EMPOWERING EDUCATION WITH VALUES AND INTEGRATION OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE: MADRASAH AL-ZAHRA MODEL

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Abstract

Discussing Said Nursi’s thoughts in the universal context has become imperative given his most holistic harmonious universal approach to various problems Islamic civilisation faces? His idealism was coupled with very pragmatic implications holding hope and optimism for solution of various problems besetting humanity in general and Muslims in particular. In my view the world can benefit from his ideas and thoughts in fields such as educational Empowerment and Integration of Religion and Science and reflection on the thinking of Nursi on these civilisational challenges for Muslims are very appropriate and most rewarding. On educational front efforts of Nursi’s contemporary and successor visionaries of Islam like Shibli Maududi, Sir Syed and Ismail Raja Faruqui and others have met but with very less success in convincing the traditional Muslim clergy about the tenacity of modern sciences visa vise religious sciences .But Madrasah Zahra model presented by Nursi stands for “integration of knowledge”, and his view that religious subjects should be taught in the secular schools (maktab) and that the positive sciences in the religious schools (madrasahs), so that the students of secular education are salvaged from irreligious behaviour the religious schools from bigotry, are very progressive. Moreover, his ideas about integration of science and technology with education are very futuristic and rewarding given the pathetic situation of Muslims in educational field worldwide. In this paper we will make a detailed study of various models of education presented by Faruqui Maududi, Sir Syed and others and will make a comparison of these models with the Nursian model, where both the objectives of empowerment through education and integration of religion with science and technology can comfortably be realized practically and in a convincing balance. The unique civilizational features of Madrasah al-Zahra model make it a most suitable and culturally viable model for Muslims in its global perspective also. Therefore studying this model in depth is highly desirable in the context of the consumerist tendencies emerging in the spheres of education and technology alarmingly, with no exception of Muslims and non Muslims, by relegating spiritual and moral values to margins. Nursian model provides an alternative which meets the demands of modern times but does not neglect the much needed values the education should imbibe to face the challenges in the wake of aggressive atheism, plague of materialism and scourge of naturalism etc.

Keywords: Said Nursi’s thoughts, Madrasah al-Zahra model, Religion and Science

1. INTRODUCTION

The Madrasah al-Zahra Model given by Said Nursi is very comprehensive and caters needs both of religion, science and morality and thus makes beautiful blend of all the three in a holistic manner. Sir Syed envisaged a model based on western standards of morality and scientific temper but he ignored the basic religious elements which were being trampled over under its feet because western secularism and atheism was the leading educational undercurrent post renaissance in the west. Mawlana Maududi was a visionary and provided some insights about education but Nursian model surpasses all these models as it is envisaged in the wake of aggressive atheism and plague of materialism, which had made their inroads under the garb of the naturalism in post Kemalian Turkey. This model has taken full cognizance of the needs of Muslims clergy as well as laity. It has talked about the
universal terms and has laid much emphasis on spiritual values and moral etiquette to be inculcated in the students of the proposed Zahra University which was to be established at Van province of the Kurdish belt of Turkey. 

This experiment was in consonance with the golden traditions of Islam which were inspiring Muslims from the times of Holy Prophet (SAW) and were holding promise for the future as well. But in order to appreciate Nursian Model in a comparative perspective, we will make its utility more deciphered and pronounced. Therefore we are presenting the other three models of Educational renaissance of Muslim civilisation presented by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan of India, Maulana Mawdudi of undivided India and Dr. Ismail Raji al Faruqi of Palestine to finally pave way for appreciation of Nursi’s Model.

2. TRADITIONS OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

To start with no book before the Quran had any command in favour of learning Prophet (SAW) first time gave value to learning and encouraged people for acquisition of knowledge and considered it an obligation and a compulsory education system was first time introduced by the prophet (SAW). During the days of ignorance the only rendezvous the Arabs was the annual fair art Makah where people used to trade and some people who were know learning and writing would also come to attend it and by this interaction some of the Arabs had learnt something about writing and reading. At the advent of the prophet (SAW) there were hardly 17 or 18 people who could write or read. The prophet (SAW) while alluding to this very fact said once: “We are an unlettered nation; we do not know neither writing nor how to calculate (hishab).”

Though Arabs were proud of being great poets and considered other communities as dumb nations but this whole activity was oral. Therefore all their literary and academic activities started with the birth of Islam in Arabia. Arabs were thus not indebted to any other community for this activity and they were not students of any other nation also. The Quran is thus the first book in Arabic language and is the fountain head of all the sciences and the reason behind all the academic and intellectual endeavours of the Arabs. Iqra (Alq: 1) and wal qalam (Qalam: 1) and wa rabuka fa kabbir (Mudathir: 3) are such verses which set the tone for all such activities which can be called pioneering the educational movement of Islam. The purpose of this movement was to learn by the name of Allah to get its status elevated.

The people who embraced Islam in some few earlier people Aram Ibn Abi Arqam had a house on the mount of Safa (which now stands near Bab Ali where there is the stream of Zam-zam constructed) was made the first centre of Islamic education. The companions would assemble secretly at this place and would learn the revealed portions of the Quran from the Prophet (SAW) and were learning how to offer prayers (salah) which was prescribed for two times initially morning and evening. This was unique type of madrasah there was no book and open every instruction was just oral and secret.

To Medina Musaib Ibn Umayr and Ibn al-As were sent to teach Islam there, who taught people the Quran and salah. In some narrations the name of Ibn Maktum is also mentioned among these teachers. Ibn al-As was knowing writing and reading and was scribing beautifully. He started teaching people writing and scribing. This was first school of Madinah.

Masjid was the first building constructed by the prophet (SAW) in Madinah which worked as a madrasah also. Masjid is the central place for all Islamic activities. Apart from the Prophet (SAW) Ubadaib Ibn Samit was also one of the instructors of this school, and would teach the students writing, the students who were pass out were known as qurai and were engaged in the work of preaching Islam and spreading knowledge. This school had the syllabus consisting of teaching of the Quran and memorization of the Quran with tajweed and leaning of the matters relating to salah and Fiqh. The Hadith in this regard is: “Whosoever Allah wants to do a good He provides him with Fiqh of Din”. This school served as a training institute also, because these people were later given government assignments by the prophet (SAW) and were preferred on others in this regard.
From amongst the prisoners of war who knew writing and reading they were exempted from ransom payment as this would be considered their ransom. This was thus the first such event in human history when a ruler would accept ransom of education and this shows that for the prophet education was more valuable than money. Every Muslim whether free or slave has been made obliged by Allah to learn some portions of the Quran.

Parents were made responsible by Islam for the education of children, otherwise parents would be hurdle in the way of children education during jahiliyyah as the children were used for earning bucks for their parents. Parents were encouraged and they were given good tidings if they educate their wards: “It was said to them to take care of your children when your children are only seven years of age they should be commended to offer salah and at the age of ten they should be admonished if they do not offer prayers and their beddings should be separated. One of the rights of a son on the father is to keep a good name of him, and make him educated and then marry him (Jamaah Sagheer). Give good training to your children.

A parent who teaches his children the Quran will be given a crown on the Day of Judgment in paradise. Then masters were encouraged to educate their servants and it was said that three kinds of people will get double rewards a persons from the people of the Book and after unbelieving his respective prophet when he believes in the Prophet (SAW) that servant who serves Allah as well as his master and gives them their due and a person who has a concubine and gives her the best education and then frees her and marries her and thus provided her the best status in society.

According to Qurtubi any believer whether man or woman free or slave it is incumbent on him or her to learn the Quran and get understanding of religion and then he recited the Quranic verse: wala kin kunu rabbaniyin. Then the third pillar of this movement is teacher his status and the systems of education of elevated. The best amongst you is one who reads and teaches the Quran. The best charity is that a person may learn knowledge and then give its education to his brother.” (Bukhari). Take to others though you may know a single verse. Everything of the world prays for a person who invites to good (khayr). On the other a person who hides knowledge if he knows that he will be taken to hell by a rope of fire. A man most punished on the Day of Judgment will be one who does not act on his knowledge thus could not benefit from his knowledge. We have been advised to respect one from whom we learn. Ali said anyone who teaches me even one word I am his slave.

The way of prophetic teaching was very instructive; The prophet (SAW) would ask a question or said something surprising or ask some question in form of a proverb or mystery and he would repeat one word thrice. The best thing for woman is to learn the Quran and read it and know argons of Islam and then work on wheel. Aisha (RA) was knowing writing she had opened a Quranic school at her home. Aisha was knowing Fiqh better than many men. Apart from Arabic poetry and Ansab Arab medicine these Ulum she had learnt from her father Abu Bakr. The prophet (SAW) had said learn half of the Ilm from Aisha.

The five Muslim women who were knowing reading and writing in early days of Islam were: hafsa bint Umar, Ummi Kulthum bint Uqbah, Aisha bint Sad, Karamemah bint Miqdad and al-Shafa’i bint Abdullah al-Adwiyyah who taught Hafsa and she was ordered to keep on teaching her after her marriage to the prophet (SAW) Aisha and Ummi Salmah from amongst the sacred wives of the prophet (SAW) knew reading but not writing. Aisha is such a woman who had collected and narrated 1000 hadith which she had listened directly from the prophet (SAW) and the prophet (SAW) had said acquire half of the knowledge from Aisha. From amongst the daughters of Ali, Nafisah was such an authentic muhadithah that Shafi would attend her classes of Hadith in Fustat. (Ibn Khallikan).

First time the stamp on the letters was put on by the prophet (saw). The prophet encouraged his companions to learn other languages. Imam Zahri says that one day the prophet (SAW) told to Zayd Ibn Thabit: “Letters from the kings keep on coming to me and I don’t want someone else should read those can you learn Hebrew or Syriac languages?” He
said: “Yes.” Then he learnt this language in 17 days. Zayd learnt Persian from the ambassador of Kisra and learnt Roman language from one of the servants of the prophet and Hibachi language from his another servant and Qibti language from a maid servant of the prophet (SAW). Since Zayd Ibn Thabit were like a secretary of the prophet knew Persian, Hash, Hebrew, Roman (Greek) languages. Abdullah Ibn Zubayr was also knowing several languages and he used to talk to his foreign servants in their native languages. According to Maqrizi, Zayd Ibn Thabit was also taught by the prisoners of Badr the art of writing. In 4th A.H he was ordered by the prophet to learn foreign languages. Different teachers for different science; Zayd Ibn Thabit for inheritance matters and Ubay ibn Ka'b for learning qirat.

3. MUSLIMS AND OTHER SCIENCES EDUCATION

The prophet (SAW) made Muslims attentive to learn other sciences also for example dividing of inheritance, Mathematics, Basics of Medicine (Malik) astronomy (Ilm al-Hait) “ta’alamu min amri nujum” (Ibn Sunni) ilm al-ansab (ta’alamu min ansbakum min al-arham lakum) (malice). Apart from the Quranic teachings the believers were ordered by the prophet to teach Muslims swimming, calculation of inheritance, basics of medicine Ilm al-Hait, Ilm al-Ansab and ilm tajweed al-Quran.

He made Muslims attentive to practical sciences and said a healthy momin is better than a weak one encouraged people to learn arrow throwing and said Ismail was knowing arrow throwing he encouraged race competitions and even participated in wrestling and commanded to take apart in swimming and horse riding.

This harmonious relationship between education and Islam in present age needs rejuvenation? Thus we have a strong basis for Islamic education which is supported by Islamic legacy. Before Sir Syed Ahmad Khan Shibli never compromised on the religion on any grounds and nor his educational thought. Religion played important role in Shibli’s educational thought that is why he criticized Sir Syed’s western oriented educational policy. Although like Sir Syed he also advocated the modern education for the betterment and devolvement of Muslim, but he wanted close contact between religious and modern education. Shibli was dissatisfied with the educational system of both Aligarh and Deoband because both were at extreme ends.

4. SYED AHMAD KHAN AND HIS EDUCATIONAL VALUE

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, a resplendent personality of 19th century played a crucial role in the development of social, cultural and educational life of Muslims of India. Sir Syed was a visionary person having versatile abilities. He showed unrelenting concern of how Indian Muslims could adapt to intellectual and political change accompanying Western colonial onslaught. The school he founded at Aligarh in 1875 became Aligarh Muslim University in 1920 which altogether shifted the intellectual paradigm of Muslims in India. The contribution and significance of Aligarh Movement for the revival and regeneration of the Muslims of Sub-Continent is commendable. Aligarh developed as the most important centre for the intellectual development of Muslims in South Asia. In a way it had became a hub for culminating the intellectual spirit among Muslims who came from different corners of India.

He felt that the Muslims had to acquaint with the fundamental principles upon which European civilization was based and with the reasons for its success. His next and more admirable achievement was the establishment of a Muhammadan Anglo oriental college at Aligarh (1878) modelled after oxford and Cambridge (in 1920) rose to the rank of a university. He instituted the Muhammadan educational conference (1886) which held annual meetings in various cities and afforded opportunities for exchange of thought and propagation of reforming ideas.

He perceived Muslims as backward and in need of education. This period also saw an increasing degree of public involvement in educational and social arenas and Sir Syed undertook three major projects. He attempted to establish scientific organization that would
help Muslims, to understand the secret of West’s success that is the establishment of Aligarh
scientific society in 1865 -a translation society to make western thought more accessible. For
Sir Syed, Muslims needed to change the way they saw and responded to the modern world; he
devoted his life to religious, educational and social reform.

Sir Syed believed in the compatibility of religion and science and considered natural law
and divine law to be the same, because according to him revelation cannot be opposed to
scientific actuality since an agreement between Gods word and work is essential. For him,
as, between the words of God (scripture) and the work of God (nature) there can be no
contradiction he believed that when there appeared a contradiction between a scientific fact
and religious rule then the latter must be reinterpreted according to scientific evidence. For
religion Sir Syed says: “… it is true that religion plays a great part in making a people
civilized. There are, no doubt, some religions which stand in the way of progress. It is our aim
to judge where Islam stands in this regard”. He was the staunch supporter of scientific knowledge and western education. The
spread of western education among Muslims and the general enlightenment which the
introduction of modern science brought about in the public was the greatest challenge. In one
of his lectures he refers to the spread of doubt and misgivings in the hearts of the people
about Islam. “I am fully confident that guidance which he has given us is absolutely in
conformity with our constitution and our nature and this is the only touchstone of its truth. It
would be clearly absurd to assert that Gods action is different from his word. All creation
including man is the work of God and religion is his word, so there cannot be any
contradiction between the two.”

About reason he says: “… It is the capacity of man which has enabled him to invent new
things and led him on to understand and control the forces of nature, it is by this that man is
able to know the things which are a source of his happiness and then tries to get as much
profit out of them as possible; it is this which makes a man ask the ways and the wherefores
of different events around him.” “Educate, educate, educate” was his watch word. The other
generation among Muslims had no sense of direction. It scouted all current scientific ideas as
incompatible. The Muslim child who went to a west oriented school was deemed to have
crossed the limits of the holy law and placed himself outside the pale of Islam.

Accordingly, he concedes that in the new college, Islamic instructions should be
provided by the recognized, i.e. the traditional-religious leaders of the community, in a
traditional way. These, of course, were proponents of a traditional interpretation of Islam. He advocated retention of self-perpetuating and in expensive arrangement for elementary
education. In respect of female education his ideas were not much in advance of his times. He
would first have the men educated and leave the problem of women’s education to solve
itself.

His interpretation of Islam was guided by his belief that Islam was compatible with
reason and the laws of nature and therefore in perfect harmony with modern scientific
thought. He argued that Islam’s teachings concerning God, the Prophet and the Quran are
compatible with modern science, which involves discovery of the work of God in natural laws;
in other words, Sir Syed argued that Islam is ‘in full correspondence with reason’. Furthermore, he equated reason with understanding and considered it an acquired quality
that enables human beings to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong, proper
and improper. According to him, who used terms like understanding, reason and intellect
interchangeably, the only criterion for a person having reason intellect, or understanding is
behavioural rather than substantive.

The attitude of this great personality was not only theoretical; he was principally a man of
action. We have to say that by his scientific thinking and critical approach he became the first
great thinker whose patterns of thought proved useful and fruitful. Sir Syed was a very
important figure in Indian context so far education is concerned. He was a dynamic
personality who contributed many essential elements to the resurgence of Islam in modern
India. He was a great “modernist” thinker who interpreted Islam in a rational, scientific
manner and established and initiated various educational programs to foster Western sciences among Muslims and to uplift the down trodden Muslim community.  

He established scientific society to challenge the insensitivity of Muslims against western education. He started Institute gazetteer and *Tahdhib al-Akhlâq* and showed that science and religion were not at conflict with each other. He opened schools for the purpose not to leave islam behind but keep it in tact with modern science and education and get benefited by both. In these schools he had emphasised on formulating collectivity and scientific spirit and these schools finally culminated into A.O College and he also started all India educational conference for this idea.

Sir Syed knew the stature and strength of English education because it consisted both on the training and information at one and the same time which had the wherewithal to lead finally to character building of a man and woman and make them distinguished. But he never lost sight of religious education for Muslims along with the western education. Sir Syed had established in Aligarh not only a College but an intellectual and cultural centre in tune with the progressive spirit of the times. The centre of this circle was Sir Syed himself and he attracted round him some of the best intellects of the day. Perhaps no journal in India has ever has such influence upon the mind of the generation as his *Tahdhib al-Akhlâq*. Sir Syed founded this journal after return from his English tour. He and his colleagues were its main contributions.

5. **MUSLIMS SCIENTIST BY MAULANA AL-MAUDUDI**

Maulana Syed Abu Ala al-Maududi was very much critical of this educational project and vision of Sir Syed. In a collection of articles by Maulana Maududi in 1955, Sir Syed was criticised by him for his ideas very scathingly. While talking about University’s syllabus, he highlighted the basic faults in it and said why the atheists and naturalists are coming out from these universities because about AMU Aligarh it was said that 90 percent of its pass outs turn to be atheists.

Maulana Maududi examined at length the remedial measures suggested by the committee constituted for the remedial purpose on this account and pointed out the main drawbacks of the existing education system, underlying the need to eliminate them. The objective was to change the defective religious educational system Muslims should remain Muslims and educated at one and the same time. But a basic question was asked by: Why nationalist communist and atheists were coming out from such institutions?

Maulana Maududi was of the idea that this experiment was a failed one: “Unfortunately, a sizable number of Aligarh alumni have become so completely de-Islamised that their existence poses a real threat to Muslims and Islamic culture. Not only are they bereft of Islamic spirit, but they have totally deviated from it. Not only are they apathetic towards religions, they have also become antagonistic towards it. Their scepticism eventually culminated in denial and now they are openly revolting against the fundamentals of Islam.”

The reasons suggested by Maududi were very much perturbing: “There is no compatibility between western and Islamic education and culture, as a matter of fact, the two are opposite to each other. This being so, if you disseminate modern western education … which is essentially secular in character … indiscriminately among the younger generations, they will eventually come adrift from the moorings of Islam. If you teach them the philosophies which negate the existence of God in the universe, if you teach them sciences which disavow metaphysical reality and are only concerned with physical reality, if you teach them history, political science, economics, law and other social sciences which are, both in theory and practice, repugnant to the spirit of Islam, and if you bring them up under the influence of an alien culture, how can you then expect them to develop an Islamic spirit, outlook and character? The traditional mode of teaching the Quran, the Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence has now become anachronistic; this kind of instruction does not serve any fruitful purpose. Moreover, the mere inclusion of the above ingredients of Islamic learning in the existing curriculum cannot give a sufficient Islamic identity to our education system.”
To ensure the Islamic character of Aligarh University, the first and foremost task is to review the western humanities and sciences and to bring into line with the teachings of Islam. It was extremely injurious to retain these western subjects indiscriminately as part of the university syllabi, as they had an indelible imprint on the impressionable minds of the students who then gave credence to every western thought and philosophy. The critical faculty of Muslim students remained dormant and should it developed in some of them, it came only after years of intense study and usually too late for them to undertake any demanding intellectual work.

According to Maududi: “Our education system therefore must be reorganised so that students become active participants in the learning process and so that their critical insights are sharpened. They should be trained to evaluate western learning critically; this critical evaluation should be made strictly from an Islamic point of view, so that the students can discriminate between the specious and the genuine aspects of western learning.”

The condition of the religious education was not any better. Likewise, he suggested that Islamic learning should not be taken verbatim from the old exegetical literature, it should, rather, be cleansed of the adulterations of later writings and remoulded on the immutable principles of Islam. He says: “For this purpose you will not find a ready... made syllabus. You will have to start from scratch. The old and traditional commentaries of the Quran and the Hadith have outlives their usefulness. They do not provide adequate guidance in teaching the Quran, the Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence today. Law, economics, philosophy, history and the other branches of knowledge being taught at Aligarh should be reoriented in accordance with the fundamental principles of Islam. Furthermore; teachers should be thoroughly immersed in the Quran and the Hadith.”

Maulana has also a very higher objective before him when he talks about education as a whole: “Leadership depends on education. Education grants mankind the vicegerency of Allah on earth. Man has been endowed with the faculties of seeing, listening and perceiving, by virtue of which he enjoys superiority over other species of this world. Similarly, this nation which is the most advanced educationally assumes the most dominant position in the world.”

He is however not happy with the instructions given in Muslim universities lacked the vision. “Unfortunately, the instruction at religious institutions still continues along traditional lines. In the wake of reform initiated by Nadwah [India] and al-Azhar the range of instruction has been extended to contemporary fields. It is not, however, been able to sharpen the curiosity or insight of students.”

Since the leadership of the world is in the hands of rudderless western powers, therefore Maulana thinks that this leadership is heading itself and finally leading the whole world including Muslims to the peril: “Western leadership since it is secular in nature, has been leading the world towards destruction and spiritual impoverishment. Godless leadership, whether it be Turkish, Iranian Egyptian or Indian, is as baneful as western or Japanese, and deserves to be condemned. God fearing leadership, however, whether it be Indian or western, deserves to be upheld and respected.”

An essential prerequisite for integration between religion and education is that religious and secular subjects should be made an indivisible whole. The compartmentalisation of religious and secular education, based on a factitious division of life into spiritual and temporal, is nor sanctioned by Islam.

Since Maududi considers Man as the vicegerent of Allah on earth, his educational views are governed by this basic tenet. He says: “In brief, this is the concept of religion in Islam. It is therefore obligatory to transform secular education into religious education. Maintaining them as separate entities inevitably gives rise to the misconception that the obligations of a spiritual and temporal life are incompatible.”

He unlike Sir Syed and most of the Muslim modernists does not advocate free lance and wholesome adoption of western model. He has a caution: “In the early stage of education, students should not be exposed to alien philosophies or cultures. Later they should be
initiated into the various disciplines of the humanities and sciences in such a manner as to bring out the Islamic point of view. While introducing dissenting views relating to these disciplines teachers should analyse them critically, making students aware that these are the views of misguided and accursed people. Likewise applied sciences should be restructured to fall in line with the principles of Islam. By recasting secular education in an Islamic mould, students would be able to distinguish between the two approaches, that is, the Islamic and secular. Education thus planned would not need a separate course for Islamic studies.63

He thinks the traditional Muslim educational system has become obsolete now: “They maintained this obsolete system without effecting any changes whatsoever. The graduates produced under this system were detached from the main stream of life; they were unable to assume responsibilities in the new political order. This state of affair continues even now. Intellectually ossified as they are, they serve no other purpose in our society than that of running a mosque or establishing a madrasah or creating religious factions. If they succeeded in disseminating Quranic teachings and Islamic values among the Muslims, the advantages would outweigh the disadvantages. However, because of their traditional upbringing they can neither project Islam convincingly nor apply Islamic principles to the problems of modern life, nor even provide fundamental guidance to Muslims along Islamic lines. They can offer no solution to socio-economic problems of contemporary life. They are, in fact, to a great extent responsible for tarnishing image of Islam. Because of their misrepresentation of Islam the younger generation of our community is gradually drifting away. It is again they who are responsible for fanning the fire of religious differences and thereby shattering the bond of Muslims unity.”64

On the other hand Maududi advocates somewhat like Islamisation of science model the Islamic re-orientation of modern sciences and to make them compatible with Islam. It is alleged that science, being a universally accepted fact, is incompatible with religion. According to Maududi there are two aspects of science. So far as scientific facts and natural laws are concerned, they are no doubt, accepted universally. Yet the mind which describes these scientific facts is by no means universal. Every civilisation describes scientific facts differently, according to its specific belief. Maududi wanted to change the second aspect of science. He elaborates his view by the following example: “While most other substances contract when they are cooled, water expands as it freezes. Ice, being less dense than water, flows on it. This scientific fact can be described differently by two persons. An atheistic scientist describes this scientific fact as being essentially inherent in the quality of water, whereas a God-fearing scientist describes this scientific phenomenon as the manifestation of divine wisdom to make life possible in the rivers and seas. The two approaches build different impression on the minds of students. The one approach is intended to undermine the existence of Allah and His Providence, whereas the other approach strengthens belief in the existence of Allah and His Providence. Instruction along the first line will produce atheistic Muslim scientists, whereas instruction along the second line will produce God-fearing Muslim scientists.”65

He says: “There is hardly any branch of science which does not strengthen our belief in the existence of Allah. The study of physics, chemistry, biology, physiology, anatomy, astronomy, in belief every branch of science, reveals facts which can make us staunch Muslims. The Holy Quran repeatedly draws our attention to the various phenomena of the universe as the evidence of divine existence. Secular scientists have corroborated scientific facts according to their specific beliefs to undermine the concept of Allah.”66

Maulana does not consider piecemeal reforms sufficient for bringing a change in educational scenario. He is in support of a total revamping of the whole system of education. “By introducing mere fragmentary reforms into the existing education system has assumed a new structure and personality. By the same token, there are modernist who, even they know that the education system they have adopted is an alien one and is causing incalculable damage, continue to tinker at it by introducing components of Islamic education. By this they
also deceive themselves as well as others into believing that the system they are pursuing has assumed a stronger Islamic character.  

Actually Maududi was not happy with Aligarh experiment where a big compromise was made by grafting some theological courses with otherwise westernised atheistic and secular education. The purpose of such education was not a development of Islamic personality having a holistic spiritual and moral character. But just to become economically viable, an objective which was fraught with religious dangers, it created Anglo Muhammadans and Anglo Indians in whom Islam and Indianars was for the name sake only. While as according to Maududi modern education was contradictory to Islam. The temperament created by such an education which is being taught as such, was posing a great threat and there was danger of losing the generations, because the philosophy they taught advocated ‘the universe without belief in God’. Here Science was indifferent to religion rather it was a mere slave of senses. Politics, history economics law and all other social sciences in their basis, implications and branches promoted a culture which was utterly in contrast with Islamic beliefs and social philosophy. The students were being prepared and trained in a culture something which in its spirit and aims and objectives and methods was an antithesis of Islamic culture.

However, some people embarked on providing the teaching of the Quran, Figh and Hadith in the old fashion which in the view of Maududi was not matching with the prevalent education. Therefore he suggested that if people really wanted to make AMU an Islamic university, all the western sciences needed a review. So that Western sciences were presented critically before the students and this critique should be from Islamic point of view so that all the futile elements were excluded from among the useful ones which needed to be adopted.

On the other hand, Islamic sciences were also to be taken after abstracting them from the embellishments of the later generations and eternal elements were to be adopted and retained. “The support of them is to be taken and their real comprehension is to be made possible. The Quran and Sunnah are to be taught by those who are aware of the spirit of the Islamic law, but old books will be of no use here. You have to teach Islamic economics but in all these cases you have to take care of Islamic institution of economy, philosophy and philosophy of history all need to be included with Islamic spirit in the new syllabus. The teaching faculty where atheists and anglicized people are to be left out and replaced them by such people who are Muslims by conviction and precept communism can be stopped by Islamic power.”

Thus, Maududi provided a model where integration of Islam with education and science was made possible. Ismail Raji also was quite conversant about the challenges of the time regarding education. Actually the challenge before him was not only internal as Sir Syed and in some cases even Maududi might have assumed but very much external and a calculated one: “After many attempts to achieve this desired objective foundered, these enemies set out to investigate and to search carefully for more devious methods. They concluded that the strength of the Ummah stemmed from its religion (din) and belief (aqidah).

According to him at the beginning of the eleventh century A.H. (seventeenth century A.C.), orientalists, colonialists, and missionaries laid the groundwork for this new intellectual offensive against Islam and the Ummah. It seems that Faruqi was aware about the critique of Maududi as mentioned above regarding westernisation of education. He thinks that the approach and mentality of such educational movements betrayed a Western outlook and an alien methodology and frame of reference that doomed them to failure. He says that it was axiomatic that what was intellectually or ideologically good for Europe and the West, in general, was not necessarily good or suitable for the Muslim Ummah, ‘whose existence and destiny are rooted in and dependent upon the Qur’an and the Sunnah’. According to him “That the basic cause of the malaise of the Ummah lay in its current thought processes which suffered from intellectual rigidity and stagnation.
6. EDUCATIONAL DISEASE

According to Faruqi there was consensus on the point that the basic cause of the malaise of the Ummah could be located in the current thought processes which suffered from 'intellectual rigidity and stagnation'. This intellectual incursion, change, and disruption that was introduced, especially in the social sciences and the humanities, Faruqi viewed was of such enormous proportions as to make the Muslims either overlook Islamic thought and legacy or, at best, to simply study it and treat it as an ancient phenomenon neither needed by nor relevant to contemporary life. It was in this context that Muslim scholars and intellectuals were invited to seek to fulfil their needs in the Western social sciences, not realizing that the West had established these sciences in accordance with its own circumstances and goals and this scheme of education was rooted in its ideological world vision. As a result, these sciences now tend to reflect the West's values, concepts, and beliefs, upon which all Western aspects of behaviour, activity, and social institutions were established. Therefore though these disciplines are acceptable and compatible with Western objectives, they were bound to clash with Islamic values and guidelines. In this process much confusion has ensued, and the basis of the present conflict, contradiction, and loss of identity and direction could be traced back to contradiction and weakness in Islamic thoughts and aims owing to this hard fact of history.

This realisation dawned on the students studying at Western universities and these young men believed that the minor crises the Ummah suffered were, in fact, mere products of the prevailing malaise and that intellectual deviation and stagnation had impaired the Ummah's thoughts. The two dimensions of the crisis assessed were: the intellectual thought processes and the estrangement between the Ummah and its legacy, i.e. its alienation from its culture and civilisation.\(^{73}\) In the same manner as a collarary the detachment of Muslims from their legacy and considering the achievements of past Muslim luminaries only historical events having no value for the present was also a worrying matter for the scholars. While as it should have presented the basis for dynamic creativity.\(^{74}\)

Thus at its inception the objective before Muslim social scientists was to face these challenges: “Therefore the task before us is to emphasizes the Islamic vision and an original approach of methodology of knowledge, incorporating the three Islamic sources of knowledge: revelation (wahy), reason (aqî), and the universe (al-kawn). This edition affirms that Islamization of knowledge is a continuing process and that its major goals are achieved through the accumulation and development of ideas in the various fields of knowledge.”\(^{75}\) This westernisation finally led to undermining of foundations of faith and culture of the vulnerable Muslims.

“The connection between the manifestations of Western productivity and power and the Western views on God and man; on life, nature, the world; and on time and history was too subtle for Muslim leaders to grasp or, in their hurry to consider. A secular system of education was built that taught Western values and methods. Soon, graduates who were ignorant of the Islamic legacy began to pour into society.”

The new generations of Muslim graduates nursed suspicion towards ulama and by implication cast aspersions subtly on Islamic rich legacy. Thus a gape was created between 'Westernizing secularizers and opponents of secularization’. The colonialist powers saw to it that the former became the decision makers in society.

This educational cultural and political scenario finally led to economic deprivation. Moreover, just about every Muslim state would be exposed to famine if the colonial powers wished for any reason to stop their unfair trade with them. Everywhere, colonial interest has been creating consumer markets and demands for colonialists' products, while the needs of Muslims for productive hardware goes unheeded.\(^{76}\) All these developments were affecting Muslims at spiritual and moral levels also and denuding them from all the good values they had cherished for centuries together. The media onslaught notwithstanding.

According to these scholars “the intellectual and methodological decline of the Ummah is the core of its malaise.” The educational system is the breeding ground of the disease.
Schools and colleges generate and perpetuate that self estrangement from Islam, from its legacy, and from its style. The educational system is the laboratory where Muslim youth are kneaded and cut, where their consciousness is moulded into a caricature of the West. Here, the Muslim’s link with his past is severed; his natural curiosity to learn the legacy of his fathers is stymied. Here, his willingness to touch base with his heritage and to spring toward creative representation of Islam is blunted with the doubts and the deviation the educational system has injected into every recess of his consciousness."

There is bifurcation in the curriculum and ‘Islamic’ and ‘modern’ are sometimes presented side by side. The colonialists devised a well-thought out and well-planned strategy. The Islamic component of the curriculum in certain universities remains unchanged, partly because of conservatism and vested interests and partly because it is in the secularist plans to keep it out of touch with reality and modernity. In this way, their graduates will present no competition to those of the secular institutions. “The forces of Westernization and secularization, and resultant de-Islamization of teachers and students, continue to gather momentum in colleges and universities; and nothing has been done to arrest that degeneration. In fact, the situation is worse than it was under colonialism. Under colonialism, a spirit of resistance, of searching for liberation and an Islamic solution animated nearly everyone.”

Western model rather a caricature of it has become dominant amidst Muslims also. Like the Islamic model, the Western educational model depends ultimately upon a specific vision, though different from that of Islam, and is animated by a will to realize that vision. Buildings and offices, libraries and laboratories, classrooms and auditoriums teeming with students and faculty are all material paraphernalia of little worth without the requisite vision. It is the nature of such vision that it cannot be copied; only its incidentals can. That is why in nearly two centuries of Westernized, secularized education, the Muslims have produced neither a school, college, university, nor a generation of scholars that matches the West in creativity or excellence. The insoluble problem of low standards in the Muslim World institutions is a necessary consequence of this lack of vision. There is no genuine search for knowledge without spirit, and the Western spirit is precisely what cannot and should not be copied. It is generated by its own vision of life and reality, in short, by its faith.

7. RENEWING INTELLECTUAL GROUND

In such circumstances the Islamization of knowledge project aimed at the greatest task confronting the Ummah in the fifteenth Hijri century to solve 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 are corrected. Indeed, the system needs to be formed anew. The present dualism in Muslim education, its bifurcation into an Islamic and a secular system must be removed and abolished once and for all. The two systems must be united and integrated, and the emergent system must be infused with the spirit of Islam and must function as an integral part of its ideological program."

The deep analysis of this malaise made people to realise that Islam was presented to the Muslim student, in his tender years, with the voice of parental authority. His mind was not mature enough to understand or to appreciate ‘objective’ claims. His attachment to the Islamic position, therefore, was born out of sentiment, not out of reasoned conviction. Evidently, his commitment to Islam cannot withstand the onslaught of ‘scientific’, ‘objective’, or ‘modern’ truth. This is why, in the absence of any counter-presentation of Islamic understanding- a presentation made with the same force of objectivity, the same scientific orientation, and 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 youth is ravaged. No wonder that he becomes a cultural freak,
a cynic who is at home neither in Islam nor in the West, ready to be swayed by anyone who
caters to his whims of the moment."

What is needed, therefore, is an educational system in which the curriculum of every
department is based upon Islamic values, principles and objectives. Furthermore, a four-year
course on the principles of Islam as 17 the essence of Islamic thought and civilization must
be introduced as part of the ‘basic’ or ‘core’ program for all students, regardless of their field
of specialization or profession. It was suggested that this course will be designed to give the
Muslim student the values and first principles of Islam as the essence of Islamic civilization,
as well as the historical achievements of Islamic civilization as manifestations of the first
principles of Islam. The course will include discussions of how Islamic civilization compares
and contrasts with other civilizations in essence and manifestations. It also will give the
Muslim student knowledge of how Islamic civilization is the only viable option in dealing with
the fundamental problems of Muslims and non-Muslims in the contemporary world.

The task of Islamizing knowledge (in concrete terms, to Islamize the disciplines or,
better, to produce university-level textbooks recasting some twenty disciplines in accordance
with Islamic visions) is among the most difficult to realize. The pioneers of this movement felt
that no Muslim had contemplated the contradiction of Western knowledge with the vision of
Islam. It was the present generation that first discovered this conflict as most of them lived it
in their own intellectual lives. But the spiritual torture this conflict had inflicted upon them
causd them to wake up in panic, fully aware of the rape of the Islamic soul taking place
before their very eyes in the Muslim universities. That is why they started 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 relaunch Islamic education on its proper track, leading to its
predestined goal, with the grace of Allah (SWT). These pioneers felt that it was most
regrettable that the Muslim world was still devoid of a center where thinking and planning on
such high level could take place. Therefore they suggested a proposal for establishing a
university that could act as headquarters for Islamic thought, where the disciplines would
undergo Islamization and the process was tested in the classrooms and seminar rooms of
the undergraduate and graduate programs of study.

Thus, this was a proposal regarding the great task facing Muslim intellectuals and
leaders: to recast the whole legacy of human knowledge from the viewpoint of Islam. The
objective was: “The vision of Islam would not be a vision indeed unless it represented a
special content; namely, life, reality, and the world. The content is the object of study of the
various disciplines. To recast knowledge in the mould of Islam relates to the Islamic vision. It
is necessary to Islamize knowledge, i.e., to redefine and re-order the data, to rethink the
reasoning and relate the data, to re-evaluate 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
Islam.”

To this end, the methodological categories of Islam-namely: the unity of truth, the unity
of knowledge, the unity of humanity, the unity of life and purposeful character of creation, and
the subservience of creation to Man and of Man to Allah (SWT) - were the values which were
envisioned to replace the Western categories and determine the perception and ordering of
reality. On the other hand, the values of Islam were supposed to replace the Western values
and direct the learning activity in every field. The Islamic values concern: (a) the usefulness
of knowledge for man's felicity; (b) the blossoming of his faculties; (c) the remoulding
of creation so as to crystallize the Divine patterns and values of Islam; (d) the building of culture
and civilization; (e) the building of human milestones in knowledge and wisdom, heroism and
virtue, piety and righteousness.

Probably the most far-reaching development in the intellectual history of the Ummah is
the dichotomy between revelation and reason. 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, that made them indulge in futile theological
issues that, eventually, led to a perceived separation of Revelation (waḥy) and Reason (aql).
Hellenized Christians and Jews lived for centuries under the aegis of this dichotomy, and many brought it into the Ummah with them when they converted to Islam.79

No religious theses based upon personal whims could claim the acquiescence of mankind or of any significant part of it for a long time. When some Muslims placed exaggerated emphasis upon the intuitive at the cost of reason, they unwittingly opened the gates to corruption of the Islamic faith and mind. Unity of Creator, Unity of Creation and Cosmic Order are three ingredients of the Islamic weltanschauung and thus form core of Islamization process also.80 Thus, the following categories were highlighted by this new vision of education. Unity of Life, The Divine Trust (Amlinah), Vicegerency, Comprehensiveness and al-Khilafah.

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 humankind into a frenzy of ethnocentric consciousness by singling out one subgroup after another, constructing for it an ideology and axiology out of that group’s innate characteristics or by declaring to be innate and particular to one ethnic group whatever is being advocated. Instead of identifying and emphasizing what is universally human, anthropology’s whole concern is to identify, to develop and to blow out of proportion the particular.81

The objectives of the ‘Islamization of knowledge’ are to perfect the tools necessary for the Ummah to progress smoothly in its Islamic role, to furnish it with the essential powers and faculties for its proper functioning, and to clarify its vision and its methodology. Achieving these objectives will better prepare the Ummah to succeed in its struggle with a changeable contemporary life that offers vast opportunities as well as serious challenges. In its widest sense, ‘Islamization’ means a framework for human life, civilization, and human transformation. It determines the purpose of every activity, struggle, action, and Islamic social organization. It gives human life purpose and charts its course. But it would be wrong to neglect or underrate the importance of any of the other diverse aspects of life. Rather, each aspect should receive due attention and consideration. Any task that the Ummah undertakes should be supported by whatever efforts may be necessary to resolve a problem at a particular point in time or a specific stage. Giving priority to the ‘Islamization of knowledge’ does not cancel other priorities nor does it belittle the significance of political, economic, social, academic, and military efforts. It simply means that the ‘Islamization of knowledge’ is urgent, a prerequisite, a necessary condition, that we are committed to fulfill as a preamble to other requirements in order to achieve perfection in provision, clarification of vision, revival of the power to build, and the ability to withstand encounters.82

8. SAID NURSI’S EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT

Now we can discuss Said Nursi’s thoughts in the universal context as he has given his most holistic harmonious universal approach to various problems as Educational Empowerment and Integration of Religion and Science and reflection on the thinking of Nursi on these civilisational challenges for Muslims are very appropriate and most rewarding. On educational front efforts of Nursi’s contemporary and successor visionaries of Islam like Shibli, Maududi, Sir Syed and Ismail Raji Faruqi and others have met but with very less success in convincing the traditional Muslim clergy about the tenacity of modern sciences visa vise religious sciences. But Madrasah Zahra model presented by Nursi stands for ‘integration of knowledge’, and his view that religious subjects should be taught in the secular schools (maktabs) and that the positive sciences in the religious schools (madrasah), so that the students of secular education are salvaged from irreligious behaviour the religious schools from bigotry, are very progressive. Moreover, his ideas about integration of science and technology with education are very futuristic and rewarding given the pathetic situation of Muslims in educational field worldwide.

The unique civilizational features of Madrasah al-Zahra model make it a most suitable and culturally viable model for Muslims in its global perspective also. Therefore studying this
model in depth is highly desirable in the context of the consumerist tendencies emerging in
the spheres of education and technology alarmingly, with no exception of Muslims and non
Muslims, by relegating spiritual and moral values to margins. Nursi's model provides an
alternative which meets the demands of modern times but does not neglect the much needed
values the education should imbibe to face the challenges in the wake of aggressive atheism,
plague of materialism and scourge of naturalism etc.

We should not forget that Nursi criticized his own conception of modern science as it
was formulated during the New Said period. But he still did not deny 'the utilization of
the findings of modern science, especially the use of modern inventions'. Thus there was
evolution in the views of Nursi’s intellectual perspective which tended to downplay the
findings of modern science in the interpretation of the religious texts. Nursi admitted this
lapse in the later stages of his intellectual life, and held it to be an error: an error he once
defined as 'polishing Islam'.

It is true that Nursi realized some of the shortcomings of modern science, but this
realization does not reflect a comprehensive critique of it. For example, Nursi arrived at
the conclusion that modern science is not interested in meaning, but it is lost in dealing with the
details of the material reality. He also realized the fact that modern science is literalist, but
instead of relating this literalism to the quantification of science, he, rather, identified it with
material causality and formulated his intellectual discourse for its refutation. But Said Nursi
had a different perspective on science. He argued that "Islam is the master and guide of the
sciences, and the chief and father of all true knowledge."

For integration of knowledge, his view is that religious subjects are taught in the new
secular schools (maktab) and that the positive sciences are taught in the religious schools
(madrasah). He argued that if the students are taught in this method, those in the secular
schools will be saved from being without religion, while those in the religious schools will be
saved from bigotry. A beautiful combination of Scientific and religious sciences as envisaged
by Nursi can be seen from this statement: "The light of the conscience is the religious
sciences. The light of the mind is exact sciences. Reconciliation of both manifests the truth.
The student’s skills develop further with these two (sciences). When they are separated, from
the former superstition and from the latter corruption and skepticism is born."

Nursi is not deprecative of modern scientific advancement unlike many traditional clerks.
Rather Nursi thinks that the scientific revolution is an exceedingly important “turning point in
the history of human intellectual endeavour”, and visualized that it set the standard for the
intellectual and scientific activities in modern times, encompassing even the domain of
religion. This was warranted by the notion that Islam could not remain oblivious to 'intellectual
inquiry', as it was itself the act of knowing. He wanted to integrate the science of modern
times with Islamic thought. But his theory of integration was the new exegesis of the Quran to
be written, almost exclusively, in light of the findings of modern science, and he tried to put it
into practice with an added enthusiasm.

He designated the project as Miraj-i Qurani (Qur’anic ascension), and advocated it as
one of the genuine modes of approaching the truth alongside the three traditional strands of
Islamic thought and spirituality: Sufism (tasawwuf), Islamic philosophy (hikmah), and
scholastic theology (Kalam). He showed the importance of precision and clarity in
interpretation, which has been brought to fore by modern science while as for the first
generation of Muslims only reason, was available. What needed to be done was the
integration of the findings of this new science into the method of Miraj-i Qur’ani, and
interpretation of the Quranic verses in their light.

He thought that his exegesis was supported by ‘objectivity and universal validity of
modern science’. But still this project did not materialize in the manner Nursi wanted, and
gave way to a different project. The Risale-i Nur project came to light as a continuation of it,
though with different orientation, also ascribing itself a noticeably high level of objectives. In
this project, instead of relying on the findings of modern science and composing it in the form
of a systematical exegesis, Nursi preferred to rely on his inspirations which, as he defined it,
reflected his "close reading of the Quran." Knowledge based on the Divine Revelation, and which also takes into account scientific developments, will surely bring more good than evil.

According to Nursi the miraculousness in the Quranic verses is the eloquent language of the Quran. It is not to be searched for in Greek philosophy or, if you are a free thinker, see how ancient philosophy and science have imprisoned minds within the walls of some errors and thrown them into abjection. However, the new scientific approach has brought down the walls of that prison. It is clear that the key to the treasure of the aspects of miraculousness in the Quranic verses is the eloquent language of the Quran. It is not to be searched for in Greek philosophy.

For sure the greatest obstacle, which causes us to suffer misery in the world and the Westerners to be deprived of happiness in the Hereafter, and which causes the sun of Islam to be eclipsed, is the supposed conflict between some outer aspects of Islam and certain established scientific facts. This is strange, to say the least, for how can something be in conflict with the very phenomenon that has given rise to it? For it is Islam which has given shepherded [sic.] the sciences, and even given birth to many of them. Yet the fallacy of conflict between Islam and science continues to prey on our minds, driving many to hopelessness and serving to close the doors of knowledge and civilization to many Muslims.

In addition to the claim of objectivity, we should mention another important premise which influenced his intellectual perspective in a just as important manner: the linear conception of scientific progress. Nursi approached this premise in an equally uncritical way, and he adopted it into his intellectual perspective without showing any sign of resistance. Therefore, he did not see any problem in declaring the traditional schools as obsolete. Had he approached the issue philosophically, he could have realized that the type of accumulation modern science appreciated was the accumulation of particular ‘facts’ which paved the way for its emergence and, according to this perspective, unquantifiable entities cannot be considered in this category. From the perspective of modern science, only ideas, theories or facts which buttress its legitimacy and functionality could be considered as accumulating and, therefore, incorporated in its domain of inquiry, not the accumulated wisdom of humanity or the truths of traditional intellectual disciplines which came to existence in light of the teachings of revealed truths. Quite the opposite, for modern science there is a deep dichotomy between the two, and they cannot be reconciled with each other by any means.

Thus, modern science meant to Nursi the driving force for the emergence of a new humanity in the West as well as the seed of a new Islamic civilization in the Muslim World. God’s primary purpose for sending His Wise Book is the guidance of people. All human beings are not on the same level of understanding, nor are they specialists in every branch of science. Therefore, God speaks in His scriptures in a way understandable to everyone. Those of a higher level of understanding and having expert knowledge can benefit from anything that is addressed to all people. But when a work addresses only scholars, things may become difficult for common people. Furthermore, people cannot easily abandon their habits or be freed from the things they have been familiar with for a long time. People often find it hard to deal with abstractions, but find it easier to understand things expressed with metaphors and similes, as these are closer to everyday life. For this reason, truths are usually presented in familiar terms or forms and thereby effectively presented for guidance.

Despite the fact that in the succeeding statements he did not neglect to emphasize the existence of the esoteric meanings hidden in the Quranic verses, in the chapter he mostly kept his focus on the popularization of the Quranic knowledge, and concluded his argument in the following way: The Quran of Miraculous exposition has considered how people can easily understand it and has used styles that are suitable to be presented in this way. The Quran is God’s address to. The following expressions are examples of this: “He has established Himself on the Supreme Throne” (7:54); “God’s Hand is over their hands” (48:10); “Your Lord comes” (89:22); “He saw it (the sun) setting in a spring of hot and black,
muddy water” (18:86); “The sun runs the course appointed for it” (36:38). That is how the Quran is, and there can be no doubt that it is God’s Word.98

To approach the issue more theoretically, what led Nursi to develop a politically motivated intellectual discourse to the extent of including the composition of a new exegesis was his unquestioned adoption of the idea of progress. His unreserved sympathy towards the cultivation of modern science was mainly related to this adoption.99 Bediuzzaman was conscious that ‘mind, knowledge and science became dominant in this age’.100 Even if teachers do not mention Allah, he attracts attention to the properties of each science showing Allah; he shows the events in the branches of science like economy, astronomy, philosophy, physics and chemistry as evidence of the existence of Allah through detailed explanations.101 Only this view of Said Nursi shows that he has a philosophy that sees belief and science, and the education of them as interrelated.102

Said Nursi observed all scientific events through the eyes of a theologian and he explained his approach successfully within the boundaries of the reasoning of the mind. He stated that the Quran included exact sciences and encouraged them. The decree of Islam about the outcomes of science is important in that it shows what causes those results. The approach of science that neglects belief in Allah and overlooks the place and function of religion brings about ‘literal meaning’, that is, viewing beings on behalf of themselves, in terms of causes. The scientific approach that takes into consideration the power of creation and effect of Allah is related to ‘signified meaning’. That is, viewing things on behalf of Allah is the correct approach.

“We should mold the science brought from Europe and America, which in fact, belongs to Islam, with the light of oneness and view it from the point of view of the contemplation and signified meaning mentioned by the Quran, that is, on behalf of its maker and master.”52/103

To carry out scientific studies with the name of Allah does not mean that mind is put aside or neglected. On the contrary, mind should step in to see the creative power of Allah. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi expresses this as follows:

“If you cannot encompass this elevated order, adorned with bezels of wisdom, with your sight, and you are incapable of understanding it through inductive reasoning, look through the prying eyes of the sciences – which are the senses of your species and are formed through the meeting of minds and conjunction of ideas, and are like the ideas of the human race – for you will see an order that dazzles the mind. You will know too that each of the physical sciences discloses through the universality of its principles, the order and harmony, the more perfect than which cannot be conceived of. For there is a science to study every area of the universe, or there will be. Science consists of universal principles, and this universality demonstrates the beauty of the order. All the sciences demonstrate a total, all-embracing order; each is a shining proof pointing to the benefits and fruits hanging in bunches from the links of the chains of beings, indicating too the instances of wisdom and advantages concealed in their changing states. The sciences raise the banner of divine unity and testify to the Maker’s purpose and wisdom.”104

When sciences are accepted as evidence for the existence of Allah, the union and inseparability of religion and science become obligatory. This principle should form a basic starting point in terms of education policy. Bediuzzaman draws attention to two sources in searching the truth; prophethood; that is, the truths that prophets convey and the views that philosophy puts forward. According to him, whenever philosophy is based on religion, it is known that only material development is not enough to reach real civilization and that spiritual development parallel to it is also necessary. Bediuzzaman makes a social determination emphasizing that in Asian countries religion and heart surpass matter: “Most of the prophets appearing in Asia, and most of the philosophers emerging in Europe is a sign of pre-eternal Divine Determining that in Asia it is religion and heart that will make the people of Asia wake up, develop and administer themselves. Philosophy and wisdom should help the religion and the heart; they should not replace them.”
After asking the question, “Why should the world be a place of progress for everybody but a place of decline for us?” Bediuzzaman states that we progressed when we stuck to Islam and that we went backwards when we slackened off: “Indeed, the facts that European civilization is not founded on virtue and guidance but rather on lust and passion, rivalry and oppression, and that up to the present the evils of civilization have predominated over its virtues, and that it has been infiltrated by revolutionary societies like a worm-eaten tree are each like powerful indications and means for the supremacy of Asian civilization. And in a short period of time it will prevail.

How is it that while there are such powerful and unshakable ways and means for the material and moral progress of the believers and people of Islam, and although the road to future happiness has been opened up like a railway, you despair and fall into hopelessness in face of the future, and destroy the morale of the Islamic world? And in despair and hopelessness you suppose that ‘the world is the world of progress for Europeans and everyone else’. However, “it is the world of decline only for the unfortunate people of Islam!” By saying that, you are making a grievous mistake. Since the inclination to seek perfection has been included in man’s essential nature, for sure, if doomsday does not soon engulf man as a result of his errors and tyranny, in the future truth and justice will show the way to a worldly happiness in the world of Islam, Insha’Allah, in which there will be atonement for the former errors of mankind.

Elaborating upon the need for change after the completion of Islam and the room for reformation in all aspects of life including legislation and education Nursi says: “Sacred laws change according to the ages. Indeed, in one age different prophets may come, and they have come. Since subsequent to the Seal of the Prophets, his Greater Shari‘a is sufficient for all peoples in every age, no need has remained for different laws. However, in secondary matters, the need for different schools has persisted to a degree. Just as clothes change with the change of the seasons and medicines change according to dispositions, so sacred laws change according to the ages, and their ordinances change according to the capacities of peoples. Because the secondary matters of the ordinances of the Shari‘a look to human circumstances; they come according to them, and are like medicine.”

At the time of the early prophets, since social classes were far apart and men’s characters were both somewhat coarse and violent, and their minds, primitive and close to nomadism, the laws at that time came all in different forms, appropriate to their conditions. There were even different prophets and laws in the same continent in the same century. Then, since with the coming of the Prophet of the end of time, man as though advanced from the primary to the secondary stage, and through numerous revolutions and upheavals reached a position at which all the human peoples could receive a single lesson and listen to a single teacher and act in accordance with a single law, no need remained for different laws, neither was there necessity for different teachers. But because they were not all at completely the same level and did not proceed in the same sort of social life, the schools of law became numerous.”

He says further: “If, like students of a school of higher education, the vast majority of mankind were clothed in the same sort of social life and attained the same level, then all the schools could be united. But just as the state of the world does not permit that, so the schools of law cannot be the same the traditional Islamic schools of thought and spirituality had degenerated, and they had to be replaced with a different school.”

In Nursi’s eyes the Risale-I Nur collection came to fill this gap and he believed that it succeeded in this to a great extent synthesized thought and spirituality in a single body of work. Nevertheless, they do not provide a satisfactory answer to the question of why he came to consider the traditional schools as having degenerated. What brings this important detail into light is a series of statements made by him on the relationship between the emergence of modern science and the (lack of) efficacy of the traditional schools. The totality of these statements reflect the fundamental premises of Nursi’s thought as they were formulated during the old Said period in a clear way, and provide important.
The only solution to this is to teach religious sciences properly in modern schools, to teach new branches of exact sciences instead of ancient Greek philosophy, which is unnecessary now, in religious schools and to have very competent scholars in dervish lodges. When they are realised, those three branches will develop in harmony and reach high ranks."

9. MADRASAH AL-ZAHRA

As it is seen in the proposals, Said Nursi wanted to realise unity in education and to eliminate bigotry originating from ignorance. If they were realised, a new generation that would surpass scholars, scientists and philosophers like Plato, Avicenna, Bismarck, Descartes and Taftazani would emerge. He went to Istanbul for the first time in order to present his proposals to the sultan and give his petition just before the proclamation of the constitutional monarchy (1908). Unfortunately, he was not allowed to talk to Abdulhamid II, the Sultan. Şefik Pasha, the Minister of Internal Affairs, talked to him. Said Nursi, did not regard this talk sufficient; he expressed his views through articles in the newspapers and his speeches. He wanted the Sultan to give importance to education instead of establishing cavalry troops and to spend the taxes collected from people on treating ignorance, the illness of the nation. He gave great importance to expressing the intense need of the community for education because the nation thirsts for a new education system that complies with Islam.108

We see that Bediuzzaman insisted on his proposal of establishing an Islamic University, which would save Eastern Anatolia from ignorance and would develop it, that he demanded it from Turkish Grand National Assembly while the republic was being founded, that with the signatures of 163 members of the Parliament out of 200, a fund of 150,000 lira was allocated for it but that it was unsuccessful because the government of that period did not adopt it. However, the Democratic Party government, which came to power in 1950, showed respect to the demands of people and to Said Nursi, established Erzurum University with this intention. Being glad with the opening of this university, Said Nursi said ‘My University’ would be like he wanted in the course of time. The higher education institution that was desired to be established was going to be in the triangle of Van-Diyarbakir-Bitlis, it was going to serve primarily to Anatolia and to the Middle East countries like Iran, Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, Turkistan and Afghanistan and it was going to render an important service to realise peace and fraternity.

Bediuzzaman had an instinctive dissatisfaction with the existing education system, which when older he formulated into comprehensive proposals for its reform. The heart of these proposals was the bringing together and joint teaching of the traditional religious sciences and the modern sciences, together with the founding of a university in the Eastern Provinces of the Empire, the Madrasah al-Zahra, where this and his other proposals would be put into practice. In 1907 his endeavours in this field took him to Istanbul and an audience with Sultan Abdulhamid. Although subsequently he twice received funds for the construction of his university, and its foundations were laid in 1913, it was never completed due to war and the vicissitudes of the times.109

CONCLUSION

In this way the Madrasah al-Zahra Model given by Said Nursi is very comprehensive and caters needs both of religion science and morality and thus makes beautiful blend of all the three in a holistic manner. Sir Syed had envisaged a model based on western standards of morality and scientific temper but he ignored the basic religious elements which were being trampled over under its feet because western secularism and atheism was the leading educational undercurrent post renaissance. Mawlana Maududi was a visionary but practically except his experiment with Thanvi Darasgah at Rampur no other full-fledged scheme of education could be implemented by him which could convince Muslim world to adopt it or make it as a model. His critique was limited to Sir Syedian model of secular education. No doubt he gave very important proposals to the authorities of Madinah university and also
provided good advices to Nadwatul Ulama functionaries at various occasions, but practically his suggestions remained just recommendatory and were not implemented fully anywhere in the world. Ismail Raji Faruqi has given a full-fledged scheme for Islamization of knowledge and on the basis of his idea which were shared by his many colleagues like Suleiman Abdul Hamid ,several research and educational institutions of world repute at Malaysia and Islamabad have fruitioned into reality .But Nuristan model surpasses all these models as it is envisaged in the wake of aggressive atheism and plague of materialism ,which had made their inroads under the garb of the naturalism in post Kemalian turkey .This ,model has taken full cognizance of the needs of Muslims clergy as well as laity .It has talked about the universal terms and has laid much emphasis on spiritual values and moral etiquette to be inculcate din the students of the Zahra university.

REFERENCES AND NOTES
1. Jamah al Ilm, Hafiz Abdur Barr quoted in aaghaz Islam nd. P-4
2. Ibid.p-8
3. Ibid. p-5
4. This madrasah remained intact for a long time and later on it was known as bayti Khaizran after the name of the mother of Haroon Rashid who had stayed in this house for a quite long time, thus the name of the madrasah, quoted in aaghaz Islam op.cit p-5-6
5. ibid.
6. Alistiaab hafiz Ibn Abdur Barr p-392
7. Ibid. in aaghaz Islam P-6
8. It is a place of worship and a place to recite the Quran, it is an educational institution where students assemble and teacher teaches them and starts giving lectures and engages them in religious discussion ,the preachers preach here and admonish people and ulama invite people to Allah (Dawah).Masjid is the house of justice where the judge decided the conflicts of the people, Mufti gives fatwa and jurists explain decrees .In the earlier days of Islam ,it used to serve as the government office of Islamic government also wherefrom commandments were issued for people and the governors were sent to different places and Baytul mal was established and Sadaqat and kharaj was collected here and then distributed from here itself. It was a guest house (darul zayuf) where government delegations would stay and Muslims would also stay and all the social cultural and other important activities would take place.” quoted in aaghaz Islam op.cit. P-7
9. Kitab al bayuh Abu Dawud
10. Quoted in aaghaz Islam, op.cit. P-8
11. (surah Zumar: 9), Baqarah: 269)
12. Qurtubi p 121, vol 3
13. Quoted in aaghaz Islam, op.cit p-11
14. Musnad Ahmad
15. Ibn Majah
16. Bukhari
17. Tafsir Qurtubi vol 4, p-121
18. Tirmidhi
19. Tirmidhi
20. Jamiah Sagheer
21. Quoted in aaghaz Islam, op.cit p-13
22. Abu Naim
24. al Baladhi futon up al Buldan, p-458 p-107, Naqush vol 4, Dr.Ahmad Shabby. Ibn ajar has collected stories of 1543 women muhadithat in his book al Isabah fi Tameei al sahabah same is the case with Nawi in Tahzib al Asma and khatib Baghdadi in Tarikh Baghdad .p-109
25. Tahzib al Asma p-948 p-10
27. Naqush, Dr.Hamidullah p-123 vol 4, Futuhul Buldam babul khatam p-123, Dr.Hamidullah. We have access to more than 250 to 300 letters of the prophet which should have been more in number 123
28. Ibn Abdur Barr Aqdu al Farid
30.134-135 Naqush, op.cit.Syed Rashid Ahmad Arshad
32. Ibid.p-138
33. Ibid.p-135
34. Ibid.p-124 Dr Hamidullah " namah lahuw al muninatah fi baytiha al ghazzal abu nairmwa ibn mundah "
35. Alimu awladulkum al rimayah wasabahah WA rakubal khayl, op.cit.p-19I
36. Back in India he started a periodical Tahdhib al Akhlaq with the object of educating the public by removing prejudices, aimed largely at reforming Muslim religious thinking and putting the Muslims back on the road to progress. Tahdhib al Akhlaq tried to do for India what Steetle and Addison had done for the British at the beginning of 18th century with their London magazines Tatlar and Spectator. (Hali, Hayat- i- Javeed, Translated by David J Mathews. Rupa & Co. 1994. P)
37. His loyalty to the British was rewarded by nomination in 1878 as a member of the vice regal legislative council and his appointment in 1888 to be a knight commander of the star of India. In 1889 he received an honorary degree from the University of Edinburgh (G.F.I Graham, Life and Work of Syed Ahmad Khan, 1885 p 60). On 27th of March Sir Syed breathed his last by reciting over and over again two verses of the holy Quran.
38. Ali Ashraf, Islam and the Modern Age, Quarterly journal.vol.3, no-14.feb.1972. pp 17-18(tafseer, vol 1, intro p. 20... And this applies not only to the past, Sir Syed leaves open the possibility that scientific developments in the future, too, even while contradicting many of our present day scientific postulates, will provide us with a newer and ever more profound understanding of the Quran.
40. Tahdhib al Akhlaq vol. 2 pp. 4-6
41. Majmu ah I Lectures, pp. 21-22
42. M. M. Sharief, A History of Muslim Philosophy: With Short Accounts of other Disciples and the Modern Renaissance in Muslim Lands. Vol. 2 Pakistan Philosophical Congress 1996. p. 159 What is nature? Sayyid Ahmad khan interprets it in the sense in which the thirteenth/nineteenth-century scientists interpreted it as a closed system of the universe which obeys certain laws of mechanics and physics and which is characterized by uniformity of behaviour to which there cannot be any exception. All inorganic, organic, and human behaviour is subject to these laws of mechanical laws. In one of his articles, he says, "In the beginning this knowledge of nature was limited. But with the increase in knowledge, the sphere of nature has correspondingly increased and, thus, seems to have become co-extensive with what we find in the universe, what we see or feel, so much so that the actions and thoughts of man and even his beliefs are all different chains in the inexorable laws of nature. "But this mechanical conception of nature, as James ward put it, is totally antagonistic to the spiritual interpretation of life, and therefore, cannot be upheld by a person who is
advocating the truth of any theistic religion. In the writings of Syed Ahmad Khan we meet with both types of naturalism, mechanistic and antitheistic on the one hand and teleological and theistic on other, and often criticism of his views on God and his relation to nature. He rightly said that if God is the mere cause of causes and cannot rise above the laws of nature and the absolute law of right and wrong, then he is God only in name, a being devoid of personality and all feelings of love and affection towards human beings. “God is really dethroned and all religious life becomes extinct. Prayer would become a cold attribute of perfunctory worship of a being whose arm is never stretched out in answer to prayers, whose ear is never open to the supplications of the penitents.” If such is the case, then man has no need to look to God in time of suffering; he has only to get as much detailed knowledge of the laws of nature as possible and then adapt his life mechanically to the requirements of the external world and, thus, attain success in life in proportion to his efforts. This philosophy of life leads to the requirements of the external world and, thus, attains success in life in proportion to his efforts. This philosophy of life leads not to the broadening of human outlook but to the spirit of self–sufficiency and self–centeredness which is the enemy of spiritual life. Sayyid Mahdi refers to the verses 25-35 of the twentieth Surah of the Quran where Moses is said to have prayed to God for granting some specific requests, and the reply was “Granted is your prayer, O Moses,” in view of this episode Sayyid Mahdi ‘Ali rightly infers that Sayyid Ahmad khan’s conception of God and function of prayer (du’ā’) does not accord with religious consciousness at all. He points out that if we accept this position, it will mean that man has no significant port to play in the world and everything is tied to the inexorable necessity of mechanical laws.( N. Haneef. Islam and Modernity. Sarup and Sons. 1997. p.210)

43. Tafsir al-quran, vol3, pp.11-12

44. This was a way to extinction. With his usual foresight Syed Ahmad grasped the nature of the issue and devised the solution. In the first place, he attempted a new syntheses of religious thought in Islam the central doctrine of which was that Islam was not opposed to the study of science and nothing to fare from its impact, he conceived of a new system of education in which the responsibility for educating the coming generations would be thrown on the community itself and in which the scholars would receive instruction in Islam along with the grounding in western sciences. This was the basic principles of Aligarh education which brought influential elements in the Indian Muslim society into the current of modernism. Sir Syed saw the need for modern education in his community and devoted his energies to seeing to that this need be met. He also recognized that the community would not be willing (and rightly) to have modern education, if this meant abandoning Islam. He therefore was scare full to provide a college in which both modern secular education and Islamic religious instruction would be simultaneously provided. Yet he also sensed that his own ways on religion, his own interpretation of Islam, and the endeavour’s which his own mind was making to synthesize and harmonizes his religious tradition with the spirit and knowledge of modernity, were unacceptable to most of his fellow Muslims. )


47. With regard to the religious thought of Sir Sayyid, Muhammad Umar al-Din - one of the three scholars after (the other two being Mawlana Sa’id Akbarabadi and B. A. Dar) who made efforts to show in great detail, how Sir Sayyid’s attempt to reformulate Islam can be placed in the broader context of the history of Islamic thought - argues that Sir Sayyid maintained that Islam is the only religion that can go together with changing conditions and with a new age. For Umar al- Din, Sir Sayyid presented “a new conception of Islam and laid the foundation of a new [Islamic] theology (Kalam). As in former [intellectual] movements Islam had been presented in the form of law, or in the form of philosophy, or again in the form of a Sufi system [of thought], in the same way Sir Sayyid, keeping in mind the scientific spirit of the modern age, presented Islam in the form of a scientific theory”. (Troll, C.W.,

48. Islam is not against culture, civilisation, modern sciences and in a moderate way against the modern culture .p99 Sayeed Akbarabadi. Though there were several movements initiated by Shah Wali Allah and Mohammad Ibn Abdul Wahab but Wahabi movement was followed by common masses but not by the elite and educated lot while as Shah Wali Allah was a pioneer of a real revivalist movement ,but his reformation was marred by Sufism .This helped Muslims and outcome this movement was Syed Ahmad Shahid’s movement ,but this was lost in timely combating .Then many madrasahs were opened under its influence like Deoband .But both the movements though having some element of vitality were not quite conversant with the real danger in wake of latter developments which was finally taken up by Sir Syed. During his period western ideas and materialism was holding sway and wanted to crush Islamic beliefs: “Only Sir Syed and only him could combat this challenge and he resists against it with the western tools of scientific methods”. (p.112)

49. Iqbal would say: “if in the world your objective is religious education but nation should not be taught renunciation alongside it” .117. Maulana Azad says that sir Syed made education movement scientific and analysed Muslim condition and their predicament. Maulana Azad wrote in 1949 that Sir Syed laid down the foundation of modern education among Muslims .He resisted opposition on this count. The slogan that western education is against religious education therefore the people who like their religion should remain attached to religious education was a common stance during that period .But Sir Syed propounded the idea that religion and scientific education are compatible. He was opposed by all for this novel idea. He fought this ideological war on the soil of Aligarh and Aligarh became a symbol of triumph and progress.op.cit.179.

What Ram Mohan Roy did in Bengal, Sir Syed did after 40 years in north India among Muslims .Though the field of Ram Mohan Roy was only religious while as that of Sir Syed was education.”179. Both had impacted Indian rulers, the education, social life language literature and press etc immensely by their revivalist activities and reformist thoughts about education op.cit.p.179

50. He was successful to establish a college which took him 20 years though he wanted to establish a university like Cambridge after he came back from England. He made this college a centre of intellectual discussions and civilisation and assembled the best intellectuals of his time around him. (op.cit.pp.180.81)

51. Therefore a committee was constituted to take stack of this situation...In this connection Maududi wrote in Tarjuman in 1936.

52. Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi (tr.Prof.S.M.A Rauf) The Education, Markazi Maktaba Islami New Delhi 2009) In the August, 1936

53. Talimat op.cit.p. 8. “The primary consideration in establishing Aligarh University was to provide the opportunity for Muslims to benefit from modern learning without losing their Islamic identity.12

54. Ibid.p.13. The university has become a den of atheism masqueraded as communism and progressivism. “A considerable number of people at Aligarh have turned to apostasy and they have become eloquent preachers of communism. The teachers belonging to this group have an unwholesome influence on the students. They lure all the intelligent, promising and new students into their net. The people inspired by this alien ideology profess that they have the interests of the poor, the peasants, and the workers at heart. But their extravagance and self indulgence belie this claim. Communism, being a world movement, serves as a convenient mask to hide their moral perversity, heresy and loose thinking. I was also deluded into believing that communism was an unauthorised edition of Islam .But through a comparative study of communism and Islam, it dawned on me that the two are completely antithetical to each other. “A Letter of one AMU student. p14

55. Ibid.pp-18-19

56. Ibid. p20
57. Founders of Aligarh University had no idea concerning the futuristic implications of this rudderless education. Apart of religious studies was included to do justice with the Muslim name. No Islamic character, nor Islamic spirit, and no Islamic identity was their concern. To create Islamic spirit in students Sir Syed wanted Muslims to make their worldly life better. p.18

58. Ibid. According to Maududi Egypt, china Greece the Muslims and now the Europe got leadership because of their excellence in education. According to Maududi Muslims were reduced to the community defeated and humiliated because of negligence towards developing these three faculties because “A community, however, pious it may be, cannot attain world leadership unless it fulfils these conditions. Considering this divine principle, you have been humbled because of your complaisance and intellectual fossilization. Your academic pursuits are limited to second hand knowledge because you have for a long time been bereft of curiosity or a passion for scientific enquiry. The west, on the other hand, has made progress in every fields of knowledge during the past centuries by having recourse to the three faculties mentioned above. The west inevitably emerged as the leader whereas you have been reduced to the position of follower”. p-56

59. Azhar was founded in 970 in Cairo during the reign of the Shiite Fatimids. In 1961 it was modernised and expanded and includes the faculties of Islamic theology, jurisprudence, engineering, medicine, commerce, agriculture, Islamic studies, languages, and science, as well as women’s college. “This kind of educational reform will not enable you to assume the role of leadership. As a God fearing community you cannot discharge your responsibilities unless you wrest this leadership from the secular community. To this end you should make relentless efforts to equip yourselves educationally so as to surpass other nations in the world.” P-56

60. Ibid. p.57
61. Ibid. p-61
62. Ibid.

63. Ibid. p. 63. “So far as the traditional system of education is concerned, it is based on principles that go back hundreds of years. The education system prevalent before colonial rule in the subcontinent was self-sufficient and catered to the needs of Muslims at that time. It offered instructions in all those disciplines which were necessary to run the administration of the government at that time. Besides religious instruction, it also included the study of philosophy, logic mathematics, literature and many other subjects. But in the wake of the political revolution which culminated in the imposition of colonial rule the old system became obsolete. In the new political setup products of the old system became misfits because they were educationally ill-equipped to carry out today’s responsibilities. Traditional education was no longer relevant to the needs of the new political order. Yet a large section in our community insisted on retaining this old system, since it contained some remnants of our ancient heritage and fulfilled our religious needs, though inadequately.” Pp-88-89

64. Ibid.
65. Ibid. P.136
66. P.13
67. Ibid. p-17
68. p. 22
69. Ibid. P.21
70. August Tarjuman Quran, 1936
71. I. R. Farooqi, Islamization of Knowledge, IIIT USA P. X-xi
72. Ibid. - X-xi
73. Ibid. (Xiii)
74. “The Institute, therefore, believes that the Ummah must be united under the aegis of its legacy, that the legacy should be viewed as a viable and dynamic force. The Institute believes that many aspects of this legacy can be used to the Ummah’s advantage through methodical and effective planning geared to making the presentation and understanding of
the educational and intellectual heritage of Islam easy and accessible. It realizes that this can be accomplished by systematically arranging and classifying the legacy and by establishing the specific relevance of Islam to the modern disciplines and social sciences.

Indeed, this legacy, as it stands today, is often obscure and yields its treasures only to a few capable and patient scholars. As a result, the Institute, in shaa Allah, intends to prepare and publish its Agenda for classifying the Islamic Legacy. In addition to this, there will be model-studies that are intended to provide the modern Muslim disciplinarians with ready access to the Legacy in their areas of specialization”.

75. “The Muslim world itself is known only for its inner strife and division, its turbulence and self-contradictions, its wars and threats to world peace, its excessive wealth and excessive poverty, its famines and epidemics.” The Ummah is divided against itself. The colonial powers have successfully fragmented the Ummah into some fifty or more nation-states and set them one against another

Finally, the enemy has created hostile "foreign“ states within the body of the Ummah to divert Muslim energy away from reconstruction, to drain its resources in futile wars, or to serve as bases for colonialism and foreign political interests. Every Muslim government spends the greater part of its resources and energy on securing its own power within and its sovereignty without—and yet without avail”.

76. The colonialists attacked everything Islamic either directly or by their native puppets. The perfection of the Quranic text, the Message of the Prophet (SAAS), the veracity of the Sunnah, the comprehensiveness of the Shari'ah, and the glories of Muslim achievements in culture and civilization were severely denigrated; none of them were spared. The purpose was to inject doubt into the Muslim’s confidence in himself, in his Ummah, and in his faith and ancestors. The object was to undermine his Islamic consciousness and to subvert his Islamic personality.

77. Today, students are cynical, lethargic, and mistrust all leaders. This is largely due to repeated false promises and disappointments and to the sad example of a morally bankrupt leadership. No Muslim government, university administration, or private organization is doing anything about the sinking morale of college youth or about their continuing de-Islamization through "education". The colossal building programs in the affluent Muslim-countries and the consequent growth of student bodies, faculty members, and expansion of facilities all serve the secularist cause. Hardly any of the funds are devoted to "modernizing" in a genuine sense, i.e., to improving the quality of education and the Islamic orientation of students and faculty. Everywhere, the race is on at maddening speed toward completing the Western educational model.

Thus the result was as follows: “The integrity of Islamic culture and the unity of the Islamic style of life were shattered in their own persons, in their thought and actions, in their homes and families. Western social institutions and customs were introduced into their lives in excess and with impertinence. Instead of raising themselves from their debasement to the heights of virtue and societal efficacy envisaged for them by Islam, Muslim men and women began to hanker after the manifestations of Western decadence: gradual nudity and immorality of dress and make-up (tabarruj), economic independence aimed at individualistic license, egotistic pursuit of pleasure, and avoidance of duties imposed by family relationships”.

78. Education in the Muslim world lacks this vision. Its leadership does not have the vision of the Western man by necessity; and it does not have the vision of Islam by its own choice, i.e., by deliberate ignorance, laziness, and lack of concern. Educational leadership in the Muslim world has existed without culture and without cause. Nationalism has inspired the Western universities in the last 200 years because Romanticism has replaced the defunct God of Christianity with "la nation" as the genuine "ultimate reality". For the Muslim, no reality is ultimate but Allah (SWT). Therefore, ultimate loyalty to the nation-state, is both impossible and blasphemous to him. Whatever type of link a Muslim has with his legacy and past, it is
not possible for him to be a "nationalist" in the same sense as the European who has substituted his Christianity with his 'nationalism'.

Look at the highest model of the Muslim university teacher-the professor with a doctorate from a Western university, especially in the social sciences and humanities. He was trained in the West and graduated with a fair or less than fair average. In most cases, he was not Islamically motivated beforehand, i.e., he had not embarked upon his expedition to seek knowledge for the sake of Allah (SWT), but rather for a materialistic, egoistic, or at best, nationalistic goal. Therefore, he did not obtain all the knowledge available to him in the West, nor 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 reunion home, and to achieve a position of affluence and eminence. The books he read as a student constitute the ultimate reaches of his knowledge; for now, he has neither time, energy, nor motivation to push beyond the frontiers of his basic training. His living and working conditions add to his distraction from such a distant ideal. Naturally, his students must emerge even less motivated and less competent. For them the Western ideal has receded even further. Gradually, the standards sink; and Western education in the Muslim world becomes a caricature of its Western prototype. The subjects and methodologies presently taught in the Muslim world are copies of the Western ones but are devoid of the vision that animated them in the West. Devoid of that vision, they have become instruments of mediocrity. Unconsciously, these dispirited materials and methodologies continue to exert a sinister de-Islamizing influence upon students by posing as alternatives to the Islamic disciplines as well as agents of "progress" and "modernization". They make the graduate of the Muslim university a typical "freshman"- thinking that he knows a great deal but knowing very little indeed.

Islamisation, op.cit p-9

77. ibid.
78. “It should not be allowed to- remain an imitation of the West; nor should it be left to find its own way; nor should it be tolerated that it serves merely the economic and pragmatic needs of the student for professional training, personal advancement, or material gain. The educational system must be endowed with a mission, and that mission must be none other than that of imparting Islamic vision and cultivating the will to realize it on the largest scale.”

79. Ibid.p. 36
80. The same bombastic claims made on behalf of the discipline by Karl Marx were denied in practice by Lenin and Khrushev. Their regime, however, has not yet permitted a statement to this effect to appear in print; but it allowed a fair measure of chauvinistic declarations, in this case national-socialistic, to be included in the new U.S.S.R. constitution of 1398 AH I 1978 AC.
81. Ibid p-50
82. Ibid.p.57.
83. Ibid. P.85
84. ibid.
85. Nursi admitted this lapse in the later stages of his intellectual life, and held it to be an error: an error he once defined as "polishing Islam" 86. However he was oblivious of the other side of science if employed without qualification, which could pose a challenge to the interpretation of the Quranic verses in the end .He was that much fascinated by the scientific precision in earlier Said stage that he thought that the traditional schools had degenerated because they had nothing like "scientific precision" available . Yet, in a more sophisticated fashion, he tried to explain this “degeneration” through human interventions and the ever-accumulating commentaries of intellectual tradition and came to the conclusion that these factors obscured the original meaning of religious
texts by creating ambiguity. Since modern science appeared with a different discourse with its claim to “objectivity and universal validity,” in his eyes it rendered the traditional schools ineffective and became the chief authority in approaching the truths of the 86. However, since he did not come up with a comprehensive and systematically critique of modern science which could dismantle its shortcomings on a philosophical level, the intellectual transition Nursi underwent did go unnoticed.

Besides, it is important to emphasize that in writing the *Risale-i Nur* collection, Nursi’s purpose was not to compose a systematical work which would deal with a variety of subjects on a theoretical level. Therefore, it is paradoxical to search for a systematic treatment of modern science in the *Risale-i Nur* collection as it pertains to the intellectual tradition.

As for the details of the adoption process, it was primarily the claim of objectivity, that is, the claim of “providing certitude on the level of phenomena.” 87. It is for this reason that many of the matters known to all today were only theoretical or even incomprehensible in the past. We clearly see that many matters of geography, astronomy, physics, chemistry, and other sciences are no longer unknown to the children of today, due to the facts and principles that have been established, the means that have been invented, and the opinions that have gained strength from one another. They were unknown even to Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and thinkers and scientists like him, although such people had a greater capacity and were far better versed in philosophy and sciences than many of their contemporaries. The deficiency lies not in Ibn Sina and his contemporaries, but in the time they lived in; we are all children of our times. See also Vahide, “A Survey of the Main Spiritual Themes of the Risale-i Nur,” 5.


89. The Influence of Modern Science on Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’s thought By Serdar Dogan, op.cit, P-5-6

90-Ibid -PP-5-7


97. the *Reasonings* - opt.cit p-4


99. In many places in his works, especially in those composed during the time of old Said, we can clearly see the traces of this influence. The primary example of this is found in “The Reasonings” (Muhakemat). It is a kind of work dedicated to the explication of the Islamization of modern science as Nursi understood it and how this Islamization can help Muslim world “progress” faster. It is for this reason that many of the matters known to all today were only
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of modern science as Nursi understood it and how this Islamization can help Muslim world
“progress” faster.
100-Nursi, The Reasonings, p-41.
101- Nursi, The Reasonings, 41. On the levels of meanings hidden in the Quranic Verses
see Kristin Zahra Sands, Sufi Commentaries on the Quran in Classical Islam, (New York:
Routledge), See Serdor op.cit pp. 8-13
103.Hutbe-i Şâmiye, (Damascus Sermon) p. 23.
104-In Kastamonu, in 1936, when a group of high-school students came to Said Nursi and
complained that their teacher
s did not speak of Allah, he said to them, “All the sciences you
study continuously speak of Allah and make known the Creator, each with its own particular
tongue. Do not listen to your teachers; listen to them.”See Sözler (Words), p.162-163
105- Sözler (Words), p. 275
107-Işârât-ül İ'caz (Signs of Miraculousness), p.88-89
108-The Words / Twenty-Seventh Word - Conclusion - p.501
109-Işârât-ül İ'caz (Signs of Miraculousness), p. 164
110-Letters / Twenty - Ninth Letter - Sixth Section - p.496
111. Divan-ı Harb-i Örfi, p. 27-
112-The Flashes / A Look at Bediuzzaman's Life and the Risale-i Nur - p.481