and IIIT (1982, 1989) mentioned “dual forms of educational system,” traditional and modern, as a goal for transformation and integration, there is missing consideration on the predicament of science. They concentrated more on the diverse disciplines offered in modern universities. Al-Attas, instead, was quite distinguished in what he perceived as the underlying problem in the current world reflecting the secular view of the physical world, as expressed in the following argument: “The problem of the corruption of knowledge has come about due to our own state of confusion as well as influences coming from the philosophy, science, and ideology of modern

Western culture and civilization.”¹⁴

“The greatest challenge that has surreptitiously arisen in our age is the challenge of knowledge, indeed, not as against ignorance; but knowledge as conceived and disseminated throughout the world by Western civilization; knowledge whose nature has become problematic because it has lost its true purpose due to being unjustly conceived, and has thus brought about chaos in man’s life instead of, and rather than, peace and justice; knowledge which pretends to be real but which is productive of confusion and scepticism, which has elevated doubt and conjecture to the ‘scientific’ rank in methodology; knowledge which has, for the first time in history, brought chaos to the Three Kingdom of Nature; the animal, vegetal and mineral.”¹⁵

Al-Attas clearly distinguished the root cause of the confusion and predicament forthcoming from the secular western views and offers its Islamic alternative and standpoint, which informed his dynamic and perceptive approaches to the problem of dichotomy of knowledge currently governed Muslim society. Against this backdrop, some instructive and dynamics understanding of the nature of the problem has also been brought forth by al-Faruqi (1981, 1982) which addressed from historical viewpoints the

¹⁴Al-Attas, S. M. N., *Prolegomena to the metaphysics of Islam: an exposition of the fundamental elements of the worldview of Islam*. 2nd ed. (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization), 1995, 15; Al-Attas, S. M. N., “Welcoming address”, in international conference on al-Ghazali’s legacy: its contemporary relevance, Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 2001.

¹⁵Al-Attas, S. M. N., “The dewesternization of knowledge”, in *Islam and secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia), 1978, 127; Al-Attas, S. M. N., *Islam: the concept of religion and the foundation of ethics and morality* (Kuala Lumpur: IBFIM), 2013, 1.

consequences and ultimate problem causes by internal aspects but not as thorough and exhaustive as al-Attas. He saw secular science as “incomplete” because it ignores revelation as a foundation of knowledge; “necessarily Western” or rather, Eurocentric, as it was moulded in the Western European experience over the past three epoch; and ultimately, the denunciation of revelation breaks the imperative requisite of Islamic stipulation, hence justifying the urgency for IOK. Al-Alwani¹⁶ endorsed this view on the ground that contemporary science has become “positivistic”, the reading of “one book” (nature), which is insufficient from the perspective of Islam which necessitates "the reading of two books" (revelation and nature). Previously in his article (1989), he acknowledged that current social sciences and humanities were byproducts of secular thought embedded in their methodology, ingredient, results, purposes, accounts of human conduct and views of life and creation that were contrary to Islamic perspective. Only such “reading of the two books” supposed to provide balanced understanding of the reality and truth. Failure of which will only produce “workers and officials”¹⁷ instead of learned and pious society.

2. Concept and Definition

In the light of various opinions and construction on IOK, a concise definition needs to be encapsulated and formulated. Some scholars concentrated more on the requirement for a precise meaning, others merely contented with “working definition” while

¹⁶Al-Alwani, T. J., “The Islamization of knowledge: yesterday and today”, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, vol. 12, no. 1, hal. 81-101, 1995.

¹⁷Al-Alwani, T. J., “Islamization of methodology of behavioral sciences”, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)*, 6 (2), hal. 227-238, 1989.

large segment either choose to dismissed it or subscribed to one or the other definitions by scholars. IIIT seems to have taken the latter views that “the scholars of our school of thought do not seek to provide a strictly inclusive and exclusive definition in the classical manner when they speak of the Islamization of Knowledge.”¹⁸ Al-Alwani argued that the IOK agenda should not be restricted to rigid definitions. Nevertheless, certain quarter maintained that in any case a working definition is required so as to allowed Islamization efforts to have direction and focus. Such a clarification will identify the semantic and mapping out the goal of Islamization and enables the determination of priorities. In this regard, al-Attas surpassed the rest because of his exact and precise expressions used in this scholarly enterprise. In general, Islamization outlined by al-Attas as: “the liberation of man first from magical, mythological, animistic, national-cultural tradition, and then from secular control over his reason and his language.”¹⁹

With regard to science, especially modern or present-day knowledge, as previously stated, unquestionably resonance with preconceived baggage and is not neutral. It inevitably reflected the background of the society in which it was casted. Thus, Islamization in this perspective implies: “The deliverance of knowledge from its interpretations based on secular ideology; and from meaning and expressions of the secular”.²⁰ Arguing on the fundamental

¹⁸Al-Alwani, T. J., “The Islamization of knowledge: yesterday and today”, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 12 (1), hal. 81-101, 1995.

¹⁹Al-Attas, S. M. N., “The dewesternization of knowledge,” dalam *Islam and secularism*. Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM), 1978, hal. 133-150.

²⁰Ibid.

ingredient of Islamic worldview that sought to liberate Muslim mind from western prejudice and control, al-Attas further argue on a very pertinent facets of this liberation, which is the concept and vision of truth that it conveys which al-Attas describes as: “the vision of reality and truth that appears before our mind’s eye revealing what existence is all about; for it is the world of existence in its totality that Islam is projecting. Thus by worldview we must mean *ru’yat al-Islam li al-wujud*. The Islamic vision of reality and truth, which is a metaphysical survey of the visible as well as the invisible worlds including the perspective of life as a whole” (al-Attas, 1995: 2) inevitably and essentially must be comprehended by the “Islamists” first since the procedure of Islamization cannot be actualized unless the person who carries it out conscious of what required to be “absorbed”, what is acceptable, and what alternatives were tolerated or not and why. Whereas social science/humanities were the main branch of science which became the concentration of Islamization, it also comprised natural, physical and applied sciences in the process especially pertaining to its underlying philosophy, elucidation and the construction of premises. In fact, the task of Islamizing of science and its evaluation must entail: “A critical examination of the methods of modern science; its concepts, presuppositions, and symbols; its empirical and rational aspects, and those impinging upon values and ethics; its interpretation of origins; its theory of knowledge; its presuppositions on the existence of an external world, of the uniformity of nature, and the rationality of natural processes; its theory of the universe; its classification of the science: its limitations and inter-relations with

one other of the sciences, and its social relations”.²¹

3. Context and Implication

Wan Mohd. Nor Wan Daud in his article analyzing the basic method and features of al-Attas and Fazlur Rahman’s conceptual ideas and their enriching philosophy warned that one may find those of weak-minded who erroneously consider the procedure of Islamization as a mechanical course that dispense with mind and spirit. Citing al-Attas, he warned the reader that the procedure of IOK is inherently theoretical and intangible, thus “they are presented to the intellect, and therefore referred to as being in the mind.”²² It was these naive-mentality individuals who later started proclaiming about "Islamic bicycles, Islamic trains and Islamic bombs," or giving substance and high priority for the establishment and materializing the blueprint of physical institutions, without appreciating the fact that IOK demands, first of all, excellent intelligence. In the same vein, al-Faruqi outlined the process of IOK and its basic ideas and meaning as “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 and relating of the data, to re-evaluate the conclusions, to re-project the goals and to do so in such a way as to make the

²¹Al-Attas, S. M. N., *Prolegomena to the metaphysics of Islam: an exposition of the fundamental elements of the worldview of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization), 1995, 114.

²²Wan Mohd. Nor, Wan Daud, “Islamization of contemporary knowledge: a brief comparison between al-Attas and Fazlur Rahman”, *Al-Shajarah, Journal of International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, 2(1), hal. 1-19, 1997.

disciplines enrich the vision and serve the cause of Islam”.²³

This undertaking involves a wide-ranging activity including, finally, to cope with the dichotomy of western-based and traditional Islamic system, which ultimately endeavors to “produce university-level textbooks by recasting some twenty disciplines in accordance to the Islamic vision” and whereas mastery of modern-day science is the “first prerequisite” for IOK, it should be conceived by “integrating new discipline into the corpus of Islamic heritage by eliminating, amending, reinterpreting and adapting its components as the worldview of Islam and its values dictate.” Its theoretical construct and far-reaching implication, was broadly conceived, which encompass the entire legacy of human knowledge that it definitely represents “a framework for human life, civilization, and human transformation. It determines the purpose of every activity, struggle, action and Islamic social organization. It gave human life purpose and charts its course.”²⁴

Speaking from practical point of view, the manifestation of this meaningful range of Islamization process demonstrated by al-Attas and to some extent by al-Faruqi, it turns out that IOK was basically a theoretical construct projected by its epistemological and methodological principles and designs which creatively involves the projection and the integration of knowledge in accordance with Islamic reference, and the tawhidic worldview based on modern

²³Al-Faruqi, I. R., *Islamization of knowledge: general principles and work plan* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought), 1982, 15.

²⁴Al-Faruqi, I.R., *Islamization of knowledge: general principles and work plan* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought), 1989, 89.

sociological method (Ragab, 1995).²⁵ It was essentially a theory making enterprise, designed to reclaim the scientific glory and achievement of the past, based on the compelling intellectual path of unification and harmonization of reason and revelation, and thoughtful reflection of the reality and the universe; which is not simply a process of supplementing and subtracting but a serious trajectory of ‘creative engagement’ with contemporary social science (Ragab, 1997).²⁶

D. CONCLUSION

This paper has briefly provided an overview of the cutting-edge development in Islamization of Knowledge debates and brought to light concise historical analysis of its origin and background. The underlying cause of the problems lie in the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane projected by the corrupt system of education prevailing in the Muslim world. To address this predicament and intellectual crisis of the ummah necessitates a revolutionary approach to uproot the main problem and its root cause. This has been considerably addressed by Muslim intellectuals such as Ziauddin Sardar, Ibrahim Ragab, Louay Safi, Fazlur Rahman, AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman, Ismail R. al-Faruqi and S. M. Naquib al-Attas in their classic works. Their meticulous solution had significantly impacted the thriving Muslim society in facing the challenges of contemporary culture and

²⁵Ragab, Ibrahim A., “On the nature and scope of the Islamization process: toward conceptual clarification,” *Intellectual Discourse*, 3(2), hal. 113-122, 1995.

²⁶Ragab, Ibrahim A., “Creative engagement of the ‘modern’ social sciences: a significant aspect of the Islamization effort,” *Intellectual Discourse*, 5(1), hal. 35-49, 1997.

civilization. The movement was geared to reconcile the classic dichotomy of the two extremes and to harmonize secular ideology with traditional ground. The rising social conscientious to reclaim their cultural and intellectual role ultimately reflected in the scientific breakthrough to reassert and reinvent the tawhidic framework. Theoretically, the basic construct and framework of IOK had been widely developed in Muslim seminary in their traditional setting that work to integrate the *'ulum al-naqliyah* (transmitted knowledge) and *'aqliyah* (rational science) as envisioned by IIUM and IIIT whose policy help to advance concrete blueprint of IOK, and streamlining its transformative influence in the postcolonial world. The paper would suggest that this basic features and outline of IOK to be implemented in schools and society at large to enrich the vision of Islam in humanity and to cultivate healthy and necessary religious discourse and tawhidic consciousness in communal life.

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