

September 27, 2021

Dear Professor Mumtaz Ali,

We are writing to propose a lasting intellectual and pedagogical partnership between the Islam Actuel Institute and the International Islamic University of Malaysia, specifically the Department of Usûl al-Dîn and Comparative Religion.

Islam Actuel is an institute that aims to make the Qur'an and the Islamic worldview work in the fields of academic study and in daily activities. In this sense, we are in line with the problematic and research program of Islamization of Knowledge.

We wish for our two institutions to benefit mutually by developing Islam as Worldview and universal Wisdom. At the moment, this is what we have to offer:

- Synthesize and translate publications by professors and intellectuals who inspire the IIUM and that we can use in our 5-year training program;
- Select and encourage French and Maghrebi students to come and pursue their studies and research at IIUM.

This is what IIUM and your Department of Usûl al-Dîn and Comparative Religion can bring us :

- The initiation to Islam as a worldview, source of knowledge and universal wisdom (through texts and interventions);
- The initiation to an Islamic Methodology of Research (through texts and interventions);
- Pedagogical advice to help the Islam Actuel Institute to design a 5-year training program, inspired by the approach of Ismail al-Faruqi but lightened, considering the particular French context;
- The organization of a Summer School with approximately thirty French and Maghrebi Muslim students in 2022.

I hope that this proposal finds a favorable response.
I remain at your disposal for any need that might arise.

Sincerely,



Mohamed Oudihat
Director of Islam Actuel Institute (Paris)
10 Rue de l'Industrie
75013 Paris, France

September 27, 2021

Dear Professor Mumtaz Ali,

The Islam Actuel Institute extends its gratitude for your timely interventions during our annual Summer School in August 2021 on the following themes:

1. Critical thinking: An Islamic Perspective
2. Crisis in Knowledge and Education
3. Need for Rethinking Knowledge and Education
4. Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan — 1982 and 1989
5. New Perspective for Education
6. Rethinking Modern Science

We hope that we will be able to renew our collaboration in the near future.

Sincerely,

Mohamed Oudihat
Director of Islam Actuel Institute (Paris)
10 Rue de l'Industrie
75013 Paris, France

NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR EDUCATION

The current educational system prevalent in the Muslim world does not take TAUK as solid criteria of **measurement and examination**.

As a result, the education has become the source of employment and good income. Most of highly educated people have lost **true purpose of life**.

The current syllabus is unable to produce ethically, spiritually and morally strong personalities who can resist all the waves of *shar* and injustice and serve the needs of people.

Through the process of higher education we need to help students to understand and internalize the teachings of Islam and become a model human being.

Ismail Faruqi argues there is a need to instil an Islamic vision and mission of life in the hearts and minds of Muslim youth rationally and scientifically.

All the available resources in educational system must be used to nurture and develop the true and realistic purpose of life and a desirable personality.

Islam, Islamic mission and vision must become the sources for motivation, inspiration, commitment and hard working for Muslim youth.

Muslim youth must be fully aware of their heritage, cultural history and traditions in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

They should think and work for the development and advancement of their communities and countries. They must become productive.

Every syllabus and program must be capable to help students to transform themselves into a vision, mission and moral oriented professionals. Education must help to develop a comprehensive, moderate and balanced personality spiritually and morally sound.

The education with its curriculum must stop all foreign and secular influences. According to Taha Jabir:

This could be achieved by integrating existing systems and creating a single system based on Islam's teachings, spirit and vision.

The new education system, its syllabi and methods, and those responsible for it, should all be infused with Islam's principles and goals.

In this new educational system we cannot adopt the tradition, educational program, content, and method of teachings of other nations and communities. We are bound to create our own as the aspirations and needs of the ummah are different from other nations.

The professional achievements and material success cannot be the goals of education. It should generate a sense of mission whereby the purpose and objective of life coincide with that of education.

In this new educational system all ideas, concepts, feelings and goals are unified and integrated into a whole. This unification guarantees the development of true and authentic understanding of Islam as the worldview and the way of life along with values and morals.

In addition to the above, to create the sense of belonging to the ummah, the special focus of

study would be on the study of Islamic civilization that will keep all the members of the college or university in tag with one another. This will also prepare students to plan for and look forward to the best possible future.

Islam is taught in this educational system as the source of thought, culture and civilization. Al-Faruqi and Taha Jabir suggested a four years course on Islamic civilization for all students regardless of their specialization. .

Discussing the need of intellectual efforts, one is confronted with two more issues.

Our students were trained in two types of education system. First, type used modern Western secular sciences, epistemology and methodology to train to lead modern societies, organizations and all sorts of systems and sub-systems. Here a body of knowledge was used whose basis, principles, method and objectives were borrowed from modern Western secular epistemology. Every aspect of this educational system is committed to the transformation and

service to the Western modern secular civilization.

The second type of education in which the religious sciences, the *Shariah* sciences or *asli* or *al-ulum al- aqliyyah* sciences were taught. There the issues of third century were discussed or debated. Most of the books which were used as text or reference works were those which had been written when the door of *ijithad* was declared as closed and “taqlid [imitation of the previous works] had been accepted. A mentality was developed among students to undermine the *ijtihadic* thinking. The graduates of this system fail to understand the realities and lead the community towards the path of development. **A sense of blind following, learning from others and imitation became dominant that stopped the sense of creativity, criticism, comparison, historical analysis and intellectual atmosphere.**

The first type of graduate were intimately linked with professional responsibilities and the second type were seen as religious scholars who are meant to guide people in religious matters mostly related to either private aspects or the aspects of the next world.

Majority of masses rejected the second category graduates and accepted the first category graduates as their intellectual and political leaders.

A DUAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION EMERGED. THE UMMAH WAS DIVIDED INSTEAD CREATING A SENSE OF UNITY AND BELONGING. FINALLY MUSLIMS LOST THE SENSE OF DEVELOPMENT.

THE RESOURCES OF UMMAH AND ITS STRATEGIC POSITION BOTH ARE USED BY THOSE WHO DUE TO THEIR IGNORANCE OF TRUTH AND REALITY ARE UNABLE TO LEAD PEOPLE TO THE PATH OF PEACE, HARMONY AND UNITY OF HUMANITY. WE SEE WARS AND WEAPONS EVERYWHERE.

Loss of self-confidence and self-sufficiency was not accepted by a few thinkers and they raised their concern and slogans. The integration of two educational systems into one and Islamization of knowledge became prominent.

In order to lead Muslim Ummah towards the path of development we need reform of education and thought.

The traditional thought, the modern thought, the western thought, the secular thought, the

nationalistic thought, the liberal, progressive thought were considered as the biggest obstacles on the path of development of the ummah.

HOW TO GUARANTEE OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS THE PATH OF DEVELOPMENT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE BEFORE MUSLIMS. WE ARE NOT READY ANY MORE TO REMAIN UNDEVELOPED. WE ARE DETERMINED TO ACHIEVE DEVELOPMENT- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

METHODOLOGY OF IOK

The concept and movement of the Islamization of Knowledge as said by Nasr continues since the 1950s to promote knowledge and thought, widens one's intellectual horizons and expands the opportunities for cultured and civilized interaction between cultures and civilizations.

Taha Jabir raised a question: Is the Ummah going through a serious intellectual crisis, and, if so, how can it find its way out?

Al Faruqi's vision is brilliant. For him, the methodology of Islamization of Knowledge is not different from the methodology of Islamic thought.

Thus, he argued that the discourse for Islamization of Knowledge is only an aspect of discourse on Islamic thought and its validity, dynamism and productivity.

The Islamic thought is the manifestation of the intellectual efforts by the followers of IslÉm for cultural and civilizational development.

The major source of Islamic thought—Ijtihad.

According to al Faruqi *usËl al fiqh* is the methodology of *Ijithād* and *ijtihād* is the methodology of Islamic thought.

Later on another development took place, al Faruqi believed, which reduced the scope of analytical and critical mind-set and encouraged *taqlid*.

He said, “The vision of IslÉm was dominant, and the zeal to realize it in History determined all conduct. It was the preoccupation of the whole community of Islam...Islamic thought was...oriented towards reality.”

For AbdulHamid AbuSulayman the problem in Islamic thought was and is the problem of its methodology.

AdulHamid AbuSulayman argued that the issue of Islamization of Knowledge must be seen as one of the issues of Islamic thought and its methodology.

The most important issue in Islamization of Knowledge is how to Islamize Knowledge and reformulate a new methodology?

What are the principles which need to be followed in a methodology? Are we applying qualitative, quantitative, descriptive, historical, analytical, or comparative methods or methodology or a combination of all these? If we are applying these methods then what is Islamic input in it.

What principles should be applied which will make the product Islamize?

What is the place of empirical and historical aspects in methodology?

For the formulation of an authentic methodology of IOK or IT, we need to identify the principles which are relevant for our time and needs.

One can suggest as the methodological principles the application of the method of comparison, identification and isolation of key Western concepts from existing present-day knowledge and the infusion of Islamic key concepts.

The project of the Islamization of Knowledge focused on as the principles of the “Mastery of the Modern Sciences” and the “Mastery of the Legacy”.

AbdulHamid AbuSulayman seems to be more concerned with the empirical, contextual nature that is time-space

dimension of the methodology of Islamic thought vis-à-vis IOK.

Hence, the understanding of the methodological issues is a prerequisite for the formulation of a new methodology.

However, it appears to me that these scholars have focused more on ideological/conceptual/metaphysical framework of Islamic methodology rather than a systematic, focus oriented, elaboration of methodology.

They had emphasized the methods and their technical dimensions again and again.

Advocating the need for a fresh look into traditional Islamic methodology, AbdulHamid AbySulayman argued that the substance and the structure of social institutions always changed according to time-space context.

Commenting on the need of a new Islamic methodology, AbdulHamid AbySulayman argued that the change must come from within, on the basis of the beliefs and values of the worldview of Islam. Reform must initiate “with intellectual reform, especially with the development of disciplined and systematic methodology for thought based on rational principles and approaches that incorporate Islamic objectives.”

According to the name of the Kulliyah Islamic Revealed Knowledge would be the basis and starting point of the methodology of IOK.

How much knowledge of IRK DO WE HAVE?

What is the central theme of the IRK?

Transformation of life and society – Development