Islamization of Knowledge: Problems, Principles and Prospective

Ismā'īl Rājī al Fāruqī

Introduction

This paper is the outcome of two papers on the subject by the president of the board of The International Institute of Islamic Thought, Dr. 'AbdulHamid 'A. 'AbūSulaymān, and myself.

The presentation that follows is of grave importance, because taking stock in one's situation, learning from the past, and planning to direct change to desired ends, are absolute necessities for survival and prosperity. The Divine judgment

أَنِ اللَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ مَا يَقُومُ حَتَّى يَغْفَرُونَ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ—رَسُولُ اللَّهُ ﷺ

(Qurān 13:11) is an absolute law of history.

This paper contends that the 'Ummah suffers from a threateningly dangerous malaise. It attempts to apply a cure designed to restore to the 'Ummah its health, as well as to nudge it forward on its predestined role of responsible world leadership.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَاطِرُكُمُ الْخَلْقِ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ مَرَادًا ﷺ

(God established the 'Ummah as median among the nations, just as He established the Prophet as median among yourselves, to separate good from evil, right from wrong—Qurān 2:143).

These considerations are sufficient to require the most serious attention an Islāmic thinker can give to what his spiritual appetite, to seek the greatest promise, and to participate in its future actualization.

The last half of the fourteenth century witnessed a great surge in Islāmic awareness worldwide, as well as the many significant strides which segments of the 'Ummah have made toward self-liberation. Despite these advances, the same century witnessed a great setback: a universal rush of Muslims toward imitating other civilizations. This rush never reached its goal in any field.
Instead, it succeeded in de-Islâmizing the top layer of Muslim society and demoralizing the rest. The vision of Islâm became clouded by another version which came to us with the colonial invaders. The alien vision survived, and indeed, grew more virulently after the invaders' departure. For many generations, the Muslims have seemed unable to get rid of it. It is evident everywhere—in the imported institutions; in the spread of the English and French languages among them; in the design of their offices, homes, and cities; in the recreational programs; in the economic and political practices they follow and in the very ideas of reality, of nature, of man, and of society that they hold. The prime agent disseminating the alien view has been the educational system, bifurcated, as it is, into two subsystems, one "Modern" and the other "Islâmic". This bifurcation is the epitome of Muslim decline. Unless it is dealt with and removed, it will continue to subvert every Muslim effort to reconstruct the 'Ummah, and carry forth the amânah Allah (SWT) has entrusted to it.

In the past, many great Muslims have attempted to reform Islâmic education by adding to its curricula, subjects constitutive of the alien view. Sayyid Âlīmad Khân and Muḥammad ʿAbduh were champions of this cause. Their strategy came to fruition in the 1380s A.H. / 1960's A.C., when some of the Islâmic universities were turned into 'modern' universities. All their efforts, and those of millions like them, rest on the assumption that the so-called 'modern' subjects are harmless and can only lend strength to the Muslims. Little did they realize that the alien humanities, social sciences, and indeed the natural sciences, were facets of an integral view of reality, of life and the world, and of a history that is equally alien to that of Islâm. Little did they know of the fine, yet necessary relation which binds the methodologies of these disciplines (their notions of truth and knowledge), to the value system of an alien world. That is why their reforms bore no fruit. On one hand, the stagnant quality of Islâmic learning was left untouched. On the other, the added "new" learning never produced any excellence such as it produced in its own homelands. On the contrary, it made Muslims dependent upon alien research and leadership. By its pompous claim of scientific objectivity, it managed to convince them of its truth over and against the affirmation of Islâm, which the votaries of progress called conservative and backward.

It is high time for Islâmic scholars to disown such easy and harmful methods of educational reform. For them the reform of education should be the Islâmization of modern knowledge itself, a task identical in character with, though greater in scope, than that undertaken by our ancestors who digested the knowledge of their time and produced the Islâmic legacy of culture and civilization. As disciplines, the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences must be re-conceived and rebuilt, given a new Islâmic base and assigned new purposes consistent with Islâm. Every discipline must be recast so as to embody the principles of Islâm in its methodology, in its strategy, in
what it regards as its data, its problems, its objectives, and its aspirations. Every discipline must be remolded to incorporate the relevance of Islam along a triple axis constitutive of *tawil* (the first is the unity of knowledge, under which all disciplines must seek rational, objective, critical knowledge of truth. This will lay aside once and for all the claim that some science is *aqil* (rational) and some *naqil* (textual and tradition) and hence irrational; that some disciplines are scientific and absolute and others dogmatic and relative. The second is the unity of life, under which all disciplines must be taken into cognizance and oriented to serve the telic nature of creation. This will disarm the claim that some disciplines are value oriented while others are value-free or neutral. The third is the unity of history, under which all disciplines will acknowledge the *'ummatic* or societal nature of all human activity, and serve the purposes of the *'ummah* in history. This will put to rest the division of knowledge into individual and social sciences, making all the disciplines, at once, humanistic and *'ummatic*.

There can be no doubt that Islam is relevant to all aspects of thinking, of living and of being. This relevance must be articulated unmistakably in each discipline. The textbooks used by the discipline must be rewritten, establishing the discipline as an integral part of the Islamic vision of reality. Moreover, Muslim teachers have to be trained in the use of the new textbooks and Muslim universities, colleges, and schools transformed in order to resume their pioneering leadership in world history. It was the *madrasah* (educational institution), animated by the vision of Islam, that created its *waqf* (endowment) status, giving it a legal corporate personality and autonomy, which made it serve as a model for the universities of Paris, Oxford and Cologne in the twelfth century. It was this same Islamic vision that made the *madrasah* the forerunner in _every_ field of human inquiry, the molder of human character and personality, and the projector of the *'ummah*'s splendid achievements in culture and civilization. The *madrasah* observed the schedule of Islam whose day began with *Salah al al Fajr* (the early morning prayer). Its teaching activity was a live-in process where teacher and student constantly lived and worked together with one objective in view, namely, the articulation of the patterns of Allah in creation. Its pedagogy rested on the impeccable character of the *shaykh* (the mentor) whom the student was to emulate, while its commence ment was the investiture of the student by the *shaykh* with his *'ummah* (the origin of the cap and gown graduation ceremony) as the symbol of total confidence that the student may now speak with his teacher's authority and on his behalf. The standards of education were at the highest because the requirement of carrying the teacher's honor and reputation in the student's hand was the gravest obligation. This excellence was made possible because, at its base, stood the vision of Islam and the will and dedication to pursue the truth for the sake of Allah alone.
Notwithstanding all this, Muslims find themselves at the start of this fifteenth Hijrah century, besieged by a deluge of students without plans for a natural growth of the educational system as well as an explosion of knowledge of all fronts without plans for scholars or institutions to cope with it. The Muslim world keeps sending its youth to the West for education and training in ever increasing numbers and suffering their loss through “brain drain.” To add further to the tragedy, the opening of the fifteenth century A.H. shocked the Muslim conscience with its war between Iraq and Iran, the Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan; “Israel’s” invasion of Lebanon, annexation of the Golan Heights and systematic colonization of the whole of Palestine; the continuing wars of the Western Sahara, Eastern Africa, South Arabia, and the Philippines; the continuing occupation and colonization of Kashmir and the persecution of the Muslim community of India (the largest minority in history). Still more Islāmic activists around the globe are the object of prosecution, persecution and misrepresentation. The cause of Islām itself seems to be in peril.

All these phenomena cast darkness and gloom over the 'Ummah. Nothing is more tragically crucial for its thinkers than to focus their minds on the 'Ummah's malaise and seek the countering cure. Never in Islāmic history has the cry of Allah Akbar (God is the greatest) ḥaḍr been more needed on the intellectual level as it is today.

May the thinkers of the 'Ummah rise to the challenge! May Allah (SWT) be their constant Guide! And may they achieve in this domain, what will please Allah (SWT), His Prophet (SAAS), and all believers.

I. The Problem

A. Malaise of the 'Ummah

The world 'Ummah of Islām stands presently on the lowest rung of the ladder of nations. In this century, no other people have been subjected to comparable defeat or humiliation. Muslims have been defeated, massacred, robbed of their land and wealth, of their life and hope. They have been double-crossed, colonized and exploited; proselytized and forcefully or by means of bribes converted to other faiths. They have been moreover secularized, Westernized and de-Islāmized by internal and external agents of their enemies. All this happened in practically very country and corner of the Muslim World. Victims of injustice and aggression on every count, the Muslims have been nonetheless vilified and denigrated in the representations of all nations. They enjoy the worst possible “image” in the world today. In the present day mass
media, for instance, the “Muslim” is stereotyped as aggressive, destructive, lawless, terrorist, uncivilized, fanatic, fundamentalist, archaic, and anachronistic. He is the object of hatred and contempt on the part of most non-Muslims, whether developed or underdeveloped, capitalist or Marxist, Eastern or Western, civilized or savage. The Muslim World itself is known only for its inner strife and division, its turbulence and self-contradictions, its wars and threat to world peace, its excessive wealth and excessive poverty, its famine and cholera epidemics. In the minds of people everywhere the Muslim World is the “sick man” of the world, and the whole world is led to think that at the root of all these evils stands the religion of Islām. The facts that the ‘Ummah’ counts over a billion, that its territories are the vastest and the richest, that its potential in human, material and geopolitical resources is the greatest, and finally that its faith—Islām—is an integral, beneficial, world-affirming and realistic religion, make the defeat, the humiliation and the misrepresentation of Muslims all the more intolerable.

B. Major Effects of the Malaise

1. On the Political Front: The ‘Ummah’ is divided against itself. The colonial powers have successfully fragmented the ‘Ummah’ into some fifty or more nation-states and set them against one another. The boundaries of the Muslim states have been so defined as to create perpetual friction for every state with its neighbors. Political machination by the enemy continually exploits those areas of friction and creates cause of alienation and hostility. Internally, every Muslim nation-state is, in turn, divided against itself, its population being heterogeneous, and one group having been assigned hegemony over the other groups by the colonial masters. No nation-state was given the time, the peace or the resources to integrate its own citizenry in order to make them a greater whole. To make things worse, the enemy has imported aliens into the Muslim World in order to guarantee perpetual strife between them and the natives or have converted the natives to Christianity, which necessarily implies their estrangement from their Muslim compatriots, or the infusion into non-Muslim Natives, of a notion of their identity, which sets them in conflict with the Muslims. Finally the enemy has created hostile “foreign” states within the body of the ‘Ummah’ to divert Muslim energy away from reconstruction and to drain it in futile wars, or to serve as bases should the colonists decide to reoccupy the land for the colonial powers’ economic, strategic and political interests. No Muslim state is secure internally and none is secure externally. Every Muslim government spends the greater part of its resources and energy on securing its own power within and integrity without—and yet without avail. Throughout the Muslim World, except in a few regions where the enemy
found rulers ready to cooperate, the colonial administration destroyed all political institutions in the land. When the time came for the colonial administration to withdraw, power was entrusted to the native elites who had already been subjugated and Westernized. Still the real power lay only in the military which was destined to grab it at the first opportunity. In the majority of cases, Muslims are ruled by the military because they are devoid of political formations capable of operating the government, or of mobilizing the masses for resistance, or leading them into constructive political action, or, more simply, of acting in tandem with one another.

2. On the Economic Front: The 'Ummah is non-developed and backward. The overwhelming majority of its members everywhere are illiterate. Their production of goods and services is far below the need which is consequently satisfied by the import of finished goods from the former colonial powers. Even in the strategic necessities of life, the staple foods, clothing, energy and hardware, no Muslim state is self-sufficient. Every state would be exposed to famine if the colonial powers wish for any reason to stop their unfair trade with it. Everywhere, colonial interests have been creating consumeristic desires and demands for colonialist products, while the needs of Muslims for productive hardware go unheeded. In their competition with local Muslim productivity, the colonialists seek, and they often succeed, to knock it out of the market. When some industry is developed with colonialist help, it turns out to be one dependent upon colonialist raw materials or finished components, which they alone supply, thus subjecting the industry to function at their mercy and to subserve their colonialist goals. In most cases, the new Muslim industries are not designed to meet the crucial needs but those tangential needs created by colonialist intensive advertisement. Muslim agricultural self-sufficiency is their first enemy, since, at this stage and for a long time to come, this is a necessary prerequisite of Muslim resistance to any colonialist scheme. Everywhere, through a false promise of better living in the cities, the lure of temporary jobs in a speculative building-construction and consumer-goods industry, and the exploitation by landlords and tax collectors, Muslim farmers are uprooted from their villages. They migrate to the cities to live in shanty towns, dependent upon imported staple foods, and are ready to answer to the call of any demagogue.

Although Allah saw fit to grant to some parts of the Muslim 'Ummah natural and mineral wealth, we find that the 'Ummah has not been able to utilize these resources fully to develop its potential capabilities. One of the main reasons for this, is the lack of political stability and sense of unity. This has made it very difficult for the 'Ummah to channel the surplus resources to the parts where it is needed. This sad situation has lead instead to great loss and a diversion of this surplus of the Muslim financial and economic resources to non-Muslim lands.
3. On the Religio-Cultural Front: The centuries of Muslim decay have caused illiteracy, ignorance, and superstition to spread among Muslims. These evils have caused the average Muslim to recoil in the bliss of blind faith, to lean toward literalism and legalism or to surrender his spirit to his "shaykh". All this bred into him no small measure of vulnerability. When the modern world impinged itself upon him, his military, political and economic weakness caused him to panic. He therefore sought half-measures of reform which, he thought, would speedily recapture for him his lost ground. Unwittingly, he took to Westernization, lured by the successful example of the West and prompted by his Western or Westernized advisers. In areas under colonial administration, Westernization was ordered and promoted by every possible means at the rulers' disposal.

Well-meaning or otherwise, Westernizing Muslim leaders did not know that their programs would sooner or later undermine the Islāmic religion and culture of their subjects. The connection between the manifestations of Western productivity and power and the Western views of God and man, of life, of nature, of the world, and of time and history, was too subtle for them to observe or, in their hurry, to mind. A secular system of education was built which taught Western values and methods. Soon generations of graduates who were ignorant of their Islāmic legacy began to make up our society. Their ignorance was combined with suspicion of the legacy's guardians, namely the 'ulamā', who were well-meaning despite their conservatism, literalism, legalism or mysticism. A gap began to develop within the ranks of the Ummah, dividing it into Westernizing secularizers and their opponents. The colonialist powers saw to it that the former became the decision-makers in society.

By the colonialists directly or by their native stooges, everything Islāmic fell under attack. The integrity of the Qur'ānic text, the genuineness of the Prophet (SAAS), the veracity of his Sunnah, the perfection of the Shari'ah, the glories of Muslim achievements in culture and civilization—none of these were spread. The purpose was to destroy the Muslim's confidence in himself, in his Ummah, in his faith and his ancestors to undermine his Islāmic consciousness; also to subvert his Islāmic personality, and thus, to make him more subservient, lacking the spiritual stamina necessary for resistance. The colonialists and their stooges filled the Muslim's daily life with tasks and ideas promoting Western culture. He (the Muslim) was bombarded with newspapers, books and magazines, radio and television, cinema and theater, records and tapes, street posters and neon signs. Muslim governments took pride in the new boulevards they opened in their capitals dotted with Western-style high-rise office or apartment buildings, but they were not shamed by the squalor and degradation of the rest of their towns and villages. Westernized elites frequented public halls to watch or hear a movie, an opera, a concert or a drama, and their sons and daughters read about them in books in the secular or mis-
sionary schools and colleges, without realizing their incongruity with everything else they thought or did. Those who completed their self-Westernization stood out even more oddly against their Muslim environment and background. The integrity of Islamic culture and the unity of the Islamic style of life were shattered in their own persons, in their thought and action, and in their homes and families. Western social institutions and customs were introduced with impertinence. Instead of raising themselves from their decay to the heights of virtue and societal efficacy envisaged for them by Islam, Muslim women began to hanker after the manifestations of Western decay: gradual nudity and *tabarruj*, economic independence aimed at individualistic license, egotistic pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of duties imposed by the extended family.

In our cities, Islamic architecture is dead and Islamic town planning non-existent. Our overgrown urban centers repeat every mistake and shortcoming of the European cities which underwent the industrial revolution two centuries ago as if we are utterly incapable of learning from the experience of others. Our homes, our furniture, and arts of decoration are hodgepodge of all styles, betraying our confused notions of who and what we are.

In short, despite all claims to the contrary, to the extent that he has Westernized himself, the Muslim has, in fact, barbarized himself. His life has become a conglomeration of styles discontinuous with his past. He has made of himself something neither Islamic nor Western, a cultural monstrosity of modern times.

C. The Self-Perpetuating Core of the Malaise

There can be no doubt that the main locus and core of the *Ummah*'s malaise is the prevalent educational system. It is the breeding ground of the disease. It is in schools and colleges that self-estrangement from Islam and from its legacy and style are generated and perpetuated. The educational system is the laboratory where Muslim youth are kneaded and cut, where their consciousness is molded into a caricature of the West. Here, the Muslim's linkage with his past is severed; his natural curiosity to learn the legacy of his fathers is stymied; here, willingness to touch base with them and spring toward creative representation or *Vergangenartigung* (i.e., the making present and alive again) of Islam is blunted with the doubts the system has injected into every recess of his consciousness.

1. *The Present State of Education in the Muslim World:* Despite the tremendous expansion which has taken place so far, the state of Muslim education is at its worst. As far as Islâmization is concerned, the traditional and the secularist schools, colleges and universities have never been more daring in the advocacy of their un-Islamic theses, and never have they had the captive ear of the overwhelming majority of Muslim youth as they do today. Since
its inception under colonialist administrations, the secularist education system has assumed tremendous proportion, elbowing the Islamic system from the field. Islāmic education, for the most part, remains a private affair devoid of access to public funds. Where public funds are made available, demands of secularization are imposed in the name of modernism and progress. This usually consists of bifurcating the curriculum into contrasting—no, opposing—sections, one Islāmic and one modern, al-Azhar being the classic example. The Islāmic part of the curriculum remains unchanged, partly because of conservatism and vested interests, and partly because it is in the secularist plan to keep it out of touch with reality and modernity, so that its graduates would present no competition to those of the secular institutions. This was all thought out and well planned by the colonial strategists. National independence gave the secularist system its greatest boost by adopting it as its own, pouring public funds into it, and secularizing it even further in the name of nationalism. The forces of Westernization and secularization and the resultant de-Islāmization of teachers and students is worse than under colonialism. A spirit of resistance, of searching for liberation and an Islāmic solution, then animated nearly everyone. Today, there is cynicism and lethargy, mistrust of all leaders largely due to repeated false promises and disappointments and to the sad example of morally bankrupt leaders. No Muslim government, no university administration, no private organization is doing anything about the sinking morale of college youth or about their continuing de-Islāmization through “education”. The colossal building program in the affluent countries and the consequent expansion in students, faculty and facilities, all serve the secularist cause. Hardly any percentage of the funds are devoted to “modernize” in a genuine sense, i.e., to improve the Islāmic quality of education and the Islāmic orientation of students and faculty. Every where the race is on at a maddening speed toward the Western educational model.

2. The Lack of Vision: Despite all claims to the contrary, the result achieved is not the Western model but a caricature of it. Like the Islamic model, the Western educational model rests ultimately on a vision, though different from that of Islām and is animated by a will to realize that vision. Buildings and offices, libraries and laboratories, classrooms and auditorium teaming with students and faculty are all material paraphernalia of little worth without a vision. It is the nature of the vision that it cannot be copied. Only its incidentals can. This is why in nearly two centuries of Westernized, secularized education, the Muslims have produced nothing—neither a school, college or university, nor a generation of scholars—which matches the West in creativity or excellence. The insoluble problem of low standards in Muslim World institutions is a necessary consequence of this lack of vision. There is no genuine search for knowledge without spirit; the spirit is precisely what cannot be copied. It is generated by a vision of the self, the world and reality, in short,
by religion. Muslim World education lacks this vision. Its leadership does not have the vision of Western man by necessity; it does not have the vision of Islam by choice, i.e., by ignorance, laziness and unconcern. Educational leadership in the Muslim World has been Philistine, without culture and without cause. Nationalism has inspired the Western universities in the last two hundred years because romanticism has replaced the defunct God of Christianity with “la nation” as genuine “ultimate reality”. For the Muslim no reality is ultimate but Allah. Ultimate loyalty to the nation-state is therefore not only impossible to him; it is blasphemous. Whatever the Muslim’s linkage with his legacy and past, it is not possible for him to be a “nationalist” in the same sense as the European who has outgrown his Christianity.

Look at the highest model of Muslim university teacher, the professor with a doctorate from a Western University. He was trained in the West and graduated with a fair or less than fair average. Since he was not Islamically motivated beforehand—i.e., he has not embarked on his expedition to seek knowledge for the sake of Allah (SWT), but for a materialist, egotistical (at best, nationalistic) goal—he did not obtain all the knowledge available to him in the West. Neither did he surpass his Western teachers at their own game, nor did he, like his ancestors who learned and Islamized the sciences of ancient Greece, Persia and India, digest what he learned or seek to rehabilitate it within the Islamic vision of knowledge and truth. Rather, he was satisfied to pass, to obtain the degree, to return home and achieve a position of affluence and eminence. The books he read as a student are the ultimate reaches of his knowledge, for now, he has neither time, nor energy nor motivation to push the frontiers of knowledge his training had reached. His living and working conditions add to his distraction from such a distant ideal. Naturally, his students must come out even less motivated as well as less competent than him. For them, the Western ideal has receded even farther. Gradually, the standards sink. Western education in the Muslim World becomes a caricature of its Western prototype.

The materials and methodologies presently taught in the Muslim world are copies of the Western ones but devoid of the vision which animated them in the West. Lacking this they are instruments of mediocrity. Unconsciously, these dispirited materials and methodologies continue to exert a sinister demuslimizing influence of the student by posing as alternatives to the Islamic ones as well as agents of progress and modernization. They make of the graduate of the Muslim World university a typical “sophomore,” thinking that he knows, but knowing very little indeed.

The very possibility of excellence in the Western disciplines is thus removed from the Muslim student. This possibility requires perception of the totality of knowledge in the fields as well as motivation by a driving idea to appropriate and to transcend the totality. The former depends upon the latter since, in
order to acquire knowledge of the totality, one must be driven by a consuming idea which only commitment to a cause generates. Without a cause, the Muslim is not driven to master the totality of knowledge in the discipline, and without that mastery, no transcendence of the discipline's state-of-the-art is possible. For the Muslim, the only cause which can be really a cause, is Islām. Lacking it, the Muslim teachers who study in the West never reach the totality of knowledge. As teachers in the universities, they cannot impart either requisite of excellence to their students. They are content in most cases to copy and to translate the less-than totality which they had acquired, dooming their students to a mediocre performance at best.

That teachers in Muslim world universities are not possessed by the vision of Islām and are not driven by its cause, is certainly the greatest calamity of Muslim education. Throughout the Muslim world, students enter the university equipped—as far as the Islāmic vision is concerned—with the little knowledge of Islām they have acquired at home and/or at the elementary or secondary school. Obviously, this constitutes no “vision” and no “cause”. Ideologically therefore, the freshman student enters as a tabula rasa. He may come with sentiments but surely not with ideas. These sentiments, if any, are shipwrecked when confronted with the “ideas”, “facts,” and the “objective” judgments of “science” presented to him in the disciplines. Obviously, he has no defense and no vision with which to counter on the ideational level. If he does not graduate a confirmed atheist, secularist, or communist, his view of Islām has receded to the realm of personal, subjective, and sentimental attachment to family and people. Of Islām as a vibrant ideology replete with the best ideas in relevance to any problem, he has none. On the ideational level, the student in the Muslim World university confronts the alien ideologies presented to him in textbooks or classrooms with as miserable a defense as a soldier with lance and sword confronts one armed with a tank and machine gun. Nowhere in the Muslim world is the Islāmic vision taught to all students as the Western tradition is taught to high school students in the West, i.e., with consistency, universality, utmost seriousness, and commitment on the part of all. In no Muslim world university is such a vision part of the “basic” or “core” studies program compulsory to all students.

II. The Task

The greatest task confronting the Ummah in the fifteenth century Hijrah is that of solving the problem of education. There can be no hope of a genuine revival of the Ummah unless the educational system is revamped and its faults corrected. Indeed, what is needed is for the system to be formed anew. The present dualism in Muslim education, its bifurcation into an Islāmic
and a secular system must be removed and abolished once and for all. The two systems must be united and integrated. The emergent system must be infused with the spirit of Islām and function as an integral part of its ideological program. It should not be allowed to remain an imitation of the West, nor left to find its own way. It cannot be tolerated to serve merely the economic, pragmatic needs of the students for professional knowledge, personal advancement, or material gain. The educational system must be endowed with a mission, none other than that of imparting the Islāmic vision and of cultivating the will to realize it in space and time. Such a task is indeed difficult to perform and may be costly. However the Ummah, in its totality, spends a far lesser percentage of its “gross national product”, of its annual budget, than most other Umam in the world today. Even in those affluent countries where the budget of education is significant, the expenditure is, for the most part, on buildings and administration rather than on research and education activities proper. The Ummah must spend far more on education than it presently does in order to attract the best minds, and to help them maintain the dignity Allah (SWT) has bestowed upon them as “men of knowledge” or “seekers” after it.

A. Uniting the Two Systems of Education

The Islāmic system of education consisting of elementary and secondary madrasahs as well as of college level kulliyahs or jāmi’ahs ought to be united with the secular system of public schools and universities. The union should bring to the new unified system the advantages of both, the financial resources of the state and the commitment to the vision of Islām. Union of the two systems should individual eliminate their disadvantages, that is, the inadequacy of archaic textbooks and inexperience of teachers in the traditional system, and the mimicry of the secular West in its methods and ideals.

The advantages may be gathered by the new system if the respective governments agree to appropriate for it the necessary funds without exercising stifling control. Steps must be taken to make the new educational system financially secure, if not wholly independent, by promoting endowments whose income would fund the system or its parts. Such endowments are precisely the awqāf which the Sharī’ah recognized and protected for the welfare of the Ummah. It was the waqf of each madrasah that made it autonomous in the past, and thus enabled its teachers and students to seek knowledge for the sake of Allah (SWT) alone—the necessary condition for any successful search for the truth. It again was the waqf institution which gave the madrasah the first legal or corporate personality in history. It was the waqf-based madrasah that constituted the model emulated by the first universities of the West when they were founded eight centuries ago.
Because of the explosion of knowledge as well as of student numbers, education may be too expensive nowadays to be funded by waqf endowments alone. A yearly portion of public funds may well be necessary. However, the state should develop the wisdom necessary to negotiate with the educators on the amount of the subsidy and trust them to make the best possible use of it. If state universities in the West could do this, it is certainly presumptuous to claim that Muslims, acting under Qur'anic injunctions, are incapable of the same. There can be neither good nor future in an 'Ummah which does not respect its learned sons and daughters; which does not exert itself to transmit to them the cultural and spiritual legacy of the ancestors, and which does not enable its youth to add to and enrich their tradition. It is a sign of tyranny when the state does not trust its educators to do their job without policing the educational establishments. Finally it is a sure sign of decay when educators have to be told by political rulers what to teach and how to run the academic concern.

B. Instilling the Vision of Islām

The union of the two systems is expected to do more than bring means to the Islāmic system and autonomy to the secular. It is expected to bring Islāmic knowledge to the secular and modern knowledge to the Islāmic system. In regard to elementary and secondary education, the crime of entrusting Muslim youths to missionaries or non-Muslim educators must be stopped. Every Muslim youth is entitled to receive full instruction in the religion, ethic, law, history and culture of Islām. The 'Ummah or any section of it, as well as its leaders, are legally responsible, and in the eye of God criminally indictable if they failed to give that basic instruction in Islām to every Muslim child.

The same is even more true in the case of adult education. The child's spirit is protected by his parents or guardian who will see to it that he commits no act odious to Islām or violates any provision of the sharī'ah. The adult, on the other hand, is free. He is the target of anti-Islāmic propaganda in and outside the university. In the college classroom and in the assigned readings, he is constantly presented with alien ideologies in the name of science and modernism. Anti-Islāmic ideas and options for conduct are claimed to constitute scientific truth, to be based on objective fact. In his tender years, the Muslim student was presented with Islām through the voice of parental authority. His mind was not mature enough to understand or appreciate "objective" claims. His attachment to the Islāmic position therefore was born out of sentiment, not of reasoned conviction. Evidently, his commitment to Islām cannot withstand the onslaught of "scientific", "objective" or "modern" truth. This is why, in the absence of any counter presentation of the Islāmic claims, a
presentation made with the same force of objectivity, with the same appeal of modernity, the Muslim college student succumbs to the secular claim and converts to it. So begins the process of de-Islamization in Muslim universities. After four years of such alienating influence within the university and an equal, if not superior, influence stemming from the mass media, his peers and society, the Islamic consciousness of the Muslim is ravaged. No wonder he becomes a cultural Philistine, a cynic who is at home neither in Islam nor in the West, ready to be swayed by anyone who caters to his whim of the moment.

1. Compulsory Study of Islamic Civilization: The only possible antidote to this de-Islamization on the university level is the compulsory four-year study of Islamic civilization. Every student in the university ought to undertake this course of study regardless of his major. The fact that he is a citizen, a member of the 'Ummah, imposes upon him the obligation to acquire sufficient knowledge of the 'Ummah's legacy, an adequate command of the 'Ummah's spirit and familiarity with its civilization. It is not possible to be civil without such knowledge. Even if the student belongs to a non-Muslim minority, it does not absolve him from fulfilling this basic requirement. Since he and/or his parents have opted to be citizens of the Islamic state, he must acquire the necessary familiarity with the civilization to which his home-state belongs, the spirit and hope which move it and his compatriots. No person may be left without acculturation in Islam, without “socialization” or integration into its society. Only such study can immunize him against invading ideologies; for it would enable him to meet argument with argument, objective evidence with objective evidence. Only such study can prepare him for genuine participation in the cultural life and progress of the 'Ummah; for only through it will he learn the essence of Islamic civilization, the logique of Islam, and hence the direction into which the 'Ummah is going, or hoping to go.

The study of civilization is the only way to grow in the person a sense of his identity. No one may be said to be self-conscious who does not know his forefathers; and that is to say, who does not know the spirit which animated them, their achievements in the arts and sciences, in their political and economic life, in their social organization, in their esthetic experience; who is unmoved by their trials and tragedies, their glories and victories; who is uninspired by their hopes. The consciousness of self-identity is not achieved except when such knowledge of one's background is contrasted with knowledge of other peoples and groups, of other civilizations. To know oneself is to know how one is different from others, not in material needs or utilitarian realities, but in the view of the world, in moral judgment, and spiritual hope. This is all the domain of Islam, of the culture and civilization which Islam built and sustained through the generations. It is achievable only through the study of Islam and its civilization, and the comparative study
of other religions and civilizations. Today, to be "modern" is to be civilizational conscious; i.e., to be conscious of the nature of one's civilizational heritage, of the essence which produced its various manifestations, of its distinction from other streams of civilizational history, and of its pull and direction for the future. Without such knowledge, one cannot be the subject of his own fate; and certainly one cannot survive in this world. Unlike the past, the civilizational forces contending in this century can reach and overtake anyone without invasion or military occupation of his land. They can subvert his mind, convert him to their world view, neutralize and contain him as a puppet whether he is aware or not. Certainly, these forces are contending with one another to dominate the world. And it is the decision of Muslims today whether Islam will be the victor tomorrow; whether or not Muslims will be the subjects of history or merely its objects. Indeed, the civilizational battle now in progress in the world-scene, will not leave anyone unscathed. Every human is bound to be transformed by one contender or another, unless he himself instantiates the contender civilization and is therefore a transformer of others.

It is unbecoming of Muslims to argue that Islamic civilization will remain alive as long as it is taught in the departments or institutes of Islamic study in the universities or colleges of the shari'ah. Indeed, it is indicative of their decadence that Muslims have instituted "departments of Islamic studies" in their universities. These are always copies of departments of Orientalistic studies in Western universities, where the study of Islam is the specialization of the few whom society needs for administering its relations with the Muslim World.

Knowledge of Islam and of its civilization is not meant for the few. The vision of Islam is not meant for, nor needed by the specialist alone; it is for all humans and it is designed to elevate all those who are possessed by it to a higher level of existence. Islam abhors the division of humans into clerics and lay; it insists that all men are to know, teach and observe the truth. The vision of Islam is needed to defend the whole people against the alien ideologies invading the consciousness. Unless everybody is immunized against the disease, the 'Ummah will become the victim. Moreover, Islam is the comprehensive religion whose vision is relevant to every human activity, to every endeavor, whether physical, social, economic, political, cultural or spiritual. It is not an other-worldly religion like Christianity and Buddhism, content to direct "divinity" affairs and leave the rest to Caesar. Nothing is said or done in any shop or factory, office or home, theater or field or a fortiori, in any classroom or laboratory of the university to which Islam is not relevant. The vision of Islam is therefore truncated—and hence dead—if it is cultivated only in one department or faculty. It must be the guiding, determining first principle of every discipline.

What is needed therefore is a four-year course of study to be part of the
“basic” or “core” program for all students, regardless of their majors or professions. It should seek to give the Muslim student knowledge of the first principles of Islam as essence of Islamic civilization in the first year; of the historical achievements of Islamic civilization as manifestations in space-time, of the first principles of Islam in the second year; of how Islamic civilization compares and contrasts with other civilizations in essence and manifestation, in the third year; and of how Islamic civilization is the only viable option in dealing with the fundamental problems of Muslims and non-Muslims in the contemporary world, in the fourth year.

2. Islamization of Modern Knowledge: It would be a great step forward if Muslim World universities and colleges were to institute compulsory courses in Islamic Civilization as part of their basic studies program for all students. This would provide the students with faith in their own religion and heritage and give them the confidence in themselves to enable them to face and surmount their present difficulties as well as to forge ahead toward the goal assigned to them by Allah (SWT). But it is not enough.

In order to forge ahead toward this Islamic goal and thus make the Word of Allah supreme in space and time, knowledge of the world is absolutely indispensable. This knowledge is the goal of the disciplines. Before Muslims went into decay and slumber, they had developed the disciplines, established and clarified the relevance of Islam, of its world view and values, to everyone of them. They integrated them successfully into the main corpus of Islamic knowledge. They made wonderful contributions in all fields, and they utilize that knowledge efficiently to promote their Islamic ideals. During their slumber, non-Muslims have taken the legacy of Muslim scientists and men of knowledge, integrated it into their own world view, developed the disciplines, added significant contributions to them and utilized the new knowledge to their advantage. Today, non-Muslims are the undisputed masters of all the disciplines. Today, in Muslim World universities, their books, achievements, world views, problems and ideals are being taught to Muslim youths. Muslim youths are being Westernized on account of this.

This situation must change. There can be no doubt that the Muslim academicians ought to master all the modern disciplines, understand them completely, and achieve an absolute command of all that they have to offer. That is the first prerequisite. Then, they ought to integrate the new knowledge into the corpus of the Islamic legacy by eliminating, amending, re-interpreting and adapting its components as the world view of Islam and its values dictate. Finally, by their example as pioneers, they ought to teach the new generation of Muslims and non-Muslims how to follow in their footsteps, push the frontiers of human knowledge even farther, discover new layers of the patterns of Allah (SWT) in creation, and establish new paths for making His will and commandments realized in history.
The task of Islâmizing knowledge (in concrete terms, to Islâmize the disciplines, or better, to produce university level textbooks recasting some twenty disciplines in accordance with the Islâmic vision) is also the most difficult. No Muslim has yet contemplated it enough to discern its prerequisites, or to articulate its constitutive steps and measures. All that our previous reformers had thought of was to acquire the knowledge and power of the West. They were not even aware of the conflict of Western knowledge with the vision of Islâm. It is our present generation that first discovered the conflict as we lived it in our own intellectual lives. But the spiritual torture the conflict has inflicted upon us caused us to wake up in panic, fully aware of the rape of the Islâmic soul taking place before our very eyes in the Muslim World universities. That is why we are alerting the Muslim World to the evil and seeking for the first time in history to elaborate a plan to arrest it, to combat its effects, and to re-launch Islâmic education on its proper track, leading to its predestined goal.

It is most regrettable that the Muslim World is still devoid of a center where thinking on this high level takes place. What is needed is a university which acts as headquarters for Islâmic thought, where the disciplines undergo Islâmization and the process gets tested in the class and seminar rooms of the undergraduate and graduate programs of study. Until the Islâmic University of Islâmabad entered into collaboration with the International Institute of Islâmic Thought, not one educational institution in the Muslim World had moved a finger to Islâmize knowledge, to produce Islâmic textbooks for college use in the disciplines, or the tools of research necessary for the writing of these textbooks. And yet, everywhere in the Muslim World one hears of the need to Islâmize education, its men and institutions, its curricula and textbooks. On the official level where the power to decide rests, one finds little more than lip-service, either made by the ignorant or designed otherwise to mislead the masses.

This task is the noblest of all tasks, the highest instantiation of the Divine irādah, the first categorical imperative of all morality. The world religions, the West and Communism did not begin to grow, to develop and achieve what they did without such a cause animating and driving their adherents. The least argument is that Muslims too, should lend their souls to determination by a cause if they want to stop being the objects of history and become its subjects. And yet, Islâm is not another “ism” on a par with these movements; nor does it present its claim as its own, as a dogma—personally experienced and subjectively appropriated—which can only be adopted or dropped arbitrarily. The claim of Islâm is a rational, necessary, and a critical claim. It has universal validity, an ought-claim and title to the acknowledge and acquiescence of mankind. As a rational claim it can be met only with counter-argument,
which the Islāmic adherent should welcome and to which he should respond with evidence. No part of the Islāmic claim, or "relevance" of Islām to any discipline, may be accepted without convincing evidence. But when the Islāmic vision has made its claim and established it for the most exacting scholarship; when it has substantiated it for the most fastidious consciousness; then it can be rejected and/or resisted only out of irrationality or malice. The former is the prerogative of the ignorant, the mentally deranged; the latter, that of the committed enemy. Both constitute what Islām calls jāhiliyyah.

This is then the great task facing Muslim intellectuals and leaders: to recast the whole legacy of human knowledge from the standpoint of Islām. The vision of Islām would not be a vision unless it is a vision of something, namely, life, reality and the world. That content (reality, etc.) is object of study of the various disciplines. To recast knowledge as Islām relates to it, is to Islāmize it; i.e., to redefine, and re-order the data, to rethink the reasoning and relating of the data, to reevaluate the conclusions, to re-project the goals—and to do so in such a way as to make the disciplines enrich the vision and serve the cause of Islām. To this end, the methodological categories of Islām, namely, the unity of truth, the unity of knowledge, the unity of humanity, the unity of life, and telic character of creation, the subservience of creation to man and of man to God must replace the Western categories and determine the perception of ordering of reality. So too, the values of Islām, namely, the usefulness of knowledge for man's felicity, the blossoming of man's faculties, the remodeling of creation so as to make concrete the Divine patterns. The building of culture and civilization, of human monuments in knowledge and wisdom, heroism and virtue, piety and saintliness, should replace the Western values and direct the learning activity in every field. To elaborate and articulate more precisely, the foregoing principles reflect the purpose of the rest of this book.

III. The Methodology

A. Shortcoming of Traditional Methodology

In consequence of the terrible devastation which non-Muslims inflicted upon the 'Ummah in the sixth and seventh centuries of the Hijrah—the Tatar invasion from the East and the Crusader invasion from the West—Muslim leaders lost their nerves and their confidence in themselves. Thinking their world consigned to doom, they became over-conservative and they sought to preserve their identity and most precious possession, viz., Islām, by proscribing all innovation and advocating a strict adherence to the letter of the Shari'ah. It was then that they abandoned the major source of creativity in the law—ijithād.
They declared its gates closed. Treating the Shari‘ah as perfected in the works of the ancestors, they declared any departure from it an innovation, and every innovation undesirable and condemnable. As elaborated by the schools, the Shari‘ah was to become frozen, and as such, to safeguard the survival of Islam. The survival of Islam, and indeed, Muslim victory and expansion in Russia, the Balkans, Central and Southeast Europe in the eighth to twelfth centuries did not undo the conservative measures. The universal adoption of tarīqahs or ways helped the Muslims to overcome their difficulties in the absence of ijtihād as a source of creativity. The Shari‘ah therefore remained a closed system until modern times when modern science and technology gave the West the power to confront and defeat the Muslims.

In modern times the West undid the Ottoman conquests in Europe, occupied, colonized and fragmented the whole of the Muslim World except Turkey proper, from where the Western powers were driven by force—Yemen and central and west Arabia—which provided little incentive for colonization. The Western powers exploited Muslim weakness to the utmost possible and contributed in a major fashion to the present malaise of the Muslim World, described in the first pages of this essay. In response to these defeats, tragedies and crises which the West had imposed on the Muslim World in the course of the last two centuries, Muslim leaders in Turkey, Egypt and India have tried to Westernize the Ummah in the hope of making it politically, economically and militarily viable. Wherever it was made, the attempt proved itself a failure. Indeed, it continues to be a failure today. The more consistently it was applied, as in Turkey and Egypt, the more striking the failure. In Turkey, it prepared the way for Mu斯塔fa Kamal to abolish all Islamic institutions and reject every traditional Islamic principle affecting public life. The whole Islamic system was to be replaced by the Western system. Today, after two generations (sixty years) of Westernization, Turkey is just as weak and poor in all respects as other Muslim countries. Westernization succeeded somewhat in de-Islamizing one class of society, but did nothing else. In Egypt, where Westernization was less consistently pursued, a Western system was implanted and the traditional Islamic system was permitted to function alongside. The two systems competed with each other; and, despite the tremendous advantages the Western system enjoyed—public funds, government support and favors—both failed to achieve excellence. They succeeded only in weakening each other.

1. Fiqh and Fiqh(s); Ijtihād and Mujtahid(s): Today, the term fiqh means possession of knowledge of the Shari‘ah according to a given school; and its derivative faqīh refers to the person endowed with such knowledge. General fiqh and its derivative would apply to possession of knowledge of the Shari‘ah in all schools of law. Such knowledge presupposes command of the Arabic language and of the judgmental (ḥukm) passages of the Qur‘an and Sunnah.
Evidently it is a technical meaning, highly restricted when compared with that of the Qur'ānic terms *faqaha* or *tafaqqaha* which are repeated in numerous verses— which point to intellection and understanding, to grasping the essence and explanation, in short, to knowledge of Islam as a whole. The movement of the term from this general connotation to the narrow technical one is itself an index of the 'Ummah's outgrowth of the need for a general meaning capable of containing its creative tendencies and varied activities. This shift in meaning of the term, and the loss of the dynamic aspect the early usage of the term indicated, constitute a sign of conservatism and narrowing of vision. The great jurists of Islam—Shāfi‘i, Abu Ḥanifah, Mālik and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal—all understood the compound term *uşul al fiqh*—not as the general principles of Islamic law, but the first principles of Islamic understanding of life and reality.

Moreover, the early *faqīhs* of the 'Ummah—namely, the Prophet's companions, their successors, the tābī‘un, and the great founders of the schools (RAA)—were preeminently knowledgeable in all matters affecting the lives of Muslims. The *faqīhs* of the classical period were real encyclopaedists, masters of practically all the disciplines from literature and law to astronomy and medicine. They were themselves professional men who knew Islam not only as law, but as ideal and theory, as a system of thought and life lived by millions of humans in actual practice. The highest Islamic qualification ever, namely, *al dhawq al sharî‘*, or the intuitive knowledge of the purposes of the law, was well within their grasp. If they were the models of creative handling of the Muslims' problems on account of their superb competence, certainly neither the knowledge nor the wisdom of today's *faqīh*—graduate equip him adequately to assume the responsibilities which the early *faqīhs* have carried out so successfully.

Within the traditional system itself, several attempts at self-reform were made, the most daring of which was proposed by Muḥammad ‘Abduh, and his teacher, Jamāludīn al Afghānī. Although awakened Muslims everywhere approved their call to reopen the gates of *ijtihād*, the measure failed for two reasons: First, the traditional qualifications required of the *mujahids* remained the same and thus restricted the practice of *ijtihād* to the graduates of the traditional *madrasah*, i.e., to those who saw no need for it. For the graduates of the traditional schools were precisely the recipients of an education which convinced them that the methodology was absolutely adequate and that the problem of the Muslim World was merely one of human reluctance to realize the values of Islam. Secondly, the understanding of the *mujahid* as necessarily the *faqīh*, (i.e., the person whose training has enabled him to translate all problems into legal terms, to make pronouncements upon them under the categories of the law), contained or subsumed the problems of modernity under those categories. This restricted *ijtihād* still further by concentrating all its
effort upon *ifiā*, or the pronouncement of juristic verdicts upon specific actions which Muslims have done or propose to do in their daily lives. Almost by definition, as it were, the traditional faqīh or mujtahid were incapable of looking at the problem as a whole, lost as he was in determining the exact correspondence of given deeds to norms and rules already specified in one or more schools. The situation called for a new methodology of which the traditional mujtahids were incapable of conceiving, for reopening our very understanding of ḩyāl, or sources of Islamic knowledge.

2. The Opposition of Wahy to *Aql: Perhaps the most tragic development in the intellectual history of the *Unmāh* is the alienation of Wahy and *aql* from each other. It was the advent of Greek logic and its influence upon some Muslims who were all too anxious to utilize the methods it provided to convince non-Muslims of the truths of Islam which set them on the path leading to such alienation. Hellenized Christians and Jews lived for centuries under the dichotomy; and many had brought it into the *Unmāh* with them when they converted to Islam. It was al-Fārābī who gave it its classical statement, upheld by the philosophers against the *mutakallimūn*. It was accepted by some later *mutakallimūn* who were content to elaborate the faith defensively. And it dominated the field of intellectual discussion in the age of decline, especially under the influence of *tasawwuf* which advocated a purely intuitive and often esoteric methodology, and hence, found no fault with such estrangement between reason and revelation.

The separation of *wahy* and *aql* is utterly unacceptable. It is inimical to the whole spirit of Islam and opposed to the central appeal of the Qur'an to reason, to weigh rationally all matters, to favor the more reasonable, more median course. Unlike those religions which sought to overwhelm man's understanding—to overpower his conscience so that he would surrender to the irrational, or even the absurd—the call of Islam was rational and critical. Invariably, it invited men to use their intelligence; to apply their critical faculties to all claims; to consider the alternatives; always to be cogent, coherent, to say nothing but the truth, of which one is absolutely certain and always to seek correspondence with reality. Such exhortations, injunctions and commands are found on practically every page of the Qur'an. Without reason, the truths of revelation cannot be appreciated. Neither would they be recognized for what they are—namely, Divine—and acknowledged as such. The claims of revelation would be indistinguishable from other claims including the absurd. When acceptance of revelation is based not on reason, it is subjective, arbitrary and whimsical. No religious thesis based upon personal whims could claim the acquiescence of mankind, or of any significant part of it for a long time. The Muslims' exaggerated emphasis on intuition at the cost of reason opened the gates to corruption of the faith. By not distinguishing it rationally
from the absurd, superstition and old wives' tales can certainly masquerade as truth and penetrate the faith. Just as surely, the overemphasis of "reason" at the cost of intuitive faith corrupts the "life of reason" by reducing it to materialism, utilitarianism, mechanism and meaninglessness.

3. Separation of Thought from Action: In the early period of Islamic history, the leader was the thinker and the thinker was the leader. The vision of Islam was dominant, and the zeal to realize it in history determined all conduct. It was the preoccupation of the whole community of Islam. Every conscious Muslim sought to probe reality for materials and opportunities to undergo re-kneading into the Islamic patterns. Thefaqih was at the same time inām, mujtahid, qāriʿ; muhaddith, teacher, mutakallim, as well as political leader, army general, farmer or businessman, and professional. If he felt weak in any aspect, everybody around him was eager to step in and make up the deficiency. Everybody gave freely all that he had to the cause, and everybody felt strong with the collective strength of others. Muslims were so closely associated with one another that the weakness of any one of them was quickly overcome by the solidarity and total experience of all. Since Islamic thought was, by nature, oriented toward reality, this association with concrete living and doing provided the laboratory in which Islamic thought explored its creative ideas. Equally, it anchored thought in reality and compelled it to keep its gaze focused upon the real commonweal of living men and women. If that period witnessed little speculative or metaphysical thought, the reason is not that they were incapable of it, but that priority for most Muslim thinkers lay in enabling the masses of people to lead healthy, rational, virtuous and prosperous lives.

On the other hand, the actual life of the people, being objects of continuing thought on the part of the leaders, had the benefit of their creative ideas. Adequate thought was applied to the problems of the 'Ummah, and the solutions fitted the requisites of the situation. The 'Ummah prospered in every facet of thought and life; for her welfare was constantly in view of the best minds, and the solutions projected by them were put to practice and implemented because the same minds commanded the executive power, or were closely associated with those who did.

Later, this unity between thought and action was broken. The moment they were separated from one another, each began to deteriorate. Political leadership and the men of power moved from one crisis to another without the benefit of thought, without consulting the learned and obtaining their wisdom. The result was bumbling which alienated the wise subjects and isolated the leaders still more. Put on the defensive, the political leaders perpetrated still more and greater mistakes. On the other hand, the thinkers estranged and removed from active engagement in the 'Ummah's affairs, focused upon the ideal as
grounds for their condemnation of political authority. Some began to indulge in affirming the normative over and against the actual. Those whose condemnation carried political consequence were subjected to persecution by the leadership in power. Those thinkers whose condemnation did not, were encouraged to soar still higher away from reality. Other thinkers began to compromise the normative in their association with the political leadership. Increased tension led to polarity and this brought about the ruin of both thought and action. Whereas action became tyrannical, succession to power violent, and empirical reality abandoned, the real commonwealth had to contend itself with commentaries on older works or retreat into the mystical flight of Sufi speculation. Soon, the whole Ummah became impervious to its own political leadership. The long succession of tyrants, corrupt leaders, throne-usurpers and caliphal puppets, manipulated by powerful sultans, demoralized the Ummah and repulsed it from the political scene. The Sufi brotherhoods received the people with open arms. They provided them with spiritual self-discipline and cultivation of mystical experience, and thus compensated them for their loss on the scene of history. In their hands, religion provided an avenue of escape from the tyranny which none could bear.

While the Sultans reigned without challenge, the greatest mental energies of the Ummah were channelled toward the spiritual, personal and subjective values contemplated by tasawwuf. The equivalence and convertibility of the spiritual with the worldly, characteristic of the early period, disappeared. In its place came the pursuit of the spiritual, at the cost of the worldly; of the other world at the cost of this world. Losing its anchor in the actual experiences of the Ummah, Muslim thought became conservative and literal in law, speculative in Qur’anic exegesis and world view, world-denying in ethics and politics and esoteric in the sciences of nature. Great thinkers, jurists and saints looked down upon political authority and action as something beneath them—something contemptible. First, resistance to the world, and then complete disregard for it, became the first conditions of virtue. The Ummah seemed to have lost the balance between the personal and the public values sublimely exemplified by the Prophet (SAAS) in his life.

4. Cultural and Religious Dualism: al Širāt al Mustaqīm, or “the straightforward path”, which was the hope of all and the practice of early Muslims, was a single unitary path stemming from the vision of Islām, integrating all of man’s tendencies and activities into one integral surge toward Islāmic self-realization in history. In the period of decay—and because of the estrangement between thought and action—the path split into two: the way of the world and the way of God or virtue. This bifurcation of the Islāmic life into two paths in constant opposition to each other—the one praiseworthy and involving all the religious and ethical values and the other condemnable and
involving the material world with all its values—corrupted and destroyed both. Both paths were transformed. The former became an empty spirituality, similar to the vacuous spirituality of Christian and Buddhist monkhood. For a spirituality that does not concern itself with the empirical welfare of the masses, which does not seek to actualize justice in the rough and tumble of the market place of the world, must be subjective and bent upon the religious interest of the adherent alone. Such a spirituality is egotistic even when it calls for altruistic acts, its prime concern is the state of consciousness of the practitioner. The others and their welfare are for it, tools and instruments of self-trial, self-purification and self-ennoblement. No wonder that this spirituality fell to the lure of gnosis and the mystical experience and became the prey of superstition and miracle-mongering. It never occurred to the shaykh(s) who founded the Ṣūfī ṭarīqah and the great minds that provided them with the ideological foundations, that their brotherhoods would become such an aberration and develop an ethic and a hope which would run counter to Islām. But the fact is that most brotherhoods did succumb to this temptation.

The path of the world, on the other hand, developed its own immoral system, absolved as it were from the moral requirements, which the representatives of the religion of Islām had declared the specialized pursuit of another class of Muslims. Without moral values as internal to and constitutive of it, the system was bound to deteriorate and become the prize for anyone who could contend for it successfully. Government and political leadership thus became an instrument for either self-glorification and the brute exercise of power, or for extortion of moral and material benefits from the people. When, in the modern period, the foreign colonial enemy attacked, invaded and occupied the land, the masses put up little resistance. The battle, they had already become convinced, was not theirs. Finally, when the colonial administrations set up another educational system and began to favor a style of life, thought and activity, alien to that of the masses, they regarded it as something déjà vu, condemnable and contemptible but not worthy of total uprising of the 'Ummah in a holy war (jihād) against it.

B. First Principles of Islāmic Methodology

As prerequisite for the removal of dualism from the educational system, which is in turn a prerequisite for the removal of dualism from life and for the solution of the malaise of the 'Ummah, knowledge ought to be Islāmized. While avoiding the pitfalls and shortcomings of traditional methodology, Islāmization of knowledge ought to observe a number of principles which constitute the essence of Islām. To recase the disciplines under the framework of Islām means subjection of their theory and method, their principles and goals to the following:
1. *The Unity of Allah (SWT)*: The unity of Allah (SWT) is the first principle of Islam and of everything Islamic. It is the principle that Allah is indeed Allah; that no other being is Allah; and that He is absolutely One, absolutely transcendent, metaphysically and axiologically ultimate; that everything else is separate and different from Him and is His creation. He is the Creator by Whose command everything that is, has come to be, and every event that happens, has come to happen. He is the source of all goodness and beauty. His will is the law of nature, as well as the law of morality. His worship and praise is due from all creatures, above all from humans, whom Allah has created in the best of forms and endowed with faculties with which to recognize Him and acknowledge His works, as well as the capacity to transform creation so as to fulfill therein His ethical and esthetic patterns.

To think and live in consciousness of divine unity is to do so in a world enchanted and alive, since everything in it is there by Allah's act, is sustained by His providence, nothing is futile or devoid of meaning. Everything in Allah's creation is according to a precise measure which Allah has ordained for it. To be part of such a world is to recognize one's infinite complex of relations with all creatures; above all to acknowledge one's creatureliness, one's indebtedness to Allah, and to give Him His due of love and obedience. To be a Muslim is to have Allah constantly present in one's consciousness. And since He is the Creator and the Judge, to be Muslim means to do all and everything as He has directed and for His sake. All good and all happiness, as all life and all energy, are His gifts. In the Islamic life, while in Islamic thought, these are acknowledged and used as such, while in Islamic thought, He is the First and ultimate cause and end of everything. As such, His being and activity are the first constitutive and regulative principles of all knowledge. Whether the object of knowledge is the microcosm of the atom or the macrocosm of the stars, the depth of the self, the conduct of society or the march of history, Islamic knowledge regards the object of knowledge as materially caused by the antecedent constituents of the situation from whence that object proceeded. The actual discharge of causality however, which brought about the object out of an infinity of other possible objects to which those same constituents might have led is seen as the initiative of the Divine Being, issuing from a Divine command. Likewise, Islamic knowledge regards every object of knowledge as fulfilling an end willed by Allah, or serving another end which is so willed, so that the causal hierarchy of the universe is at once a hierarchy of ends, at the top of which stands the Divine Will, willing the end of every individual being, of every series of ends, and of the hierarchy as a whole. Islamic knowledge recognizes that there is neither being, nor truth, nor value outside the chains and complexes of same in which Allah (SWT) is cause and end, both immediate and ultimate; that whatever is conceived of, known or evaluated outside the divinely ordained nexus is non-existent,
false or value-free, or merely misrepresented as standing outside that nexus.

2. The Unity of Creation: From the unity of Allah (SWT), the unity of His creation follows with logical necessity. As He has said in the Holy Qur'an, "If they were in heaven and earth other gods than Allah, both heaven and earth would have fallen into chaos" (21:22). If there were more than one ultimate reality, ultimate reality would not be ultimate. Moreover, the universe would then have to follow different orders; and if it did, it would not be the ordered universe we know. Nor would it be possible for us humans to know a universe in which more than one order obtains.

a. Cosmic order: it must be understood that under which we discern objects as substances, qualities, relations and events. It is the consistency or unity of cosmic order that enables us to recognize the permanence of substances as things, and the repetition of events as causal relations. Without cosmic order, neither things nor causes and consequences would be the same.

Creation is an integral whole precisely because it is the work of the Creator Whose order and design has infused every part of it. Cosmic order consists of the laws of nature. These operate throughout the universe and permeate every part or aspect of it. The material, the spatial, the biological, the psychic, the social and the esthetic—all reality obeys and fulfills these laws. All laws are the *sunan* (patterns) of Allah (SWT) in His creation. Allah (SWT) is not merely the source of these laws, or, having once designed nature according to them and established their working in nature, operates and/or controls them no more. He is not retired but eternally living and active. Therefore, every being in the cosmos, and every event that takes place, are so by His command. At any stage of its existence, every being has built within it the dynamic power to change. This dynamic power comes from Allah and is sustained by Him. Furthermore, this power is not necessarily bound to produce the result with which it is associated. It is by Allah's command that a particular effect is caused by the causes usually associated with it. Allah (SWT) may operate a cause to bring about its effect immediately; but He may and does operate a cause by means of other causes, so that what seems to us to be an inexorable chain of causes is just as much a Divine cause as a single cause. For our part, as humans, we trust Allah (SWT), or His cosmic order: that given a cause, its effect will follow. As al-Ghazâlî and Hume had found out despite their ideological differences, there is no necessity to any causal connection. Indeed, what we call causality is mere "following upon" and repetition, leading us to believe that a cause is usually followed by its effect. Such faith has nothing to stand upon except the benevolence of the Divine Being. For Allah (SWT) seeks not to cheat or mislead. He is a benevolent Creator Who ordered things in the universe to make it livable and comprehensible to us; to make it possible for us to exercise our moral options and prove our ethical worth in the deed.
b. Creation: A Kingdom of Ends.—Allah (SWT) created everything and did so with precise measure (25:2). This measure assigns to everything its nature, its relations to other beings, and the course of its existence. Equally, the Divine measure subjects everything not only to the system of causes described above, but also to a system of ends. Everything has a purpose, a raison d'être, which is being served. This purpose is never final but always subject to other purposes constituting a final nexus which ends only in Him. For only He is the ultimate End, the final Purpose, unto Whom everything returns. His Will makes every good, good.

Everything that is, therefore, is at once related in a cause-effect relationship to everything else, as well as in a finalistic, or means-to-end relationship. For both the metaphysical and the axiological relationships terminate with Allah. The network of each is infinite. Certainly, both are open for human inspection, for human knowledge and appreciation. Being infinite, however, humans can know only a portion of the relationship, led, as it were, by a pocket spotlight in a dark jungle. But it is their prerogative and duty to press ever forward in its exploration and discovery. To discover and establish those relationships is to establish for knowledge and appreciation, the immutable patterns of Allah (SWT).

That all things in creation serve a purpose and that all purposes are interrelated as means and ends to one another makes the world one telic system, vibrant and alive, full of meaning. The birds in the sky, the stars in the firmament, the fishes in the depth of oceans, the plants and the elements—all constitute integral parts of the system. No part of it is inert or evil, since every being has a function and a role in the life of the whole. Together, they make an organic body whose members and organs are interrelated in ways which humans are only now coming to discover for science, but only in very limited parts of nature. Muslims know all too well that creation is organic, that every part of it serves some end or another, even if that end is not known to them. This knowledge is a consequence of their faith. Confronted with the wolf devouring the lamb, the bird eating the butterfly or the human body feeding the worms in the earth, they assume all being to be good, fulfilling in a natural way, a divine purpose and serving a system of purposes which culminates in the Divine Will. The Muslim is not free to ascribe anything to accident or to blind fate. Earthquakes and pestilences, drought and tragedy, are regarded by Muslims as being ordained by Allah. However tragic or painful, the Muslim accepts these events as His effects, willed by Him for a good cause which may not be discerned presently. The Muslim is never overwhelmed by them because he knows Allah, the Author of them, to be at once his beneficent Protector. He therefore assumes them to be tests, ordained by Allah to try him, calling for the greatest firmness, faith and optimism in the final out-
come. This aspect of the faith of Islam is precisely what humans need when faced with tragedy.

Allah's ordaining of this world as one in which causes are followed by their effects, where causes converge on everything from an infinite scope, and where effects diverge from every event in infinite scope, and where the same infinite interrelationships exist and bind everything together in a system of ends, is itself meant to provide a theater for man's life and ethical endeavor. The theater is not its own end; nor is it the property and exclusive domain of man. Since man is created for a life of service to His Creator, the world is His grant to him. Man's duty is therefore to work out the divine patterns in it, but to safeguard it from deterioration and indeed to improve it.

c. Taskhīr (Subservience) of Creation to Man.—Allah (SWT) has granted the world as a temporary gift and theater to man. He has made everything in it subservient to him; i.e., capable of being used by man for his nourishment, enjoyment and comfort. Such use may be immediate, as in the case of nourishment and enjoyment, or mediate as when the forces of nature are utilized to produce the goods men need. Between the objects of creation and human usufruct there is a built-in concordance. Creation has the needs of humanity built into it, its objects being meant to serve those needs. The whole range of nature is capable of receiving man's efficacy, of suffering change at his initiative, of transformation into any pattern man desires. Mankind can dry up the seas or harness the sun, move the mountains and cultivate the deserts, or lay the whole world waste. Mankind can fill the world with beauty and enable everything to prosper, or fill it with ugliness and destroy everything. The subservience of creation to man knows no limits. Allah (SWT) has willed it so. The causal and finalistic interconnections of the objects of creation are the substance of this subservience which would be futile and meaningless without them. Man would quickly lose interest in creation and give up any attempt to transform it into the ought-patterns revealed by Allah, if he could not depend on causes to bring about their effects, or if the means were not to be good for the ends. It was a Muslim thinker who first expressed the Kantian notion, "You should, therefore you can," as the first principle of the metaphysics of ethics; and he did so under the inspiration of the Qur'ānic principle, "Allah does not make imperative except that which is possible" (2:286). Without this necessary implication, the universe would be either an inert, immovable and unchangeable world, or a world for fools.

3. The Unity of Truth and the Unity of Knowledge: Reason may certainly have its illusions and aberrations as well as its uncertainties. Its capacity for self-criticism gives it a fair degree of protection; but wherever ultimate truth and reality are concerned, its human predicament leaves it in need of corroboration by the infallible source of revelation. Once the questions of first
or ultimate principles are settled, then reason acquires new vigor with which it can overcome the problems confronting it. Its basic presuppositions must all be apodeictically certain. Some are so by self-evidence; others are the common experience of humanity at large. There are others, however, which are capable of an ought-necessity only; i.e., they are capable of being perceived as true only by those who have the requisite degree of wisdom, or maturity of religious or ethical vision, and who are on that account expected to see the reality as it is. Hence, recognition of such truths and values may not be mathematically universal, but it enjoys a different kind of necessity, an ought-to-be necessity or Sollensnotwendigkeit. Where reason does not enjoy apodeictic certainty, the light of faith can provide this certainty and in fact cast illuminating light on all other presuppositions, and support with additional certainty the whole worldview built upon them. This light of faith is definitely epistemological, and comes as the consequence of reasonableness, not its opposite. Between it and the apodeictically certain presuppositions of reason, there is affinity, harmony, correspondence and complementarity. At least in Islam, unlike the other religions which are dogmatic through and through, faith is never irrational in its role and contribution. It does not stand above reason, just as reason does not stand above faith. The perception of reason and faith as diametrical opposites, and of man having to choose between them is not Islamic, but rather the antithesis of the Islamic position.

As concerns the theory of knowledge, the position of Islam may be best described as the unity of truth. This unity devolves from Allah's absolute unity, and is convertible with it. Al Haqq ("the truth") is the name of God. If God is indeed God, as Islam affirms, then the truth cannot be many. God knows the truth and, in His revelation, He tells it as it is. What He conveys in the revelation cannot be different from reality, since He is the Creator of all reality as well as of all truth. The truth which is the object of reason is embodied in the laws of nature. These are the patterns of God in creation, His sunan, which are constant and unchangeable, and hence are possible to discover, to establish and to use for the benefit of humanity. Besides proclaiming God's existence and creation, revelation instructs about the world, giving the very same laws of nature or Divine patterns in accordance with which the universe runs. Obviously, there can be no truer disclosure or rendering of these laws or patterns than by their Maker and Author. Theoretically, therefore, there can be no discrepancy. This logical equivalence of reason, truth, and reality with the facts of revelation is the most critical principle epistemology has every known. This equivalence is based on three principles underlying all Islamic knowledge.

First, the unity of truth prescribes that no claim on behalf of revelation may be made which goes counter to reality. The propositions which revelation is supposed to teach must be true; i.e., they must correspond to reality
and agree with it. It is inconceivable that God may be ignorant, or that He may seek to cheat or misguide His creatures. His statements, therefore, given expressly to guide and instruct, cannot oppose reality. Wherever such variation from reality occurs, the Muslim is rightly cautioned by the doctrine of the unity of truth to reconsider his understanding of revelation. The doctrine guards him against over-hasty interpretation, exaggerated allegorical interpretation and exegesis, or the reading into the material of any esoteric meaning (bāṭin) which is arbitrarily assumed on someone's personal authority. The meanings of the Islāmic revelation are eternally anchored in two solid rocks: Arabic lexicography and syntax which remain unchanged since the revelation of the Qurān, and reality. This is why the Qurānic revelation has known no hermeneutical problems as such. All exegetical issues have revolved around questions of lexicography and syntax.

Second, the unity of truth prescribes that no contradiction, difference or variation between reason and revelation is ultimate. It categorically denies that there is no over-arching principle, fact or understanding which can solve the contradiction. In one's investigation of nature and attempt to discover the patterns of laws of the Creator in the universe, it is certainly possible to make mistakes, to fall under illusion and to think one has grasped the truth while being in error. Such would create discrepancy between revelation and reason. The unity of truth rejects such discrepancy as illusory and demands the enquirer to reconsider, and re-investigate the data. The cause of the discrepancy may well be in the findings of science or reason, in which case it would be salutary to send the investigator back to the data for re-examination. And it may well be in his understanding of revelation, in which case it would be equally salutary to send him back to the data for review.

Third, the unity of truth, or the laws of nature with the patterns of the Creator, prescribes that no inquiry into the nature of creation or any part of it may be closed and concluded. The patterns of God in creation are infinite. No matter how much or how deeply we may come to know of them, there will always be more of them to discover. Hence, openness to new evidence and persistence of the quest are necessary characteristics of the Islāmic mind which accepts the unity of truth. A critical attitude to all human claims, and an active search for the laws of nature which is never ultimately conclusive, are at once necessary conditions of Islāmic and of genuine science. Under this view, the strongest conclusion is always tentative, valid only until new evidence has questioned, refuted or verified it. The highest wisdom, the most certain pronouncement, must always be followed with the affirmation, "وَلَا أَعْلَمُ (Allah knows better!)."

4. The Unity of Life: In a passage of the Qurān, Allah (SWT) said: "And when (after creating heaven and earth) Allah (SWT) told the angels that He was about to create a vicegerent and to assign him to the earth, the angels
pleaded; 'Would you place on earth persons who will do evil and shed blood while we praise and adore you constantly?' Allah (SWT) replied: 'I have an ulterior purpose which you do not know.' Having created 'Adam, Allah (SWT) taught him the names of all things, showed him to the angels and asked them to name the things of nature. They could not and answered, 'Praise be to You. We know only what You have taught us. Yours is the knowledge and the wisdom.' Allah (SWT) asked 'Adam to tell the names, which he did . . . Then Allah (SWT) asked the angels to prostrate themselves to 'Adam.' (2:30-34).

In other passages concerning the creation of man. Allah (SWT) said: "We offered Our trust heaven and earth and mountains. But they withdrew and refused to accept it. Man, however, agreed to carry it (33:72). I have not created men and jinn but to serve me . . . (51:56). Allah (SWT) created heaven and earth . . . that you (humankind) may prove yourselves ethically worthy by your deeds (11:7). Praised be He . . . Who created life and death that you may prove yourselves ethically worthy by your deeds (67:1-2).

a. The Divine Amānah—The foregoing passages of the Qur’ān answer for all time the question of whether or not man’s being has reason which explains it. Islām affirms with all possible emphasis that man has a raison d’être which is the service of Allah (SWT). The Divine Will is of two kinds, a kind that is realized necessarily, and the Divine patterns on the basis of which creation runs. These patterns are the laws of nature. They are immutable and their fulfillment is cosmic. In addition to revelation, they may be known by reason. Allah (SWT) enjoined upon man to seek them, to understand them, to establish them for knowledge, and to utilize them to his advantage. The second kind is realized only in freedom, only when they are fulfilled in a condition where both fulfillment and violation or non-fulfillment are distinct possibilities. These are the moral laws. They co-exist with the laws of nature; i.e., they are always realized in a context of things, persons and relations in the empirical world, but they belong to a different order from the empirical. They are a priori.

Whether or not they enter the real situation and become fulfilled therein depends upon that situation’s fulfillment or otherwise of their own peculiar requirements. They demand the free exercise of a personal will. Devoid of such will, “heaven and earth and mountains” were incapable of carrying the Divine amānah (trust). Only man carried it; for he alone is capable of such moral freedom. His capacity puts him above the angels, because they do not enjoy the freedom to obey and disobey. That is why Allah (SWT) commanded them to prostrate themselves before man. For their lack of moral freedom, they are inferior to man. They are perfect and can only obey Allah’s orders. They praise and serve him constantly, and never disobey. Thus the obedience of man is worthier than the obedience of the angels, precisely because it is done by a person who is well capable of doing otherwise. For such a person, to turn away from the way of evil, the way of the lesser good, the way of
the material or utilitarian or selfish good, and opt freely to do that which the moral law demands, is to realize a higher value. The moral life is a higher, superior, nobler and greater kind of life. The higher part of the Divine Will does not enter history and become real unless human beings chose to realize it in freedom. Man is therefore a cosmic bridge between the higher echelons of the Divine Will and historical reality. Evidently, his being is of tremendous significance.

b. The Khilāfah—Man's carrying of the Divine Amānah constitutes his khilāfah or vicegerency to Allah (SWT). His khilāfah consists in the fulfillment of the moral laws. But these have aspects which are not merely religious or other-worldly, but which are quite this-worldly in their character and effect. The rest of the corpus of religious or moral laws consists of actual practices of living, of being and doing. What they add to the actual practices is a quality, a perspective, a way of discharging those self-same practices. It is commonplace for men to desire; to grow and to enjoy; to acquire and possess, to love, to marry and procreate, to seize and exercise power, etc. Islām wishes these activities to continue. It does not, like Christianity or Buddhism, condemn and wish them to stop. All it seeks is to have humankind enter into these actions with different motivation, and to perform them in a different way. The different motivation is for them to be willed for the sake of God; and the different way is to do them justly and righteously, to have them bring about their utilitarian or moral objective without entailing any undesirable, unjust or immoral consequence.

The aforementioned unity follows from the fact that Islām does not separate the sacred or religious from the secular. In its view, there is one reality only, not two, as in the case of religions which bifurcate life into a sacred sector and a secular sector. Nothing is, as such, sacred except Allah. Islām regards everything as creaturely, not sacred, and it assumes it to be good since it is God's. It is the manner of doing what we do that fulfills or does not fulfill the religious or moral requirement. When it does, it is good; when it does not, it is evil. Human deeds alone, therefore, could be good or evil, virtuous or vicious, depending on whether they bring about justice, righteousness, beauty, happiness or otherwise. To be religious, therefore, does not mean to withdraw from the usual processes of life, nor to perform deeds which are utterly devoid of utilitarian value. The whole matter of religion is fundamentally the very practice of living. On this account, Islām remains imbedded in the very processes of life and history. There is neither piety nor virtue, and certainly no Islām, outside of these processes. Christianity and Buddhism may regard religion as requiring other imperatives such as the processes of life and history, self-mortification asceticism, monkery, and etc. They do so because in their view the processes of life and history stand condemned as evil and doomed. For Christianity believes creation is “fallen” and “evil” and
“hopeless” and prescribes faith and the *imitatio christi* as salvation. Likewise, Buddhism believes creation is evil, (tanha), full of nothing but pain and suffering; it prescribes self-and-life denial as salvation from the processes of life and history.

Islam denies such *a priori* axioms condemning life and history. In its view, creation, is as such good, brought about by Allah (SWT) for a good purpose, namely, that it may be affirmed with devotion to Him and justice to mankind. Involvement in its processes is at the root of Islam’s view of man. Allah (SWT) has appointed him to achieve two objectives. First, humans should transform creation into the Divine patterns, i.e., re-arrange its materials so as to make them fully and beneficially subserve human needs: the material (food, shelter, comfort, procreation) as well as the moral, the intellectual and the esthetic. Second, in the very act of transforming creation, humans ought to instantiate the ethical values by choosing to enter into those acts of transformation in an ethical way, that is, in a way that fulfills the requirements of devotion to Allah (SWT) and justice to mankind.

The content of the Divine *amūnah*, and therefore of *khilāfah*, is the development and establishment of culture and civilization. To institute peace and assurance of life and property; to organize humans into an ordered society capable of producing food; of processing, storing and distributing it to all in adequate quantities and quality; to provide shelter, warmth and comfort, communication and ease; to build and make available the tools necessary to realize these goals and; and finally to furnish opportunities for education and self-realization, for recreation and esthetic enjoyment—this is the core content of *khilāfah*. It is equivalent to the making of culture and civilization, and to the affirmation and promotion of life. Allah (SWT) commands all this to be done and declares it to be the very reason for His creation of the world. The Divine ulterior motive in all of this is to provide humans the opportunity to prove themselves ethically worthy in doing it. Allah knows best. They can do so by entering into their routines of action for His sake and maintaining the balance of justice throughout their actions. Rightly, Muslims understand *khilāfah* as predominantly political. The Qur’an repeatedly associated *khilāfah* with establishment of political power (7:128; 10:14, 73). Political action, i.e., participation in the political process as in election of *bay’ah* of the ruler, giving continual counsel and advice to the chief of state and his ministers, monitoring their actions, criticizing and even impeaching them—all these are not only desirable, but prime religious and ethical duties. Failure to perform such duties is, as the Prophet (SAAS) said, to lapse into *jāhiliyyah*. On the other hand, to be part of the political-economic body of Islam is integral to the faith itself. Abū Bakr and the *ṣaḥābah* (RAA) fought those who wanted to secede from the state while maintaining the faith; they were regarded as apostates who have rejected the whole of Islam. Unlike Christianity, which
regards the political process as the depth of evil, and counsels against involvement in it, Islām regards it of the essence and prohibits withdrawal. The same is true a fortiori of culture- and civilization-building. Islām regards them as the very business of religion. All the more contrasting with the norms of Islām, therefore, is the disengagement of the Muslim masses from the political process in the period of decay.

The same is true of the requirement of peace and security, perhaps the most precious and the most sought-after prize in the Muslim World today. Every Muslim must feel secure in his life, property, personal honor, and place in society. To fulfill this requirement is a first Islāmic societal imperative. To this end, Islām requires that every Muslim be politicized, i.e., awakened, organized, and mobilized to seek fulfillment of the objective in his own person as well as in the persons of his family members, neighbors, and all fellow-Muslims.

c. Comprehensiveness—The will of Islām to culture and civilization is comprehensive, as it must be if it is meant seriously. This comprehensiveness is at the foundation of the comprehensiveness of the sharī‘ah. Every aspect of human life is affected and this affection is the relevance of Islām to it. This relevance may be clear or unclear—hard as in the sharī‘ah’s injunctions and prohibitions, its wājibāt and muḥarramāt; or soft as in its categorizations of mandūb, makrūh and mubāḥ. But nothing escapes Islām’s relevance. True, the area of the mubāḥ (permissible) is wide. But its width is not a sign of Islām’s irrelevance, but of its fall outside the realm of strict enforcement, whether coercively, as in the case of the wājib and haram, or by moral authority as in the case of the mandūb and makrūh. Behold that realm stands the realm of culture and life-style which is just as important for Islām as that of strict enforcement. In fact, strict enforcement depends upon proper acculturation which is its presupposition, and without which it is unthinkable. Nothing is enforceable to which the masses have not been acculturated already, of which they are not already convinced.

It is therefore the duty of the Muslim thinker to Islāmize, i.e., to define and apply the relevance of Islām to every single item in human living. The Qur’ān has already done so in a number of areas of human activity, normally assigned the status of “soft enforcement” or neutrality; e.g., greeting, soft voice, door-knocking before entry, quick exit after food, gentleness to parents and elders, etc.. The Prophet (SAAS) did his best to complete the application by his teaching and example in the areas of how to eat and drink, to keep clean, to recreate oneself, to treat one’s neighbor, etc.. The style of life, which Islām had instituted in the early period in elaboration or extension of these Qur’ānic and Sunnaic directives, needs today to be redefined, recrystallized, complemented so as to extend to those activities which were not known or common then, or to apply more firmly to those areas which modernity had
raised from the status of luxury or marginality to that of necessity. The areas of social intercourse, of travel and transportation, of recreation, of the audio and visual arts, of mass communications, for example, are especially needy of such extension of coverage by the relevance of Islām.

5. The Unity of Humanity: Being the unity of the Creator, the Divine unity must stand in absolutely the same Creator-created relation to all humans. The converse of this relation is that all humans must stand inversely in a created-creator relation to the Creator. Humans cannot be ontically plural without this plurality implying an equal plurality in the Creator. Certainly, humans can and do have different characteristics such as race, color, physical build, personality, language style and culture. None can have ontological value; i.e., constitute the person it qualifies as a different being. None of them can affect the person's creature-status before Allah (SWT). Their value remains accidental to the person being Allah's creature. By affecting or sometimes determining the personality and/or conduct of the individual these characteristics may very often bring about his moral felicity or ruin. But their determination of the ethical outcome is never necessary, never final or ultimate. The inner core which is constitutive of the person's being must therefore remain somewhat free of them, capable of following their determinative power, as well as of doing otherwise, i.e., of channeling their causal efficacy to other ends.

The foregoing argument is the reason underlying the Divine statement of the Qurān: “O People, We have created you (all) of a single pair, a male and female (namely Adam and Ḥawwāʾ (Eve)); and We have constituted you into tribes and nations that you may know one another. Nobler among you in the estimate of Allah (SWT) is the more virtuous” (49:13). Belonging to one gender or another, to “tribes and nations” or one ethnicity or another, is perhaps the most obvious characterization of, and first differentiation among, humans. Second, comes language, physiognomy, intelligence, dexterity, body strength, which are less fixed at birth and more apt to undergo change. Third, there are the readily changeable characteristics of personality which constitute the virtues and vices: from wisdom and knowledge, piety and patience, to ignorance and foolishness, faithlessness and rebellion. All these constitute human personality or life style, at least in its foundation and base. The rest of personality and life style is what is built up as a habit or judgement, tendency or temperament, reputation, history or tradition of that personality through the accumulation of its own deeds. All of them are constitutive and determinative of the human person. But they differ widely from pre-determination before birth and hence immutability, to acquisition in various stages of life and hence growth and development, or change and abolition.

Humans are most apt to mistake the values of these characteristics, the nature of the roles they play in the life of the person. In history, no other human facts have determined judgment of persons and groups more than the first
order of characteristics, namely, gender and ethnicity. And yet these are the most innocent because they are the least dependent upon moral decision and action, the least susceptible to change. In most cases, their immediacy and obviousness misled judgment to take them as ontic and to differentiate and discriminate on their basis. That is why the Qur'an picked them first and sought to demolish all judgments dependent upon them. These characteristics are the work of Allah, necessary and unchangeable, created by Allah (SWT) merely for the purpose of identification. They are to be regarded solely as a "passport" or "identity card", saying absolutely nothing about the moral character or value of the carrier. This is the meaning of the verse if its terms are taken literally. If the term "know" is taken figuratively, then the Qur'an would be telling us that gender and ethnic characteristics were created by Allah (SWT) to the end of humans finding in them mutual cooperation.

All humans are therefore one and the same. On this ground, the universalism of Islam is based. All humans are one in the eyes of Allah (SWT) except as their deeds distinguish them in moral virtue, in cultural or civilizational achievement. If these deeds are dependent upon preemptive cultural characteristics hampering such achievement, it is a moral duty to alter those characteristics and to grow others—which is always possible. The door to such alteration is never closed. On the other hand, where judgment does take place on the basis of the immutable characteristics, a mortal crime—namely, ethnocentrism—is committed. The implications of such crime are ominous; the unity of humanity is violated, and Divine unity is violated as well. Nothing is more odious to Allah (SWT) than shirk (i.e., associationism, or polytheism); and nothing less than shirk is the implication of ethnocentrism. Religion and all sorts of causes have been paraded as cause of various conflicts among groups of humans. In reality, nearly all conflicts among groups are ultimately reducible to ethnocentric decisions made on the basis of the immutable characteristics of a so-called "enemy."

With ethnocentrism, of which racism and nationalism are the commonplace expressions, Islam can have no compromise. The conflict between them is insoluble, as the damage which ethnocentrism inflicts upon the human spirit—whether as subject or object of discrimination—is irreparable.

To condemn ethnocentrism as Islam does, is not to condemn patriotism. The latter means the attitude of love and endearment, of appreciation of the life and value of the group, of self-preparation to undergo any exertion or sacrifice, including laying down one's life, for its defence. As such, patriotism is not only an evil, but a positive good enjoined by Islam. It is both a religious and ethical duty, to love and serve, to defend one's people and land against aggression and injustice. Ethnocentrism, however, is far removed from patriotism. Its essence is to assume the advantage of the ethnic entity as the ultimate criterion of good and evil; and its most common expression is to
hold the ethnic entity superior to mankind because of the image characteristics of it members and to regard and pursue that advantage at the cost of any other. It is because ethnocentrism makes such assumptions that it is possible for it to command the absolute loyalty of its adherents. The claim it makes is the claim of ultimate reality. The committed ethnocentrists, whether Jew, German, French or Russian, genuinely assumes that their people are ultimate realities constituting ultimate criteria of good and evil. What Zionism built in the psyche of the Jewish people; what Hegel, Fichte, Nietzsche and other Romantic thinkers built in the psyche of the German people as to what is "Deutschland"; what Rousseau, Fustel de Coulanges and others had built in the psyche of the French people as to what is la Nation, or la France, was nothing short of a mystique which bloated their people into something approximating the ultimate reality of a religious faith. The pride and inspiration which those mystical entities command, the moving appeal which they exercise upon the heart and imagination of the adherents, are indeed those of a reality that is a mysterious, tremendous, fascinating a priori—absolute, transcendent and ultimate.

The Muslim is the person who believes the exact opposite precisely because his God is absolutely the only God of all, the premise which necessitates his assumption of the unities referred to above as well as the unity of humanity. A Muslim nationalist or racist is therefore a contradiction in terms; and the Muslim who claims commitment to nationalism is either a munafiq or zindig (i.e., a non-Muslim pretending to be one) or one whose commitment is so superficial that it cannot withstand the lure of bribe or personal advantage. That is also the reason why the careers of the overwhelming majority of so-called committed Muslim nationalist leaders had left much to be desired by way of consistency, fidelity to the professed ideal, and moral integrity.

In modern times, knowledge of man has nearly all been based upon ethnicity as the ultimate definition of humanity; and knowledge of society, upon ethnicity as the ultimate ground of social order and organization. The universalism of the "Enlightenment" had never been given a chance of implementation before it was repudiated in favor of the ethnocentric approach of Romanticism. Indeed, the universalism of the "Enlightenment" was theoretical and suspicious, considering that even in the hands of the prince of the movement, Immanuel Kant, the various peoples of mankind were graded as superior and inferior on the basis of traditional European prejudices and the innate characteristics of Asians, Africans, and Europeans. Romanticism swept over the whole of the West, wiped out every trace of rationalist or Christian universalism, and provided the greatest impetus for the humanities, the arts and the social sciences. Man was defined by the thinkers as a function of facts, faculties and forces which spring and nourish themselves from a land mythically conceived, from a race or people or blood mysteriously standing in an infinite
dimension of time, and from a tradition whose roots run infinitely as to depth and extension in both space and time. Furthermore, these are understood not by reason, but grasped by feeling, immediate experience and intuition. Their most eloquent and clearest expression is to be found in the arts, especially in music, painting, and literature. Even religion was re-conceived by these romantic thinkers, notably Schleiermacher, as founded solely on the ineffable experience of the adherent, i.e., personal feelings—after conceding the point to detractors that it is irrational and arbitrary and of the same nature as “illusion” and “opium”.

The Western humanities continued to speak of “man” and “humanity”. But in their romanticized understanding, these terms denoted Western man and Western humanity. If they did not exclude the billion “blacks”, and the billion “browns” and the billion “yellows” of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, they counted them only as approximations of humanity which may be colonized, exploited and used for the welfare of Western humanity. Certainly these “humanities” ought to be studied; but only as specimens of an age that the West once underwent, and thus contribute to the Western man’s historical (evolutionary) understanding of himself.

Ethnocentrism is internally divisive because it is always possible to find within any defined group, sub-groups which reveal a greater concentration of innate characteristic than the larger group. Such “fact” could then furnish the base for a small group to call itself an ethnic entity endowed with a stronger particularism. Hence, besides separating the Westerners from the rest of the world with which they were coming into more intensive contact because of the development of industry and transportation, romanticism divided the West into mutually hostile and competitive nations, each seeking its “national interest” as if it were the criterion of all good and evil. The nations of the West learnt from and readily accepted the findings of one another. The romantic insights, analysis and expression of one nation were quickly acknowledged as true of another, then adopted and applied as if they were one’s own.

The Western social sciences: history, geography, economics, political science, sociology and anthropology, were all developed under the impetus provided by Romanticism. All of them, each in its own way, are based upon the ethnocentric view that the nation, or ethnic entity in its well-defined geography and demography, but infinite and woozy history, is the ultimate unit of analysis and value. When they speak of “society” or “social order”, they mean their own national entity or order. In political science, Western geography and history conceives of the world only as a satellite to the West, a world revolving around England, America, France, Germany, or Italy as its heart and core, depending on the author and place of publication. Western economics was at its earlier stages impertinent enough to claim for itself the status of a universal science. But it was put back in its place as a Western analysis of a Western
nation by the arch-romanticists and ethnocentrists of Europe, the Nazis. The same bombastic claims made on behalf of the discipline by Karl Marx were denied in practice by Lenin and Khruschev. Their regimes however have not yet permitted a statement to this effect to appear in print; but it has allowed a fair measure of ethnocentric (in this case, national-socialistic) declarations to be included in the new U.S.S.R. (1978) constitution.

Finally, anthropology is the boldest of all. In its view, "humanity" means ethnicity and is logically equivalent to and convertible with it. In the last two centuries, its effect has been to whip up mankind into a frenzy of ethnocentric consciousness by singling out one subgroup after another, and constructing for it an ideology and axiology out of that group's innate characteristics or what its advocates have fabricated and declared to be innate and particular to that ethnic group. Instead of identifying and emphasizing what is universally human, its whole concern is to identify, develop and blow up to great proportion the particular.

Islām recognized the family as the constitutive unit of social order and buttressed its extended form with legislation regarding inheritance and dependence to enable the largest possible family membership to eat from the same kitchen, and hence economically. The purpose is that by living in close proximity to one another, often under the same roof, the members of the extended family would mutually support their social, emotional and mental health and well being. Beyond the family, Islām recognized not the nation or ethnic group, but humanity, the universal social order. Nothing stands between the two circles of family and humanity. By themselves they constitute all there is to the social order. Man's membership in this order is Islām's concern in the social sciences. Human groupings between the family and humankind, namely, the country or region, the people or nation, is regarded in Islām as purely administrative units which are absolutely irrelevant to the definition of good and evil and to the interpretation and application of the shari'ah. The arts, the humanities and the social sciences of the modern West must therefore be totally recast. A new foundation of first principles should be given to them which are concordant with the universalism of Islām. And they ought to receive from the Islāmic thinkers a new axiology—viz., Islāmic values and ends—as ultimate objectives for guiding social research.

V. The Workplan

The objectives of the Work Plan are the following:
1. To master the modern disciplines.
2. To master the Islāmic legacy.
3. To establish the specific relevance of Islām to each area of modern knowledge.
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4. To seek ways for creative synthesis between the legacy and modern knowledge.

5. To launch Islamic thought on the trajectory which leads it to the fulfillment of the Divine patterns of Allah (SWT).

To realize these objectives, a number of steps must be taken. Their logical order defines the order of priority belonging to each step.

A. The Necessary Steps Leading to Islamization of Knowledge.

Step 1. Mastery of the Modern Discipline: Categories Breakdown.

The disciplines, as they stand today in their most advanced state in the West, must be broken down today into categories, principles, methodologies, problems and themes. Such breakdown must reflect the “table of contents” of a classic textbook in the discipline’s methodology, or the syllabus of a course in the discipline which all graduate courses in that discipline assume their students to have taken and mastered. Such breakdown will not be couched in technical terms, nor in chapters’ titles. It would have to be couched in sentence-form, making clear what the technical terms mean, and explaining the categories, principles, problems and dominant themes of the discipline in its Western and highest form.

Step 2. Discipline Survey

Every discipline ought to be surveyed and essays written on it to lay bare the broad outlines of its genesis and historical development, the growth of its methodology, the widening of its field of vision, the main contributions which its great votaries have made. An annotated bibliography of the most important works should conclude the survey for each discipline. It should include, in categorized and ordered form, the most important books and articles upon which knowledge of the discipline stands, and without which no mastery of it may be achieved.

This step has for purpose to ascertain Muslim understanding and mastery of the discipline as it developed in the West. Clearly substantiated and amply annotated and footnoted, the discipline survey would constitute a base of common understanding for specialists on the discipline which they are expected to Islamize. Since disciplines in the West today have become “many-splendored things” because of the explosion of knowledge, it would be necessary for Islamic scholars dealing with that discipline to touch base and agree together on the identity, history, topography, and frontiers of the object of their Islamization efforts.
Step 3. Master of the Islāmic Legacy: The Anthology

Before any elaboration of the specific relevance of Islām to the discipline, it is necessary to discover what the legacy of Islām had to say on the discipline. The legacy of the ancestors must remain for us the starting point of the relevance of Islām. Our Islāmization of the discipline would be all the poorer if it did not make the legacy into account and did not benefit from the insights of the ancestors. However, the contribution of the legacy to the discipline is not ready for the modern researcher to obtain, to read or to understand. Indeed, the modern researcher is not equipped even to search in the legacy for Islām’s contribution to the discipline. The reason is that the categories of the modern discipline, sometimes even its very name, are unknown as such in the legacy. Likewise, the legacy may contain worthy materials which are not classifiable/relatable to any modern category. The Western-trained Muslim scholar is too often defeated by inaccessibility of the legacy. He is strongly tempted to give up in despair, judging that the legacy is silent on the matter in hand whereas the fact is that he is unfamiliar with the legacy’s categories under which the sort of material relevant to his discipline is classified. Moreover, the Western trained Muslim scholar has neither the time nor the energy requisite for successful exploration of the vast and colossal works of the legacy of Islāmic learning.

On the other hand, the traditionally trained Muslim scholars, masters of the Islāmic legacy, can neither discover nor can establish the relevance of the legacy to the modern disciplines because of their ignorance of those disciplines. This is so despite their expertise in the legacy. They are unfamiliar with the topics, the problems and themes of the modern disciplines. Therefore, it is necessary to instruct them in what is needed and then turn them loose on the legacy to draw from it what is pertinent. For this, the products of steps 1 and 2 serve the purpose, by familiarizing the experts with the modern disciplines and thus providing them with a criterion of relevance which they can use in their searches.

This step involves the preparation of several volumes of anthologies of selected readings from the legacy for each modern discipline, arranged according to the categories of that discipline. These anthologies would give the modern Muslim scholar ready access to the legacy in the area of his specialization. They would present in a topical order familiar to him, the best that the legacy has contributed to the range of issues which are the main objects of his disciplined study. Since the modern Muslim disciplinarian has neither time nor know-how to reach the legacy by himself (in most cases he does not even know the language of the legacy), no familiarity with the legacy—let alone the mastery of it—is possible for him without these anthologies.
Step 4. Mastery of the Islāmic Legacy: The Analysis

In order to bring the achievements of the Islāmic legacy closer to the understanding of the Western-trained Muslim scholar, it is necessary to do more than merely to present in anthological form, pages of materials dealing with a given subject. The ancestors had done their own work of relating the Islāmic vision to the problems which they faced. And they did so under influence of all sorts of factors and forces which pressed upon them for attention. In order to understand their crystallization of the Islāmic vision, their works must need be analyzed against their historical background, and the relations of the problem at issue with the other departments of human life and thought identified and exposed. Historical analysis of the contributions of the legacy will undoubtedly illuminate numerous areas of the Islāmic vision itself. It is conducive to a better understanding of the vision to learn how the ancestors understood and were moved by it; how they translated it into prescriptions for action and a style for conduct; how it helped them overcome and solve their peculiar difficulties and problems.

Such analyses of the contributions of the Islāmic legacy cannot be undertaken at random. A hierarchy of priorities ought to be established and Islāmic scholars invited to undertake them in order. Above all the main principles, the major problems, the continuing themes—those issues which promise relevance to the problems of the present, ought to be the object of Islāmic educational and research strategy.

Step 5. Establishment of the Specific Relevance of Islām to the Disciplines.

The foregoing four steps amount to posing the problem to the Islāmic thinker. Together, they sum up for him the development of the discipline which Muslims have missed during their slumber. Equally, they should inform him with the greatest authority and clarity possible of the contributions of the Islāmic legacy to the areas studied by the disciplines, and generally, to the goals of the discipline. These materials will have to be made more specific by translating them into principles on a level with the modern discipline in general, or in theory and of reference and application. In this regard, the nature of the modern discipline, its constituent methods, principles, problems, objectives and hope, its achievements and shortcomings—all of these should be related to the Islāmic legacy; and the legacy's specific relevance to each must be deduced from the general contribution. Three major questions must be posed and answers to them found. The first is, what did the Islāmic legacy of learning, from the Qurān to the modernists, contribute to the whole range of issues envisaged by the discipline? The second is, how does the Islāmic legacy's contribution to the discipline compare or contrast with the achievement of the discipline? Where has the legacy fulfilled, fallen short of, or transcended the vision and
scope of the discipline? The third is, given the areas or issues in which the Islamic legacy has given little or nothing, in which direction may the Muslim effort be henceforth exerted in order to fill the discrepancy, reformulate the problem, and enlarge the vision?


Now that both the modern discipline and the Islamic legacy have been exposed, their methodologies, principles, themes, problems and achievements identified, surveyed and analyzed; and finally, now that the specific relevance of Islam to the discipline has been clarified and established, the discipline should be subjected to critical analysis from the standpoint of Islam. This a major step in the Islamization of knowledge. All the previous five steps seem to lead to it as a sort of preparatio. In its historical development, the circumstantial factors which determined the discipline to be what it is must be identified and exposed. Its methodology—what it regards as its data and problems, their classification and categorization; what it regards as its theory, the first principles under which it treats its problems—must be analyzed and tested for reductionism, adequacy, reasonableness and consistency with the five-fold unity which Islam teaches. The discipline's dominant problems and persistent themes ought to be analyzed for their assumptions, their importance and relationship to the essential vision of the discipline. The discipline's ultimate purpose ought to be critically related to its methodology as well as to its front line objectives. Has it fulfilled the vision of its own founders? Has it realized its role in the total enterprise of knowledge-seeking that is the human quest? Has it established for the understanding and for history the Divine patterns of creation it was meant to establish? The answers to these questions should give a genuine state-of-the-art report on the discipline from the standpoint of Islam, as well as to shed the necessary light upon the areas where one or another kind of Islamic correction, amendment, addition or elimination is necessary.


By the Islamic legacy we first mean the Holy Qur'an, the word of Allah (SWT) and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAAS). These are not objects of criticism or of assessment. The Divine status of the Qur'an and the normativeness of the Sunnah are beyond question. Muslim understanding of these two sources however is not. Rather, it is subject to both assessment and criticism in terms of the principles which these sources provide. So too is everything else in the legacy, which may be derived from either of the two sources by human intellectual endeavor. This human element needs to be reviewed because it is not playing the dynamic role in Muslim life which it
once did, and which it is always supposed to play. The relevance of our human understanding of the relation to the various problems of the present must be subject to critique from three areas of reference: First, the Islamic vision insofar as it can be established from the sources of revelation directly and from its concrete instantiation in history by the Prophet (SAAS), his companions (RAA) and their descendents; Second, the present needs of the Ummah around the world; and Third, all modern knowledge represented by the discipline. If the legacy is found to be inadequate or erring, it should be corrected by our present endeavor. If it is adequate, further development and creative recrystallization are necessary for the future. At any rate, no Islamic stand is viable today which does not relate to the legacy of Islam. To do so, it must be based upon thorough knowledge of the legacy in its strength and weakness. Moreover, today’s and tomorrow’s Islamic stand must assume a form that is consistent with the legacy, rather than a radical departure from it.

The task of assessing the Islamic legacy’s contribution in each fields of human activity must therefore fall upon the shoulders of the experts in that activity. They are the monitors of the Muslims need in that field and they are the masters of the modern discipline studying that activity. Certainly, they should be assisted by the experts in the legacy in order to guarantee the most adequate and correct understanding of it possible.


Awakening from its slumber, the ‘Ummah is today confronted with formidable problems on all fronts. Its economic, social and political problems which are overpowering by any standard’ are “iceberg tops” of deeper-lying malaise on the intellectual and moral levels. The whole “iceberg”, or complex of causes, manifestations, dialectic with other phenomena and consequences of the ‘Ummah’s problems, requires empirical survey and critical analysis. The wisdom of the discipline should be brought to bear upon the ‘Ummah’s problems, i.e., to enable the Muslims to understand them correctly, to assess with precision their effect upon the cause of Islam in the world. No Muslim disciplinarian may pursue his disciplined study as pure, ivory tower, intellectual curiosity; as it were, in isolation from the ‘Ummah’s existential realities or from its hopes and aspirations. The prayer to Allah (SWT) to grant us a “useful knowledge” must apply to our disciplinarian pursuits, by bending our gaze to the problems at hand. Above all, the problem of the disciplines and of our educational institutions, viz., the persistence of their de-Islamization attempts. Simultaneously, our attention must be devoted to the main problems affecting the ‘Ummah’s political, social, economic, intellectual, cultural, moral and spiritual problems; indeed, the ‘Ummah’s problems in every department of human endeavor.

It is an intrinsic part of the Islāmic vision to bear responsibility not only for the welfare of the 'Ummah but for that of the whole human race. Indeed, the amānāh of Allah (SWT) encompasses the whole universe; and man's responsibility must accord therewith. It is true that the 'Ummah is in many respects backward and non-developed by comparison to other 'Ummāt. But in the respect of possessing the truth, the ideological statement of it which is most conducive to religious, ethical, and material prosperity at the same time, the 'Ummah is second to none. Because of Islām, the 'Ummah alone possesses the vision requisite for the felicity of humankind, for history to be as Allah (SWT) has desired it to be.

Hence, the Islāmic thinker is called upon to confront the problems facing the world today and to contend for their solution according to Islām. As carrier of the Islāmic vision, the 'Ummah is today the only viable speaker for the human masses of the earth whose cause it lost between imperialists-colonialists' conquests, and the resulting results of the people revolutionaries seeking to throw off their yokes. Ethnocentrism is still ravaging inter-human relations worldwide. Alcohol and other drugs, sexual promiscuity and deterioration of the family ethic, illiteracy and laziness, militarism and armament build up, the rape of nature and the threat to the earth's ecological balance have been doing the rest without effective check from any source. Certainly, these problems constitute another area of reference for Islāmic thought, planning and action, that is of crucial importance to the 'Ummah's felicity as well as to the felicity of mankind. To solve these problems and to lead mankind to felicity—that is to prosperity with justice and dignity—cannot be separated from the Islāmic hope.


Having understood and mastered the modern disciplines as well as the Islāmic legacy; having assessed their strengths and weaknesses; having established the relevance of Islām to the specific areas of inquiry of the disciplines; having identified and grasped the problems facing the 'Ummah in its march in history as the khulāṣa of Allah on earth; and having understood the larger problems of humankind from the standpoint of Islām which enjoins upon the Muslims to be shuhādā‘ 'alā al nās in human history, the stage is now set for the Islāmic mind to make its creative leap. A new road must be blazed for Islām in the fifteenth century if it is to resume its world leadership and continue its salutary and civilizing role in human affairs.

A creative synthesis must be struck between the Islāmic legacy and the modern disciplines which would bridge over the gap of centuries of non-development. The legacy of Islāmic learning must become continuous with
themodern achievements and start to move the frontiers of knowledge to more distant horizons than the modern disciplines have envisaged. The creative synthesis must maintain its relevance to the 'Ummah's reality by addressing itself to its problems which have already been identified and analyzed. Indeed, it must provide efficacious solutions to the problems of the whole world as well as address the ever-new issues presented by Islamic hope. What are the specific contents of that hope in every department of human life and how does the new synthesis move the 'Ummah and mankind forward in its realization of that hope?

Given the specific relevance of the legacy to a certain topic or problem, and given the particular character of the pertinent issue, what options are legitimate for the Muslim to pursue? Certainly in every case, a vast array of options are possible, which approximate or stand at a distance from the Islamic ideal; which are more or less effective; which generate or retard movement toward Islam's ultimate goals. Which of these options is possible, necessary or indispensable, desirable, legitimate? By what criteria may the specific relevance of Islam (its shari'ah, its ethic, its culture and spirit) to the problem be ascertained? By what principles may the contribution of the creative synthesis be projected, tested and evaluated; the proper emendations and corrections introduced, and their progress and efficacy monitored and evaluated?

Step 11. Recasting the Disciplines under the Framework of Islam:
The University Textbook.

By nature, the Islamically determined minds will not all reach the same solutions, or choose the same options in their determination of the relevance of Islam to the present and future existence of the 'Ummah. Such diversity will not be undesirable, but highly welcome. We need scores of diverse critical analyses by the Islamically committed and modern-disciplined in order to enrich the 'Ummah's consciousness of its own desiderata and goals. In fact, the 'Ummah may not be said to have recaptured its dynamism of the first centuries of the Hijrah unless Islam itself becomes again for all Muslims a cauldron constantly bubbling with new ideas in which Allah's patterns may be objectified in nature; an infinite mine of ethical and creative options in which His divine values and commandments may be concretized and instantiated in history.

It is out of a wealth of such new insights into the meaning of Islam, of creative options for the realization of that meaning, that the desired college or university textbook may be written for the discipline. The essays representing individual breakthroughs in any topic, branch or problem must pile high in order to provide a "background vision", or "field of relevance" from which the Islamic vision for the discipline may be drawn.

Islamization of the discipline is not fulfilled by one textbook, even if it complies perfectly with the foregoing requirement. Scores of textbooks are need-
ed to develop the intellectual stamina of Muslim minds. Above all, numerous books are immediately needed to fill the educational needs of the various university levels (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior and graduate). More books are needed to satisfy the Muslim needs which are infinite and to project and crystalize the vision of Islam which is equally infinite. However, priority dictates that our first efforts be devoted to the production of a standard textbook in each discipline which would state definitively the relevance of the Islamic vision to that discipline—and serve as a general guide for future Islamic minds to follow. Hopefully, it need not be said that any attempt to preempt the production of the university textbook by leaping over the foregoing steps in bound to result in mediocrity. The Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) commanded us to do anything that we enter upon doing, perfectly. The university textbook is truly the final end of the long process of Islamization of the disciplines. It is the work which crowns the long search of all foregoing steps.

Step 12. Dissemination of Islamized Knowledge

It would be idle, even if great, should all these works be produced by Islamic scholars, and be kept in the privacy of their personal collections. And it would be a great pity if they should remain known only to a closed circle of their authors' acquaintances and friends, or utilized by the educational institutions of their neighborhoods or countries alone. Whatever is produced for the sake of Allah (SWT) belongs to the whole 'Ummah. The benefit of it will not win Allah's blessing unless it is brought to and is appropriated by the greatest number of His creatures. Although Muslims may, and indeed should be, materially rewarded for their intellectual effort, the work of thought in Islam cannot be copyrighted, i.e., monopolized for profit. The fact that it is produced for the sake of Allah (SWT) imposes upon it always to remain available to whomsoever wishes to invest in the paper, ink and binding necessary to carry it.

Second, the intellectual work to be produced in the foregoing steps is intended as something by which the Muslims of the world—nay, mankind—are to be awakened, enlightened and enriched. They are the readers, or "consumers" of the product. However, being Islamic, executed for the sake of Allah (SWT), and carrying within it the vision of Islam itself, it is expected to do more than to inform. In presence of the vision of Islam, human consciousness should lose its poise, become astir, and generate new energies hitherto unknown. Under its spell, the subject is expected to become an instrument of the Divine will, and ready to press forward and achieve in Allah's (SWT) name, what he had never dreamt of achieving before.

That is why the Work Plan calls for measures to place everyone of the works produced, under the foregoing steps, in the hand of every Muslim university academician free of charge. To such academician, the given article, essay,
pamphlet, anthology or book should come as a personal invitation to join in this enterprise, to become a “producer” of better works in consequence of his appropriation of the product in hand. Equally, to place such products in the hand of all Muslim thinkers is the greatest reward possible in this world. This is not to obviate the need for the material reward; but for the scholar determined by the vision of Islam and devoted to seek wajh Allah (SWT) there can be no greater reward than to plant that vision in the heart and mind of another human, no greater duty than to nurture that vision in the consciousness of the Muslims of the world.

Third, the products of this Work Plan should be officially presented to the universities and colleges of the Muslim World with the request to consider them for possible adoption as required readings in the pertinent courses of instruction. Naturally, they would have to be translated to the languages of instruction in the various countries of the Muslim World.

B. Other Necessary Aids to Islamization of Knowledge.

1. Conferences and Seminars: A series of conferences and seminars should be held between experts in the relevant fields designed to solve any problems transcending any single discipline. The 'Ummah’s problems mostly fall in this category requiring all the light numerous disciplines could shed on them at the same time. Another series of conferences should be held between scholars specialized in various aspects or areas within one and the same discipline in order to assist one another in their respective tasks.

2. Classroom Workshops for Faculty Training: Once the textbook and the literature preceding it in steps I-J2 have been produced, it is necessary for the teaching faculty to be trained in their use. The experts who produced these works should be given the opportunity to meet the faculty and discuss with them the unwritten presuppositions, the unprojected effects of the theories, principles or solutions they have included in their essays and books. In addition, such meetings would explore the pedagogical issues of materials-presentation and thus help the faculty to achieve the ultimate goal efficiently.

C. Further Rules of Implementation.

1. In this stage of Muslim academic development, it is not reasonable to expect Muslim scholars to contribute their work free. Honoraria proportionate to effort, and additional to their regular salaries, should be instituted as incentives and rewards for production and quality. Such honoraria should be fixed on the basis of scholarly standards universally applied throughout the
world. We do not believe that the Muslim and/or native or resident scholar should be paid less than the non-Muslim, non-native or non-resident. Such discrimination is at the very root of the "brain drain"; at the very root of the demoralization of the Muslim scholar; and finally, at the very root of the cynicism, unconcern, and the lapse into academic nihilism of the resident scholar.

2. The greatest possible care should be taken to see to it that only the most competent scholars are commissioned to produce the instructional materials projected. However, since it cannot be absolutely ascertained that any scholar commissioned to do a certain piece of work will actually produce it, and since the quality of the product thus commissioned cannot be absolutely guaranteed, more than one scholar should be commissioned to produce the same work. Casualty is only the other side of exacting demand, and cannot be compromised. Hence, it is to be accepted as principle that up to five scholars will have to be commissioned to do each piece of work. Moreover, since scholarly work—even in the exact sciences, though to a lesser degree than in the social sciences and humanities—is bound to be personal and represent differing viewpoints and styles of the authors, the multiplication of commissioned works in one discipline is never a duplication. It is always an enrichment.

3. Wherever the work contemplated is too big for any individual, it should be divided into parts, each of which would be commissioned to a separate scholar. This will also expedite completion within the projected time.

4. Since this work is a pioneering effort—a real "first" in the Muslim World—and since its benefits will fall to all Muslim countries, it is certainly justified to seek funding for it from every Muslim country. Islamization of modern knowledge is a fard āyn on the whole Ummah as long as no responsible agency of the 'Ummah has undertaken it. Every effort must be exerted therefore to obtain funds from the Muslim World, its organs and agencies, and its rich individuals.