"ISLAMISATION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE IN IIUM CONTEXT"*

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WHAT

A. **WHAT IS MEANT BY "ISLAMISATION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE"**

A.1 <u>The term is new but the concept is as old as Islam :</u>

A new expression or label for a fundamental religious imperative incumbent upon Muslims and *Mu'minun* (Believers), `*Ulama'* (Scholars and the *Ummah Wasat* (Justly Balanced Community)

A.2 <u>The broad meaning of the concept</u>:

The proper way for the Servants of Allah (SWT), the Vicegerents, the Believers, the Islamic Scholars to use their God-given intellect (`*aql*) in pursuit of wellbeing in this world and wellbeing in the Hereafter

WHAT

A.3   BRIEF IMPLICATIONS OF I.O.H.K.:

- "Developing human knowledge (or acquired knowledge) in accordance with Islamic principles/perspectives"

- "Learning, educating and teaching in accordance with the worldview and epistemology of *Tawhid* (affirmation of the oneness of Allah as The Supreme Source of Knowledge, the Sustainer and Master of all the exist, the Sustainer and Master of mankind)

- "Desecularisation or dekufurisation of modern and contemporary human knowledge"

- "Reforming Muslim thought and contemporary human knowledge and education in the light of the Worldview of the Qur'an"

WHAT

A.4.1   A MORE COMPREHENSIVE MEANING RELEVANT TO I.I.U.M. CONTEXT :

"I.O.H.K. is an alternative intellectual paradigm for pursuing, teaching, developing, organizing, disseminating, utilising, critiqueing, and evaluating contemporary human knowledge (as contrasted with Divinely revealed knowledge), in accordance with the worldview, fundamental principles, ethical values and norms of Islam...

WHAT

A.4.2   A MORE COMPREHENSIVE MEANING RELEVANT TO I.I.U.M. CONTEXT :

'This paradigm is to engage the different branches of contemporary human knowledge as represented by the secularism–grounded behavioral sciences, human sciences and humanities as well as the philosophical or ethical aspects of the modern natural, physical and applied sciences – insofar as those aspects are imbued with or constructed upon worldviews, philosophies, underlying assumptions, theories or principles which are contrary or repugnant to the Islamic equivalents.

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A.4.3   The process of intellectual reform of IOHK requires the inculcation of Islam's spiritual and moral values in the mind, personality and conduct of the Muslim academic or administrator and scholar as expected in an Islamic university"
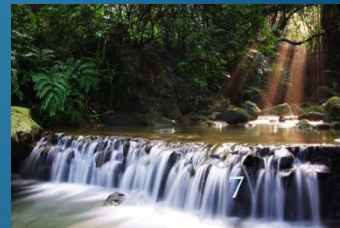
WHAT

A.5.1 **LONG-TERM GOALS OF IOHK**

It is important to bear in mind that the long term goals of the alternative paradigm of IOHK are:

1) the liberation of the Muslim Ummah from its internal crisis, backwardness, malaise and predicaments, to realise the goals of the *Khairu Ummah* (Q3:110) and *Ummah Wasat* (Q2:143).

WHAT

2)   the realization of a universal, balanced and holistic civilization based upon the integration of Divine revelation and human reason, and the unity of the spiritual and the material needs of human life which upholds the principle of achieving "goodness in this world" (*hasanah fi al-dunya*) and "goodness in the Hereafter" (*hasanah fi al-akhirah*). It is one of the religious duties of an Islamic university to work towards achieving the ultimate goals.
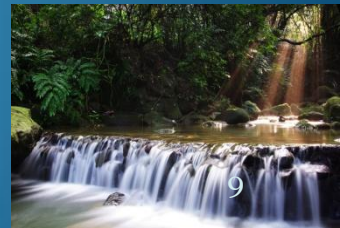
A.5.2 **BROADER IMPLICATIONS OF I.O.H.K.**

It is important to reiterate that the processes of IOHK entail a two-pronged reformatory approach, namely :

1) the reform of the curriculum of the Islamic university and

2) the refinement of the character and work ethics of the students, scholars and administration staff of the university.

WHAT

This aspect and dimension of "Islamisation of the self' is unfortunately not given the attention it deserves in much of the literature or discourse on the contemporary "IOK" project. Consequently situations have arisen wherein the eloquent and impressive intellectual articulation of "Islamization of human knowledge" is not matched with the requisite spiritual and moral qualities befitting the character of Islamic scholars, as prescribed by the Qur'an and exemplified by the great `Ulama' of the past.

WHAT

Whereas the great Islamic scholars of the past are well-known for integrating profound scholarship with excellent moral and spiritual attributes such as piety, humility, aversion to self glorification or self-centred egoism or conceit, disregard for human adulation or flattery, and constant vigilance against worldly temptations and other diseases of the heart.

WHAT

A.5.3   **WHAT IOHK IS NOT**

1. A REJECTION OF ALL Western knowledge, science, culture and civilisation, because there are many positive aspects and contributions of Western scholarship, techniques and systems, etc., that are acceptable or should be adopted/emulated by contemporary Muslims .

2. A DISCOURAGEMENT of learning or benefitting from modern science and technology. Muslims ought to learn and excel in science and technology as *Fard Kifayah* knowledge from the perspective of the signs of Allah (SWT) in the cosmos, in history and in society.

WHY

B.1.   THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL DESIDERATA OF BEING :

1. The sons of Adam, *Insan* endowed with the `*Aql* (intellect) as a Divine *Amanah* (Trust) created for `*Ibadah* of Allah SWT

2. The <u>servants</u>/slaves of Allah (s.w.t.)

3. The <u>vicegerents</u> appointed by Allah (s.w.t.) to develop the environment and civilised human society in accordance with Allah's scheme of life.

4. The <u>believers</u> in Allah (s.w.t.) and His Messenger (s.a.w.) who use the intellect in harmony with Allah's revelation <u>(wahy)</u>

5. The *'ulama'* , *al-Rasikhun bi al-Ilm*, *Ulu al-`Ilm*, *Ulu al-Albab*

6. The *Khairu Ummah* the *Ummah Wasat*

WHY

B.2.   THE NECESSITY AND URGENCY OF FULFILLING THE MISSION OF IOHK ACCORDING TO IIUM'S CONSTITUTION

B.2.1 The philosophical/metaphysical basis of the Mission :

   1.   The principle of *Iqra'*
   2.   The principle of *Tawhid*
   3.   The principle of *Amanah*
   4.   The principle of *Khilafah*
   5.   The principle of *Ibadah*
   (Memorandum and Articles of Association, 2002, p. 4)
   6.   The principle of *Tazkiyah al-Nafs* in the Qur'an

4

IIUM's Philosophy of Knowledge as Enshrined in the Memorandum of Association of I.I.U.M*

"For the purpose of the primary objects of the University, the University will be guided by the philosophies and principles which will include but are not limited to the following:-

i.   The philosophy of the University shall be based on, but not confined to, the meaning and spirit of *Surah Al-'Alaq* verses 1-5 of the Holy Qur'an.

ii. Knowledge shall be propagated in the spirit of *Tawhid*, leading towards   the recognition of Allah as the Absolute Creator and   Master of mankind.

iii. The recognition of Allah as the Absolute Creator and Master of mankind represents the apex in the hierarchy of knowledge.

* Popularly known as the Constitution of IIUM

contd.

iv.   Knowledge is a trust (*'amanah*) from Allah and its development shall be in conformity with the purposes behind Allah's creation of the universe.

v.   Knowledge should be utilised by man as the servant (*'abd*) of Allah and vicegerent (*khalifah*) on earth, in accordance with the will of Allah.

vi.   The quest for knowledge is regarded as an act of worship (*'ibadah*).

vii.   The University shall be international and Islamic in character."

<div align="right">(Ref. M.O.A., pp.1-2)</div>

The Vision of IIUM as Enshrined in the Constitution

" Inspired by <u>the worldview of *Tawhid*</u> and the Islamic philosophy of the <u>unity of knowledge</u> as well as its concept of <u>holistic education</u>, the University aims at becoming a leading international centre of educational excellence which seeks <u>to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the *Ummah* in all branches of knowledge</u>"

(Ref. M.O.A., p.3)

The Mission of IIUM as Enshrined in the Constitution: the 1st 4 out of 7 Mission Statements

"Towards actualizing the University's vision, IIUM endeavors:

i. To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner;

ii. To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating quality of Faith *(Iman)*, Knowledge *('Ilm)* and good character *(Akhlaq)* to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world;

WHY

B.2.2. **"To promote the concept of Islamisation of Human Knowledge in teaching, research, consultancy, dissemination of knowledge and the development of academic excellence in the University"**

"To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and workers who are motivated by the Islamic worldview and code of ethics as an integral part of the work culture"

WHY

B.3.   To meet the urgent needs of reforming, revitalising and reenergising the Muslim *Ummah* suffering from internal crises and malaise, in order to play its divinely mandated role as *Khair Ummah* and *Ummah Wasaṭ* for the benefit of mankind and the global ecosystem.

WHY

B.4.   To provide the necessary alternatives to those, secular or agnostic or atheistic paradigms of knowledge which have produced remarkable advancements in science and technology which are beneficial to human society, on the one hand, but have also precipitated or being responsible for the unparalleled spiritual crises, moral decadence, global economic and political and injustices, disastrous and unprecedented ecological problems of grave proportions.

WHY

B.4.1.   SIGNS OF MORAL DECAY AND INTELLECTUAL CHAOS OF ANTHROPOCENTRIC AND SECULAR - HUMANISTIC CIVILIZATION IN ADDITION TO THE MALAISE OF THE MUSLIM UMMAH

1. Alan Greespan , The Age of Turbulence (2008)

2. Fareed Zakaria, The Post-American World (2009)

3. Joseph E. Stiglitz, Globalization and Its Discontents (2002)

4. Immanuel Wallerstein, The End of the World as We Know It (1999)

5. Nakatani Iwao, Why Capitalism Self-Destructed (tr. Shihonshugi wa nazejikai shita no ka) (2008)

6. Lester W. Milbrath, Envisioning a Sustainable Society (1989)

7. Robert Bork, Slouching Towards Gomorrah (1996)

8. Chomsky on Miseducation (2004)

WHY

B.4.2. A GRIM REMINDER FROM A DISTINGUISHED JAPANESE ECONOMIST

Nakatani, now, after witnessing the international financial crisis, argues that global capitalism has spawned a monster that must be brought under control. "Global capitalism and market principles," he asserts, "inherently sunder the bonds and ties between individuals; they are an `evil system' causing the destruction of social values"

Nariai Osamu. "Global Capitalism :

After the Fall", Japanecho vol. 36, no. 2, April 2009; 7.

WHY

B.4.3.   OUR CONCLUSION

The end of the 20th century and the last two decades of the present century has witnessed the disastrous consequences of the moral failure of secular modernity, secularised knowledge and secular - humanistic modern civilisation grounded upon the epistemology of autonomous human reason and the ontology of naturalism and materialism.

HOW

C.1.   Reintegration of Revealed Values and Norms and ethics (*aqidah*, *shari`ah* and *akhlaq*), where necessary, in the disciplines of social sciences, human sciences, professional sciences, and also in aspects of the natural sciences. Emphasise the unity of "signs of Allah" in the Qur'an and "Signs of Allah" in the Universe, leading to *ISLAH* (reform), *TAWAZUN* (balance) and *FALAH* (holistic wellbeing)

HOW

C.2.   Intellectual Reform of Human Sciences in the 20th Century in the fields of:

    1) EDUCATION
    2) LAW
    3) ECONOMICS
    4) LITERATURE
    5) POLITICAL THOUGHT

HOW

C.3. Weed out or reject the undesirable, blameworthy, objectionable and harmful elements (*al-munkarat*), from the existing conventional and secularised bodies of human knowledge and reaffirm the useful, the desirable and acceptable elements from Western or Eastern civilisations.

HOW

C.3.   Reform (*islah*), renewal (*tajdid*) and relevantisation (*mu`asarah*) of the Muslim intellectual legacy (*turath*)

HOW

C.4. **Prioritize <u>Ummatic</u> reform welfare and wellbeing ; peaceful co-existance with "others" and ethical accountability for the sustainability of the natural environment and the Allah-given ecosystem.**

HOW

C.5.   Develop the integrated personality types of the *Ulu al-Albab*, the God-fearing scholars (*ulama*') and the true believers who are committed to the civilisational vision and mission of Islam; who project the peaceful and compassionate image of rahmatan li'l-`alamin, and portray the ethical and humane behavior of the true <u>Khalifahs</u> and servants of Allah (s.w.t.)

HOW

C.6.   Institutionalise the <u>holistic</u> quality culture as apposed to the secularist quality culture, to achieve "excellence with the soul" and not "excellence without a soul" (e.g. Harvard University)

(see Harry L. Lewis, <u>Excellence Without a Soul</u> : <u>How a Great University Forgot Education, 2006</u>)

HOW

C.7.   In dealing with the different schools of thought regarding IOHK and bearing in mind the existence of some contentious and sensitive issues which, if not wisely managed, could lead to counterproductive and negative consequences, the I.I.U.M.'s stance and attitude should be driven by the following principles:

C.7.1   Seek unification and reconciliation by emphasizing the common ground, taking the best from all sources and deemphasizing or discarding the irreconciliable differences.

HOW

C.7.2 Depersonalization of the discourse after recognizing and acknowledging the positive contributions of all the major proponents. The project of IOCHK in I.I.U.M. is a continuous process and its future progress could not be predetermined or dictated by the early proponents. The depersonalization emphasis will help to prevent the tendency among some ardent followers or disciples of the major scholars to promote or popularize their own school of thought to be regarded as the only genuine or orthodox school of thought, bearing in mind that only the Prophet (S.A.A.S) is *ma`sum* (infallible).

HOW

C.7.3 Keep the discourse open to new and useful ideas as long as they are based on authoritative Islamic sources of knowledge, bearing in mind that human knowledge continues to grow and even some aspects of Western-originated sciences could also undergo major paradigmatic changes in the future, while the door of legitimate *ijtihad* is open to the qualified scholars and intellectuals. Any tendency to claim finality or orthodoxy in the project would be unjustifiable and premature, bearing in mind that shortcomings and weaknesses could be found or detected in the works of even the best scholars in the field.
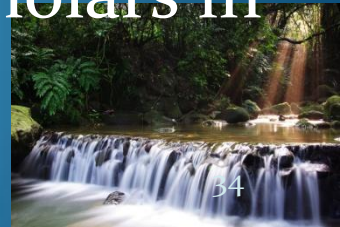
HOW

C.7.4 Regard this effort as a most noble intellectual jihad and a collective responsibility which benefits from and welcomes all the sincere efforts and contributions from all scholars and institutions which share the common vision and mission of Islamicisation.

GUIDELINE FOR IOHK OF DISCIPLINES

➢In reforming or reviewing /revising the curricular/courses/references on the basis of I.O.H.K. or in developing the Islamic Perspective texts, departmental committees/teams/individual instructors should be able to identify, among other activities, the following elements in the existing/prevailing text books, references, readings, theories, methodologies, concepts, approaches, etc. , which are based on secular/conventional/modern/traditional paradigms/worldviews/philosophies, for the purpose of inclusion or exclusion.

POSITIVE
1. The Lawful (*al-halal*)
2. The Good (*al-khayr*)
3. The Right, Acceptable (*al-maÑruf*)
4. The Useful (*al-nafi`*)
5. The Praiseworthy *(al-mahmud)*
6. The Neutral or Open Ground/Space (*al-faragh*)
7. The Allowable (*al-mubah*)
8. The Recommended, the commendable (*al-mandub*)
9. The Just (*al-`adl*)
10. The Beautiful (*al-husn*)

NEUTRAL
1. The Allowable (Mubah)

NEGATIVE

1. The Bad/Evil (*al-sharr*)
2. The Wrong/unacceptable (*al-munkar*)
3. The Forbidden (*al-Íaram*)
4. The False (*al-batil*)
5. The Disliked (*al-makruh*)
6. The Blameworthy (*al-madhmum*)
7. The Unjust (*al-zulm*)
8. The Ugly (*al-qubh*)
9. Kufr
10. Shirk
11. Atheism
12. Agnostisim
13. Materialism
14. Relativism
15. Secularism

A VARIETY OF INTELLECTUAL EFFORT/ACADEMIC WORK WHICH CAN BE UNDERTAKEN AS PART OF THE ISLAMICISATION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE AGENDA AT IIUM

- 1. *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. A form of limited integration called "Islamic Input" has been going on for some time now in the Kulliyyah of Medicine.

- **2.** *Serious critique* **and/or** *critical assessment* of contemporary human knowledge/ intellectual systems/traditions/institutions/theories/assumptions/methods/findings/conclusion/views/major proponents/ coming from secular, materialistic, rationalistic, agnostic or ethnocentric paradigms of human knowledge in the social/human sciences/humanities/natural sciences/applied sciences/professional sciences.

- 3. ***Reform (islah), renewal (tajdid), revival (<u>ihya'</u>) or relevantisation*** of revealed knowledge disciplines/concepts/methods/ideas/ systems/ thought and disciplines. Included under this cluster of activity is the academic and intellectual effort of ***reexamination*** or ***reevaluation*** of classical or ancient Islamic works, treaties or manuscripts with the aim of highlighting their relevance, usefulness or otherwise, novelties or uniqueness. In the division of Islamic revealed knowledge and heritage of KIRKHS, the methods of teaching, studying, assessment and student-teacher communication can also be modernized (***tahdith***), in the spirit of relevantisation, through e-learning and use of I.C.T. ***Integration <u>(takamul)</u>*** of useful and beneficial ideas, methods of research, analysis, perpectives or theories from the natural sciences/applied sciences/social sciences/human sciences may also be undertaken in the departments of Islamic revealed knowledge (Usuluddin and Comparative Knowledge, Fiqh and Usul al-Fiqh, Al-Qur'an and Sunnah, General Studies and Arabic Language and Literature) in the Kulliyyah.

- 4. *Comparative analysis/studies* of conventional disciplines, secular systems or non-Islamic knowledge/theories/worldviews/values/philosophies/ideologies/concepts with the Islamic based on sound and objective knowledge of the subjects compared. This type of work has been going on in the Kulliyyah of Laws, E.N.M. and some Huamn Science departments. The aim of the efforts should be to show, demonstrate, highlight or indicate the more positive aspects or qualities of the Islamic elements.

- 5. *Accepting, acknowledging, affirming and adopting* whatever is regarded as excellent, good, wise or useful from Islamic religious perspective, or whatever is in harmony with Islamic worldview, values and norms, no matter where it comes from, such that the Islamic perspectives/positions/theories/concepts become more wholesome/ holistic/up-to-date/universal/complete/persuasive/profound.

- 6.   ***Inviting to, promoting, extolling, supporting and popularizing*** all that which is good, beneficial and praiseworthy from the Islamic worldview, found in contemporary human knowledge.   For academic staff in revealed knowledge departments to do this, he/she requires the assistance of experts in the human/social sciences and humanities who also have a good knowledge of Islamic values, norms or perspectives.

- 7. *Enjoining or encouraging or leading* to all that is considered *ma`ruf,* praiseworthy and useful in contemporary human knowledge by showing or demonstrating their Islamicity or compatibility with Islamic values and norms. This effort is to be undertaken by human science/humanities academics with assistance from revealed knowledge counterparts.

- 8. *Refuting, rejecting, prohibiting, discouraging, objecting, countering, repelling, deconstructing* all that which is ***munkar*** , ***haram***, false, untrue, distorted, misunderstood, disliked, blameworthy, evil, harmful, Satanic, deceptive or contrary to Islamic creed, Divine law, ethics, spirituality and worldview. This cluster of negative intellectual efforts is an essential aspect of the process of Islamicisation of human knowledge, but it should be done with scholarly knowledge, objectivity, probity, integrity and rigour.

- 9. ***Defending, protecting, supporting*** Islamic perspectives, concepts, theories, systems, values, norms, precepts, ideas, schools of thought, etc. vis-à-vis the criticisms or attempts to undermine, disparage, distort or discredit Islam or aspects of it, including the intellectual discourse of Islamicisation of human knowledge. This cluster of Islamic intellectual ***apologia*** can be undertaken by Muslim academics in all Kulliyyahs, provided the ***apologia*** is based on sound knowledge, expertise, authority, integrity and authenticity.

- 10.   *Reorientation* of aspects of natural/applied/professional/human science disciplines, theories, theoretical frameworks, paradigms after careful examination and critically identifying the unislamic or anti-Islamic elements found in the books, references or journal articles of those modern sciences originating from the intellectual milieu of secular humanism, materialism, rationalism, positivism, atheism, agnosticism, existentialism, pragmatism, and postmodernism.

(I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to Assoc. Professor Dr. Hazizan Noon for adding this notion of *reorientation* to my list of Islamicisation efforts. He has been using this term in his academic mission of Islamicising sociology in I.I.U.M.)

- 11. *Synthesizing* the positive and acceptable aspects, elements, intellectual contributions of non-Islamic sources of knowledge or science with the Islamic perspectives, aspects or elements. This effort can best be achieved through academic collaboration between academics in Islamic revealed knowledge disciplines and those in the other disciplines.

- 12. ***Improving*** the conventional or non-Islamic systems, practices, theories, ideas with Islamic input or ideas without compromising the beliefs, values and norms of Islam, especially when the purely Islamic systems, practices, methods or models are not available due to unavoidable circumstances.

- 13. *Reconstructing* of conventional thoughts, ideas, systems, methods, disciplines, culture, practices, etc. based on the Islamic worldview, values and norms. This could be a long-term strategy of the departments of the human sciences, professional sciences and applied sciences.

- 14. *New Construction* of human knowledge, theories, practices, systems, methods, products, curriculum, courses, etc. based on the Islamic worldview, ontology, epistemology, anthropology, axiology, ethics and Divine Law. This would be the most commendable Islamicisation effort as it pushes the frontiers of human knowledge over and above the conventional and constitutes a respectable alternative to secular knowledge or paradigm.

- 15. *New inventions* in the form of academic or scientific tools, techniques, technology, gadgets, etc. which may have high commercial potential which manifest the creativity and innovativeness of Muslim academics, not only from the hard sciences, natural and applied sciences of professional sciences, but also from both the revealed knowledge and the human sciences divisions of the Kulliyyah of Islamic revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences.

CONCLUSION

"Islamisation/Islamicisation is the SOUL of the International Islamic University Malaysia. It is the SOUL that matters most because of it I.I.U.M. becomes truly unique and religious. Let us all rededicate ourselves to enriching and sustaining the SOUL which defines our NICHE in the world of highly competitive higher education"

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