

**ISLAMIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE:
THE QUESTION OF IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES**

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Preamble:

The Islamization of knowledge project came as an evolution. It emerged in stages. Shocked by the socio-political and economic crisis that enveloped the Muslim world in the 20th century, the Muslims intelligentsia attributed the crisis to the nature of education implemented in the Muslim countries. It is the secular education in which religion and religious orientation are kept in abeyance. Islamization of knowledge was proposed as the panacea to the crisis. The activities in terms of seminars, conferences and meetings which led to the Islamization proposal spanned a period of ten years (1972-1982). The activities include the following:

- (1) Establishment of Muslim Social scientists in USA in 1972
- (2) Organization of World Conferences on Islamic Education in
 - Jeddah 1977
 - Pakistan 1980
 - Dacca 1981
 - Jakarta 1982
- (3) Establishment of International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) 1982
- (4) World Centre for Islamic Education Umm Al-Qura University

(5) Publication of RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOUR WOLD CONFERENCES ON ISLAMIC EDUCATION Makkah 1983

(6) Publication of other materials on Islamization of knowledge which include:

- The Role of Religion in Education by Qutb
- Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education
- Western Educational Theory and Islamization of Knowledge in South Asia
- Crisis in Muslim Education
- Conceptual Crisis and Natural Sciences
- Curriculum and Teacher Education
- Muslim Education Quarterly (The Islamic Academy, Cambridge) etc

The Muslim personalities who played key roles in these activities include Professors Ismaíl Faruqi, Ghulam Ahmad, Ashraf S.A. all of blessed memory.

The Term Islamization of Knowledge: How appropriate?

As a prelude, it should be noted that the proposal or project before the Muslim intelligentsia is to seek an enduring solution to the socio-political and economic crisis in the Muslim world through education. Through the activities highlighted above, the Muslim intelligentsia concluded that changing the education system in the Muslim world is the first step towards solving the crisis. Thus, the term **Islamization of knowledge** was adopted as the right tag for the process of changing the education system.

A school of thought argues that, given the antecedent to the secular education, the term **Islamization of knowledge** is inappropriate. This school of thought, to which I subscribe, anchors its opinion on the fact that the Muslim University in Cordova, Spain served as the bridge through which the concept of university education crossed to the Western world. The education system which the Muslim university bequeathed to the West did not segment learning into religious and secular boundaries. If the west returned to the Muslim world a repackaged education system in which religion takes the back seat, and to the extent that the repackaged system is harmful and the Muslim world is poised to return to the basis, returning to the basis cannot be termed Islamization of knowledge. In other words, the education system as repackaged and returned to us is incomplete. An effort to make it (the incomplete education) complete by inclusion of the missing link which is the religious component cannot be called Islamization of Knowledge. The effort is

simply returning to the basis. If we are looking for a term to describe the effort or project of returning to the basis, **Revival of Knowledge** suffices.

When the West repacked education taken from us, the process of repackaging was not termed westernization of knowledge.

At this juncture, it is pertinent to recognize the fact that it is not Muslims only who have sported danger and ills in the secular education. Some non-Muslim intellectuals have been drawing attention to the ills and inadequacies of western education. For example, in his inaugural lecture presented in June, 2006, Professor A.A. Lawal of the Department of History and Strategic Studies, University of Lagos titled his lecture **CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA: A COLONIAL LEGACY**. This is a cathollogue of the ills of the colonial administration in Nigeria. Education has its own share of ills being a colonial legacy.

Also worthy of note is a book published in 1984 in USA. It is entitled **Intellectuals Speak Out About God**. It is a direct allusion to the importance of religion in our public life.

Implementation Techniques.

The necessary steps to take towards implementation of Islamization of Knowledge include the following:

- (1) Indigenization of the Procedure and Goals
- (2) None reliance on foreign aids
- (3) Mobilization of Experts from the Nigerian Institutions
- (4) Mobilization of funds.
- (5) Drawing Experiences from both local and international sources
- (6) Setting a project schedule
- (7) Ensuring Sincerity of purpose**

(a) Rationale for Islamization: Defects in Education

At the implementation level, the starting point is the identification of the ills of the current education system. The obvious index or manifestation of the ills of the current system is the outcome of the system. The way the country is run and the attitude of an average educated Nigerian to materialis are clear indicators of the ills of education. For example:

- Salaries/allowances of the political office holders at all level of government
- Change of the vehicle plate number

- Taking foreign loans Deliberate killing of industries and its attendant woes of unemployment/insecurity
- Driving habit, etc

Any person who can perpetrate the above is certainly a product of a defective education system. In other words, all misdemeanours an educated Nigerian may exhibit can be squarely attributed to his/her education. An extensive study of such socially undesirable acts should be undertaken at the beginning of implementation techniques.

(b) Curriculum Design

Having identified such defects as highlighted above, the missing link is sourced and injected into the curriculum. The missing link is character which is to be enforced through the instrumentalization of religion. Which religion? The technique of integration? The reaction of an Islamic Studies graduate to a sack order.

Publications

A-B above should be conducted at seminars and workshops the proceedings of which will metamorphose into textbooks for learners at all levels of education.

Retraining of Teachers

Teachers must be retrained to understand the philosophy of Islamization of knowledge because they are the prospective **interpreters** of the new curriculum and new textbooks.

Conclusions

The implementers of Islamization of knowledge should aim at producing curriculum, textbooks and teachers in such a manner that will make the teaching of Islamic Studies an integral part of any classroom learning activity. In other words, Islamic Studies is taught through any classroom subject.

We must learn a lesson from the idea of transfer of technology as advocated by some Nigerians who considered it saw the right step towards realization of nation building. It does not require the wisdom of Solomon to know that technology transferred cannot give a sustainable development. If Nigerians are desirous of sustainable development, they must aim at home grown technology, that is, the technology that emanates from the ingenuity of Nigerians and through deployment

of materials sourced locally. In the same token, the Islamization of knowledge project (if we must use the term) must be conceived by Nigerian Muslims who, believing in what the project is all about, will mobilize human and material resources in terms of experts and funds. We must not wait to be guided by foreign interests in this regard. If the purpose of Islamization of knowledge is to re-engineer and reshape our education system with a view to producing a sustainable growth, we must look inwards. We are stakeholders in Islam as well as in nation-building. Furthermore, we must take a critical look at the appropriateness or otherwise of the tag Islamization. An alternative term can be suggested in case we are convinced of inappropriateness of the term Islamization.