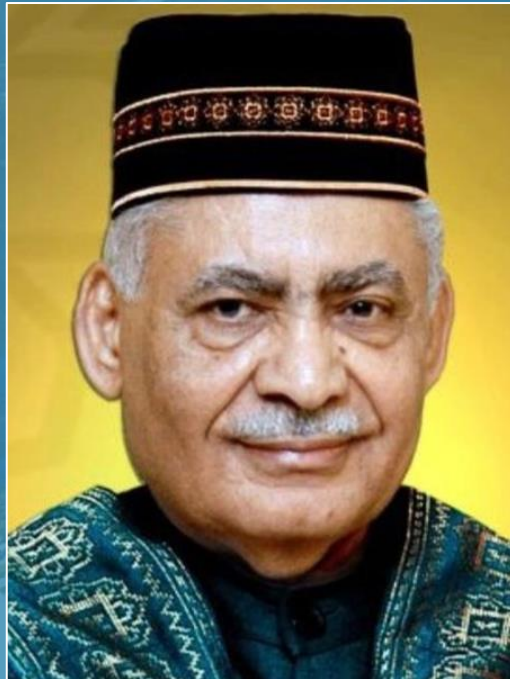


INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ABDULHAMID ABUSULAYMAN AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTELLECTUAL AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM (21-22 FEBRUARY 2023)



Study of Other Religions in Light of Abdulhamid AbuSulayman's Notion of Islamisation of Knowledge (IOK)

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The Objectives of the Presentation

To enlighten contemporary Muslim scholarship of religions in light of AbuSulayman's intellectual reform vis a vis IOK

To fulfill the need for innovative study on interreligious issues and relation.

To discuss the flaws of the modern and traditional methods in the study of religions

To recommend plausible methods and approaches for developing Islamic scholarship of religions guided by AbuSulayman's notion of IOK



1. Introduction

There are three ways to deal with crisis facing the Muslims

- i. duplicate modern solution
- ii. duplicate traditional solution
- iii. Return to *asalah*; return to the heritage of Islam and examine its relevance and adaptability

The state of art of SOREs

First, modern approaches; limited by the epistemological framework, subscribe to neutrality and objectivity in the collection, presentation and analysis of data.

Second, modern approaches avoid judgment and evaluation of data because it implies religious biasness and prejudices.

Third, study of religions in the intellectual tradition of Islam is embedded in Usul al-Din and Kalam whereby the faith of Islam is explained and defended and the faith of religions other than Islam is explained and challenged.

ijtihad

Intellectual endeavor

Purpose of life and duties

**Revelation +
reason**

worldview

Reform methodology

crisis

2. Asalah

- mediating approach; requires sound methodology, technical experience, intellectual approach
- has to be realistic, to consider contextual changes
- should be reform in methodology - role of reason and revelation
- to return to the worldview of Islam; the anchor of IOK
- the right worldview can only be attained only if man accepts rev and reason
- compatibility of physical and metaphysical truth to help man to understand the purpose of his life and his duties on earth
- the right worldview has to transpire in Muslims intellectual endeavor
- more ijtihad to be done
- **Muslim intellectuals have to develop methodological and disciplinary principles to establish Islamic science; scholarship in the SORES**



3. Epistemological and Ethical Concern on the Modern SOREs

- modern secular concept of religion distorted due to **modern rationalism and materialism**; hence divided meanings of religion
- modern SOREs resort to different means for understanding religion because it has **marginalized revelation**; unscientific
- modern SOREs **does not recognize metaphysics and metaphysical truth**
- religion as **superstition** e.g. EB Taylor, anthropological SOREs
- **evolution theory** of religion; religion progresses from primitive to modern condition



Cont.

- **religion as myths** e.g. Muller, Louis Jourdan, Mircea Eliade
- **historical approach** Ernst Peter Wilhelm Troelstch, Rudolph Otto, Rudolf Karl Bultmann - religion evolves from polytheism to monotheism
- give rise to biblical historical criticism ; to prove syncretic aspects of Christianity as it evolves from primitive condition of Hellenistic polytheism to the most advanced form of monotheism
- **phenomenological approach** ; non-judgmental and non-biased approach; bracketing, epoche
- uninterested in matters pertaining to religious truth
- study religion in empirical context per se



Cont.

- there are many other modern secular approaches; claimed to be objective; **descriptive, value-free study; axiological crisis;**
- **epistemological + ontological + axiological crisis** ; meaning; purpose, moral aspect of knowledge
- **Despite the many innovative methods and approaches introduced by the modern study of religions, ironically, everything about religion is worth researching except for religious truth.**



IOK and SOREs AT ISLAMIC INSTITUTION

- a) Muslims intellectual pursuit must be governed by the spirit of Islam
 - i. sources of knowledge ; rev + reason - Qur'an and Hadith
 - ii. reason helps to understand and interpret revelation
 - iii. *fitrah* helps to guide human conscience
 - iv. to recognize data from revelation about metaphysics; God, the world herebefore, hereafter, and the physical aspects of the universe; it works under certain order susceptible to the law of cause and effect except when the laws is interfered.



Cont.

- b) Three premises as basis ; ontological, teleological and axiological
 - ✓ Tawhid is the axis of all existence in its plurality
 - ✓ every existence has purpose/reason that justifies the orderliness of the universe
 - ✓ Truth is objective and it helps to explain man and his relationship with the universe.

Muslim scholarship in the SOREs should acknowledge

- ❖ Allah is the God of everyone and everything since He is the Creator.
- ❖ the fact that there is/are purpose/s in the creation of many religions
- ❖ Religious truth is objective for it helps man to understand his ontology, and his ontology in relation to others and in relation to God.



Cont.

- c) Technical and practical aspects of the scholarship
 - ✓ the role of shariah with special reference to ijtihad
 - ✓ reject taqlid of the past and of modern invention
 - ✓ abide by shariah aims, purposes and directives
 - ✓ when dealing with revelation refrain from the rigidity of literal understanding, but to understand in relation to the reality
 - ✓ classify the Quran and Hadith so can deal with them in a more systematic manner
 - ✓ understand sirah in order to comprehend the context of the hadith/sunnah



Cont.

- d) To deal with the intellectual heritage of Islam
 - ✓ include Muslim works of other religions ; many in Usul al-Din, Kalam and philosophy; overlapping discourse eg epistemology, god, man, nature, life, afterlife, prophet, revelation,
 - ✓ special reference on the courses related to Usul because they are the sources and research methods in Islamic thought



Cont.

e) Language

- ✓ language proficiency in Arabic and English
- ✓ to access to works in both languages; classical works of the heritage of Islam and modern works by modern scholars of SORES
- ✓ cautious about being rigid to tradition and being liberal with the modern values
- ✓ read with a pinch of salt



Cont.

- f) Methods and field of study
- ✓ go beyond textual studies of language, traditions and orthodox jurisprudence
 - ✓ understand ijtiḥād and its differences from iftā
 - ✓ current ijtiḥād - beyond the legal specialists
 - ✓ interdisciplinary discourse between one specialisation with legal specialist



Cont.

g) institutional role

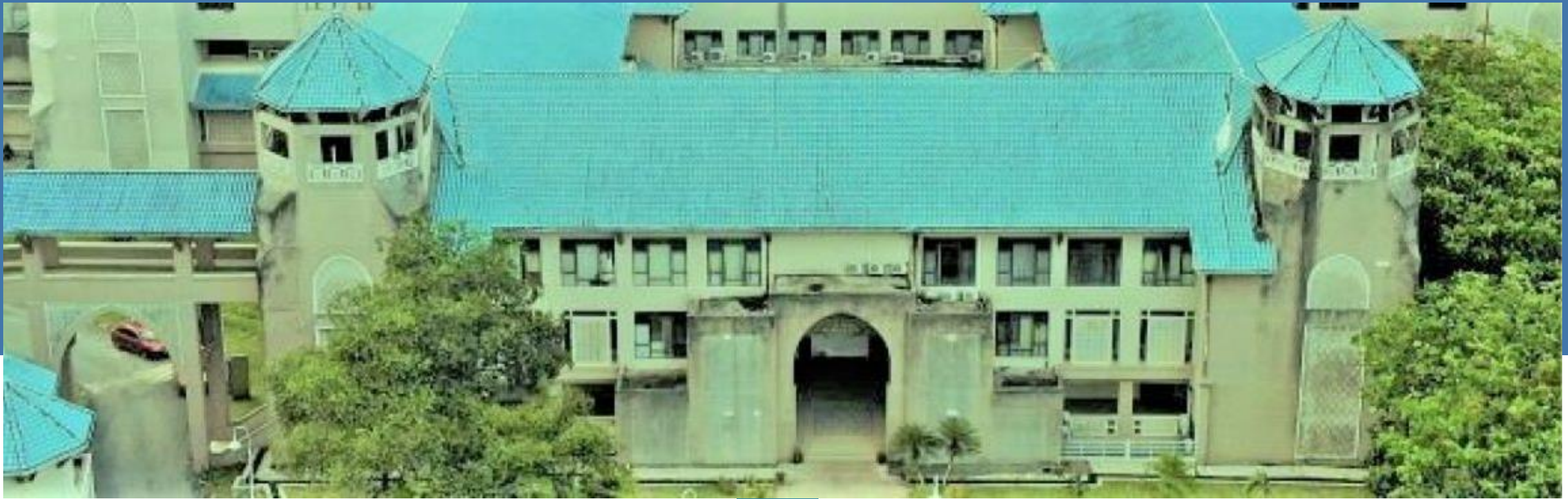
- ✓ via curriculum, research, consultancies, publications and any academic activities
- ✓ institution as a catalyst
- ✓ a concerted effort



Conclusion

Guided by AHAS notion of IOK, Muslim SORES should deal with the following;

- i. Do away with duplicated methods and approaches
- ii. start with the right worldview, epistemology, teleology and axiology
- iii. include the right sources and tools
- iv. embark on ijihad involving different experts
- v. The institution dedicated to intellectual reform and committed to uphold the Truth of Islam



Thank You