

ONE Pearl from the Precious String

Islamisation-Herald



*Al-salāmu ‘alaikum wa Raḥmatu’Llāhi wa Barakātuh. Islamisation-Herald meets you once more with Issue 6 No. 3, October 2025 | Jumādā al-Awwal 1447. This time with an important follow-up element from the previous issue, of the ‘HOW’ of IOHK, as Emeritus Professor Tan Sri Dr. Mohd Kamal Hassan, *Allāh yarḥamuhu* had meticulously explicated.¹ The last issue specifies several important key features of the HOW -*

“Develop the integrated personality types of *Ulū al-Albāb* – the God-fearing ‘*Ulamā*’ (scholars) and the true believers who are committed to the **civilisational vision** and **mission** of Islam; who project the peaceful and compassionate image of *Raḥmatan li’l-‘Ālamīn*, and portray the ethical and humane behaviour of true *Khulafā’* and servants of Allah ﷺ.”

Here is the follow-up, written as a mandate that must be taken heed seriously:

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“**INSTITUTIONALISE**
the **Holistic Quality Culture**
as apposed to
the secularist quality culture, to achieve
“**EXCELLENCE with THE SOUL**”
and not “excellence without a soul”.²”

(See Harry L. Lewis, *Excellence Without a Soul: How a Great University Forgot Education*, 2006, referring to Harvard University.

What does “**THE SOUL**” refer to here? This is the soul, which is fully integrated (between *rūḥ*, *qalb*, *‘aql* and *nafs*) in its inherently well-balanced and goodly nature (*fiṭrah*). The soul that constantly undergoes purification and spiritual discipline highlighted in the last two series. This is the soul whose *qalb* (heart) is

cleansed from behaviours and habits that corrupt it (e.g. *kibr*-arrogance; *riyā’*-ostentation; *takabbur*-excessive pride; *‘ujub*-self enggrandisement; *hasad*-envy; *ghadab*-uncontrolled anger; *bukhl*-greed and miserliness; *ghaflah*-heedlessness; *ghurur*-vanity, conceit, delusion; *wahn*- deep worldly

attachment; etc) and further beautified with purity and refined character³. Al-Ghazali shares a profound insight:

“The occupation of **animals** is eating, sleeping, and fighting; therefore, *if you are an animal, busy yourself in these things.*

Devils are busy in stirring up mischief, and in guile and deceit; *if you belong to them, do their work.*

Angels contemplate the beauty of God, and are entirely free from animal qualities, *if you are of angelic nature, then strive towards your origin*, that you may know and contemplate **The Most High**, and be delivered from the bondage of lust and anger.

You should also discover why you have been created with these [lower] instincts: whether that they should subdue and lead you captive, or whether that **YOU** should **subdue them**, and, in your upward progress, make of one your steed and of the other your weapon.”⁴

Al-Ghazali also teaches that while the bodily **senses** (*ḥawas*) are like **windows** that let in data from Allah’s Signs (**Āyāt Allāh** in the Qur’an, in nature, history and human behaviours) to the *qalb*, the *qalb* itself is like a **mirror**, reflecting on the Signs. The clarity and accuracy of the perceived Signs depend much on the **purity** of the ‘*ḥawasic windows*’ and the ‘*qalbic mirror*’ – the latter also

regarded as the “**Seat of Knowledge**”, where data is processed to be comprehended and knowledge constructed.⁴ Spiritually purified *ḥawas* and *qalb* constitute much of the purified and disciplined soul of *Ūlū al-Albāb*. As stressed before, this is the soul of people with excellence and benevolence, whose mind is nurtured with godliness in the form of *taqwā*, *ikhlaṣ*, *tawāḍuʿ*, *raḥmah*, and *iḥsān* that they are endued with deep understanding and acute wisdom.

IIUM must INSTITUTIONALISE the physical, intellectual, affectual and spiritual disciplines and trainings to **nurture Ūlū al-Albāb** among **ALL** her leaders, staff and students, for **Holistic Quality Culture** to pave way towards **EXCELLENCE with THE SOUL**.

Regular in-class instructions and out-of-class endeavours and learnings must include and emphasise elements of spiritual discipline and purification of the soul. What more during ‘*Ibadah*’ camps, *usrah* and *halaqah* where these must be given **top priority**. We must not be weary, lest our research, publication, teaching and learning become purely academic and promotional exercises, and our ‘*Ibādah*’ camps, *usrah* and *halaqah* socialisation events—rather than **truly enlightening social, affectual, rational, intellectual, spiritual endeavours**.

Nur Jannah Hassan • Resident Writer & Illustrator

^{1, 2} Written based on M. Kamal Hassan, “Islamicisation / Islamisation of Human Knowledge in IIUM Context”, IIUM Ta’aruf and Intellectual Discourse (TIDE) #43, January 27th, 2014.

³ See al-Ghazali, *Al-Muhlikāt (The Destructive Elements)*, also ‘*Ajā’ib al-Qalb (Wonders of the Heart)*, of *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*.

⁴ Al-Ghazali, *Alchemy of Happiness*, https://data.nur.nu/Kutub/English/Ghazali_Alchemy-of-Happiness.pdf, (trans. Claude Field), 1910.

