A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL DUALISM IN THE MUSLIM CLASSICAL ERA

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Abstract

This paper reviews the evolution of Islamic education system and examines the symptoms of dualism in the classical era of Muslim history. The first part of this paper provides a chronological picture of the developments of Islamic education including its institutions and curriculum in the classical era. There are four phases are identified in the Islamic educational development. The first is the phase of its construction and establishment from the period of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) (632 A.D.) to the end of the Umayyad dynasty (749 A.D./41-132 A.H.). The second is the phase of flourishing period during the Abbasid caliphate in the East until the Tartar invasion in 1258A,D/659A.H. The third is the phase of decline and stagnation during the Ottoman period. The final is the phase of revitalization and educational reform from the end of Ottoman Empire until to the present day. The focus of discussion is only the first three phases which are classified under the classical era of Islamic education i.e. 622-1300A.D. (1-700A.H.). The second part of this paper analyzes whether there existed any symptoms of dualism at the beginning of Muslim history. Dualism is identified as the major contributing factor for the Ummatic malaise. It is found that notwithstanding, the nature of present dualism is quite different, its symptoms had been recognized in the earlier Muslim history such as the emergence of traditionalism and rationalism and the dichotomy between politics and religion. On the other hand, the art of integration had been practiced among Muslim intelligentsias at their individual level and they emphasized the role of the Holy Qur’an and promoted Islamic Intellectualism. This study gives some implications on Muslim life and civilization including the system of education and its learning institutions.

Keywords: Integrated curriculum, educational dualism, historical review, Islamic history, Islamic civilization, Muslim classical era

1. INTRODUCTION

In general, there are four phases of Islamic educational development. The first is the phase of its construction and establishment from the period of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) (632 A.D.) to the end of the Umayyad dynasty (749 A.D./41-132 A.H.). The second is the phase of flourishing period during the Abbasid caliphate in the East until the Tartar invasion in 1258A,D/659A.H. The third is the phase of decline and stagnation during the Ottoman period. The final is the phase of revitalization and educational reform from the end of Ottoman Empire until to the present day. For the purpose of discussion, the first three phases are classified under the classical era of Islamic education i.e. 622-1300A.D. (1-700A.H.) with less emphasis on the period of stagnancy meanwhile the final phase is referred as the modern era of Muslim educational developments.
The first phase provides a chronological picture of the developments of Islamic education including its institutions and curriculum in the classical era. The establishment of learning institutions was closely related to the emergence of the schools of Islamic legal and theological thoughts. They developed because of divergent methodological thinking. This phase is very significant in understanding about the evolution of Islamic education system and to detecting the signs of dualism in the classical era of Muslim history.

The second phase narrates several chronological events that fashioned Muslim educational system prior to, during and after the colonial periods in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The review on educational developments in the modern era is very complex because it deals with a long duration, and the educational systems are still evolving. Furthermore, as an impact of Western colonialism, the Muslim territories become scattered and different countries experienced different political and social changes. This historical review attempts to make a general analysis of Muslim education system as a whole. It stimulates the discussion in the subsequent chapters regarding the practical attempts of reviving Islamic education system through an integrated curriculum.

2. THE CLASSICAL ERA OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

2.1 The Construction Period

The history of the Ummah began from the time of the prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) in 610 A.D in the Arab land. During the period of ignorance (jāhiliyyah), as Totah describes, the Arab were capable of producing poetry but were illiterate than the Christians and the Jewish who were known as ‘people of the Book’ (ahl al-kitāb). The education of the Arabs had two phases; the first is Arab type that developed progressively from the first quarter of the seventh century A.D. The second is the non-Arabic elements of the institutionalization of learning in the first and second centuries of Muslim history. In the early period of Muslim history, several places were used for educational activities such as kuttāb, palaces, bookshops, private homes, literary salons, deserts and mosques. In the pre-Islamic period, kuttāb (writing school) offered elementary education comprised of Arabic literacy, arithmetic, poetry and history. During the Prophetic time, some kuttāb taught the Holy Qur'an and basic religious doctrines and some others taught basic skills of reading and writing, language and others. For instance, literate captives of Badr were offered to teach ten Muslims on how to read and write at these kuttāb. Their services were counted as their ransom.

The private homes were also used with permission for teaching the Holy Qur'an and basic Islamic knowledge. In 610 A.D, the Prophet utilized al-Arqam bin Abi Arqam’s house in Makkah as the first ‘school’. At Dār al-Arqam, prophet’s teaching was conducted secretly for three years and it was limited to reading the first divine revelation and its applications in life. Companions of the prophet like ‘Abdullah bin Rawānah, ‘Ubadah bin Sāmit and Abu ‘Ubaidah al-Jarrāh also taught various skills and knowledge. The Prophet's migration to Madinah in 622A.D. started a new history. Masjid Qubā and Masjid al-Nabī were the places where he taught the Islamic doctrine in a semi-circle form of assembly known as majlis (occasion) or halqah (learning circle); and this is practiced until today. In addition to religious and social
activities, mosques were also the places to settle legal matters systematically. It became the center for public education where both religious and worldly knowledge were taught. Eventually, the mosque-centered style evolved to become residential ‘school’ where the students stayed to seek higher learning in reading, writing, legal matters and memorization of the Qur’anic chapters. The mosques were supplemented with the construction of dormitories or residence halls (khān) which were known as mosque-khan (masjid-inn). The demise of the prophet P.B.U.H, the expansion of Islamic territories and later the development of jurisprudence (Fiqh) had changed the organization of Islamic learning institution. In the tenth century, mosque-khan was transformed into madrasahs for training students in the interpretation of Islamic texts for legal and administrative purposes. The masjid paid salary for the staff and offered free tuition for learners. Whereas the mosque-khan supplemented with accommodation and food, in addition to that the madrasahs afforded all learning necessities of the students. In sum, the early Islamic learning institutions evolved from the mosque (masjid), to the mosque-khan (masjid-inn) and eventually they became madrasahs.

2.2 The Flourishing Period

A new historic development in Islamic classical education transpired with the establishment of learning institutions. Makdisi classifies the learning institutions into two types based on the centrality of the madrasah i.e. pre-madrasah and post madrasah institutions. The former comprised two types; the first was institutions without foreign sciences that evolved out of the masajid and the second variety of institutions such as libraries and hospitals were inclusive of foreign sciences. The nature of madrasah was theological, political, and disseminated Sunnism over Shi’ism. Initially, the Shi’a was the first group which institutionalized learning with a structured curriculum. However, the conquest of Baghdad by the Seljuks in 25th Muharram 447 A.H. became a turning point of the Sunni’s struggle against Shi’ism. The former obtained authority over educational activities. The first well-structured Madrasah was founded by Seljuk Vizier named Nizam al-Mulk Hassan Bin Al-Tusi (d. 485 A.H.) under the Seljuk in Baghdad, Iran by 459 A.H (1066-1067 A.D.) through endowment system (waqf). Later, Nur al-Din (d. 569 A.H.) founded schools in Damascus in 541 A.H. under the Ayyubid in Egypt.

However, the curriculum of the madrasahs was limited to religious sciences and this made some knowledge seekers discontented from the real life. Hence, outside the madrasah, privately and informally they sought some foreign sciences such as philosophy, mathematics, medicine and rationalist theology. This non-institutionalized learning evolved because of the transmission of Hellenistic scientific and philosophical works and their translations to the Muslim world in the latter first century of Islam. This enhanced the flourishing of Islamic religious intellectuality in the Muslim golden ages especially during the caliphates of Hārūn al-Rashīd (170-193A.H./786-809A.D.) and al-Ma’mūn (198-218 A.H./813-833 A.D.). Chemistry was the first science developed by Khālid ibn Yazīd; later, the treatises of metaphysics, theology, physics and logic were translated. However, some Muslims claim that these were contradictory to the Islamic doctrines and consequently, this disintegrated the Ummah into various groups. The popular learning institutions, Totah recognizes,
were *bait al-hikmah* (House of Wisdom), *dār al-ʾilm* and *al-Nizāmiyyah* madrasahs.\(^{14}\) The first was the earliest scientific Islamic university, which had outstanding professors, library and astronomical observatory. The second had subjects such as astronomy, language, grammar and philology. The third offered religious curriculum comprised of syntax (*Nahv*), dialectics (*al-Kalām*) and jurisprudence (*Fiqh*).\(^{15}\) The curriculums of the first two were scientific and liberal while the last was conservative and theological.

In terms of curricular aspect, the classical Islamic education system and its formal institutions had some distinguished features.\(^{16}\) The formal learning was religious in nature with priority to theology and legal jurisprudence while non-religious sciences were excluded. Its curriculum seemed to be narrow, dogmatic, more theological, formal and governmental superimposition. Badawi mentions that during this classical period, the *maktab* was regarded as primary school, the *madrasah* as intermediate level and the mosque as the zenith of the system. The *maktab* focused on recitation and memorization of the Holy Qur’an, exegesis and scholarly elaboration of the tradition. The *maktab* offered Arabic language and literature. Makdisi identifies some religious subjects that were offered such as the Qur’anic exegesis (*ʿilm al-tafsīr*), the science of Qur’anic readings (*ʿIlm al-qirāʿāt*), the sciences of tradition (*ʿUlūm al-Hadīth*), methodology of law (*Usūl al-Fiqh*), jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and the principle of religion (*usūl al-dīn*). The subsidiary sciences were Arabic Sciences (*ʿUlūm al-ʾArabiyyah*) such as grammar (*Nahv*), lexicology (*Lughah*), morphology (*Tasrīf*), metrics (*ʿArūd*), rhyme (*Qawāfī*), prosody (*Sun at al-Shiʿr*), Arab tribal history (*Akhbār al-ʾArab*) and Arab tribal genealogy (*Ansāb*).\(^{17}\)

In general, Totah identifies classical curriculum inclusive of academic and extra-mural subjects, permissible and prohibited subjects. He classifies and distributes these subjects into five areas as provided below:

i. Legal Subjects (*Shariʿiyah*): Jurisprudence, Exegesis, Tradition

ii. Literary Studies (*Adabiyyah*): Philology, Syntax, Rhetoric, Prosody, Composition, Reading, History

iii. Mathematics (*Riyādiyyah*): Geometry, Astronomy, Arithmetic, Algebra, Music, politics, Ethics, Domestic Economy

iv. Rational (*ʿAqliyyah*): Logic, dialectic, Dogmatic Theology, Metaphysics, natural Science, medicine, Chemistry.

v. Miscellaneous: Surveying, Veterinary, Agriculture, Magic, Phrenology, Astrology, Dream Interpretation.\(^{18}\)

The learning institutions were funded by their founders through endowment system (*waqf*) and institutions such as Nizamiyyah offered free education to public. After the institutionalization of learning, Al-Ghazali mentions, teachers did receive salaries. Prior to this, as a sacred duty they taught free.\(^{19}\) There were six types of teachers, identified by Nakosteen, namely *muʿallim*, *muʿaddib*, *mudarris*, *shaykh*, *ustādh* and *imām*, not to mention private tutors and *muʿayyid* (junior instructor).\(^{20}\)

### 2.3 The Stagnant Period
The stagnancy of Islamic intellectualism is the most horrific development in the history of the *Ummah*. Its impacts lasted for almost four centuries before colonialism and extended to this modern era. The first decline happened prior to the sack of Baghdad, when the Islamic education system seemed to be collapsing due to the absence of intellectualism and originality of knowledge. This sign of intellectual decline was detected by Fazlur Rahman who concludes that the original theological, philosophical and legal instructional materials had been replaced with guidebook, commentaries and super-commentaries at the tertiary level. Moreover, the scholarly method of learning had been changed into technique of learning by rote and disputation (*jadal*) that reproduced meaningless refutations and counter-refutations. Zuberi marks this stagnant age as low in intellectual productivity, lacking in originality and widespread in illiteracy. The scope of Islamic education was limited to religious subjects and Arabic language.

During the fourth century A.H., the door of *ijtihād* in legal aspects had been determinedly closed. It was not practiced continuously but only when it was necessary. The decline of the Muslim intellectual life and the wholesale destruction of the *Ummah* happened in the middle of the thirteenth century (the end of the seventh century A.H.). It began with the advent of Mongol and the Tartar, which led to the sacking of Bagdad in 1285 A.D. (656 A.H). Finally, the era of Islamic intellectualism was replaced with the era of conservatism in Islam. However, there was no real stagnation in the Muslim world until the nineteenth century. The *Ummah* was still revitalized by Al-Ghazali and other personalities like al-Razi, Ibn Khaldun, Salahuddin al-Ayyubi to name a few. Three dynasties existed during this stagnant period namely the Mughal Empire in India, the Safavid Empire in Persia and the Ottoman Empire in Turkey. The biggest factor of the Ummatic downfall was subjection to European colonialism in the nineteenth century, which resulted from the Renaissance that brought catastrophe to the Muslim world. Consequently, the *Ummah* lost its identity, and since then suffering in many aspects of life standard to emerge.

3. SYMPTOMS OF DUALISM

It is a fact that, dualism is identified as the major factor for the Ummatic malaise. Although, the nature of present dualism is quite different, but its symptoms had been recognized in the earlier Muslim history. This is proven with the emergence of two rival groups of Muslims, which had different thinking approaches namely, traditionalism and rationalism. The consequent, continuous struggle between both groups significantly affected the Muslims’ life system as a whole including the system of education and learning institutions.

4. TRADITIONALISM VERSUS RATIONALISM

The signs of dualism could be observed in the development of Islamic education even during the classical era. Initially, Muslims were adopting different approaches in the disputations of legal matter (*Fiqh*) and later, it extended into theological matter (*'aqīdah*). This resulted in the emergence of the personal legal schools such as Hanafites, Malikites, Shafi‘ites and Hanbalites as well as theological movements like Dogmatism (*Mutakallimūn*), Shi‘ites, Mu'tazilites, Ash'arites and Ikhwan al-Safa.26
During the prophetic period, the signs of dichotomy were hidden in different approaches of practicing Islam among the companions (Sahābah) in legal matters. They were categorized into ahl al-Hadīth and ahl al-Ra‘y based on geographical factor. The former were the residents of Hijaz or Makkah and Madinah. Their practices of Islamic teachings were directly referred to the Prophet or knowledgeable companions (Sahābah). Meanwhile the latter were the migrants or newly revert who settled especially in Kufah. They tended to use reason (ijtihād) to solve their legal problems for it was difficult for them to reach the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) or other prominent companions. Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) himself approved this practice as in the case of Mu‘ādh bin Jabal when he was appointed as governor to Yemen.

In the last period of the Righteous Caliphs (Khulafā’ al-Rāshidīn), a political conflict occurred between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah in the battle of Siffin. The turmoil of discrepancies and incongruous political views developed unremittingly after this conflict. This caused the disintegration of the Ummah into several rival groups, which resulted in the crisis of Islamic thought. The attitude of the Umayyad who was more interested in government than in religion led to the separation between thought and action. The caliphs justified their oppressive behavior on the issue of predetermination (qadr) and manipulated the Jabarites who believed that human deeds were predetermined by Allah and thus, man was not responsible and should not be punished for any wrongdoings. This earliest philosophical issue was disputed by the Mu’tazilites who upheld that man has free will and freedom of choice; thus, Allah must be just and ought to reward the good and punish the wrong doers.

Subsequently, this philosophical dispute extended the decisive struggle between conservative religious groups or legal-traditionalists (ahl al-Hadīth) and the theological-rationalists (ahl al-Kalām) thereby the symptoms of dualism in the Ummah became more obvious. The former was represented by Ash‘arites while the latter by Mu‘tazilites. The former believed in the supremacy of revelation while the latter advocates the superiority of reason. This struggle had implications for understanding Islamic beliefs and practices. The overuse of reason eventually led to the misuse of intellect among Mu’tazilites, which include al-Ma‘mun’s attempt to infuse the notion of the createdness of the Holy Qur’an (al-Qur’ān al-makhluq) into the traditionalists’ doctrine. The consequent traditionalist responses were detrimental to the unity of the Ummah. The critical conflict led to the incident of great bloody Inquisition (Mihnah) in Baghdad, the hub of Islamic intellectualism and culture. This conflict ended with the victory of traditionalist force, which was led by Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. He symbolized a legal scholar (Faqīh) and an all-rounded personality who was competent in religious, political and military leadership roles.

5. THE DICHOTOMY BETWEEN POLITICS AND RELIGION

Al-Fārūqī, Abu Sulayman and al-‘Alwānī observe that the dualistic state of the Ummah, in fact, was the result of the political struggle above. The root cause of this dualism was the crisis of thought among Muslims, which manifested in the dichotomy between the reason (‘aqlī) and revelation (wahy). Eventually, this crisis ruptured the unity of thought and action, which resulted in the separation of leadership from the sources of Islamic thought. The political man manipulated puppet caliphs and demoralized the Ummah. This unfavorable political exploitation made the thinkers
avoid social involvement and some of them isolated themselves from this chaotic reality to practice Islamic mysticism, to be later known as Sufis. Consequently, two types of leadership emerged. The first was the political leaders who were not entitled to exercise religious authority because of lack of religious knowledge. The second was religious spiritual leaders who were practicing *ijtihād* but had no authority to enforce it. The former used religion to justify their actions and persecuted the latter who were against them. Finally, the religious leaders had to close the gate of *ijtihād* in order to defend religion from being abused by the political leaders. Indeed, the dichotomy between politics and religion had a great impact on *ijtihād* as an intellectual discipline as well as the intellectualism of the *Ummah*.

6. **DUAL SYSTEMS OF LEARNING**

The impact of dualism in thought influenced significantly on the education system and its institutions during the classical era as discussed earlier. Makdisi asserts that the struggle (between traditionalist, and rationalists) was on the uphill; the main obstacle being the Islamic waqf, upon which rested the whole edifice of institutions of learning, and which excluded any and all things that were considered to be inimical to the tenets of Islam.

Consequently, two different systems of learning existed. The first was the formal learning system institutionalized by the state. It aimed at producing Jurisconsultants (*Muftī*) who issued legal opinions (*fatāwā*), but isolated themselves from this chaotic reality. These formal institutions were fully advocated by the consensus of traditionalist scholars. The second informal non-institutionalized learning system tended to produce either philosophers, scholastic theologians, and was initiated subversively by the rationalists.

This dual systems of learning produced dual curriculums; the former system only offered Islamic religious sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-Islāmiyyah, al-ʿulūm al-Sharʿīyyah*) related with Islamic law and theology. The latter provided the non-religious sciences (*al-ʿulūm ghayr Sharʿīyyah*) or the sciences of the ancients (*ulūm al-awāʾil*) or foreign sciences. Madrasah adopted only the religious learning for its formal curriculum and denounced the non-religious subjects due to some misconceptions about these subjects. Fazlur Rahman examines some factors for that denunciation. Firstly, the psychological factor, with the priority over spiritual life influenced by the Sufism. Secondly, the religious scholars’ attitude that led Muslims to neglect the Qur’anic invitation for scientific investigations. Thirdly, the promising profession offered to religious graduates to become qadis or muftis (not philosopher or scientist) who were limited to court service only. Fourthly, the religious scholar’s influence as that of al-Ghazali who denounced scientific and philosophical thoughts. It could be concluded that mostly Muslims were more interested in religious learning for its economic returns and prestige. For an example, a Qādī earned more and he was considered as an intellectual than a scientist was. Moreover, financial scholarships were allocated for religious learning only. However, some Muslims still pursued the non-religious learning due to the culture of learning as a norm of society. Therefore, the compartmentalization of knowledge into religious and non-religious spheres emerged.
7. THE PRACTICE OF INTEGRATION

Although, the symptoms of dualism were much rampant during the classical era, which alarmingly affected the *Ummah*, the efforts of integration were made by some individuals, groups and institution. Generally, integration deals with combining or synchronizing two or more separate elements in order to establish a harmonious relationship between them (this term will be elucidated further in Chapter Four). Badawi claims that the classical Islamic education system had practiced three types of integration which, according to Max Weber's analysis, are ‘charismatic education’, education for culture’, and ‘specialist education’. This education system gave priority to spirituality. This means that the classical education emphasized the human personality development in cultural education, individual's inner excellence and societal progress. Thus, Islamic education was a part of social activity that stimulated the Islamic intellectualism in an integrated manner.

Curriculum integration had been practiced about 150 to 200 years earlier during the classical period especially in the reign of Abbasiyah, Uthmaniyyah and Mughal periods. There was an effort to incorporate the field of modern professionalism with Islamic religious education. The trainees of military and civil servants were required to master in the modern professional subjects along with religious studies such as the Holy Quran, the Sunnah, Islamic Law and Jurisprudence as well as Arabic languages. Badawi posits, “the professional standards of excellence and the ethical standards of professional conduct were reinforced and safeguarded by religious ethics and values.” Thus, the infusion of Islamic principles into modern professionalism made the classical curriculum more useful.

Even though the *waqf* tended to create dualism in the classical education system as discussed earlier, however, the art of integration was still practiced in the madrasahs in the various ways. Firstly, it served learning that was connected to life and professionalism. For instance, the scholastic theology was offered by the first *madrasah* and it was aimed at producing religious experts and scholars. Secondly, the *madrasah* system integrated theory and practice. Its core curriculum comprised both theology and law that manifested the integration of theoretical and practical sets of knowledge. Later, the inclusion of both philosophy and science into its formal curriculum also embodied an integration of theory and practice. Thirdly, it adopted an integration between an ideal religious Islamic science i.e. law and an ideal Islamic religious orientation i.e. traditionalism that fashioned its scholastic method for promoting thinking process. Besides, through the practice of *ijtihād* while seeking Islamic religious knowledge, an academic freedom was also manifested since the eleventh century. Rosnani asserts that the *madrasah* system had a dynamic pedagogy in teaching jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) by practicing intellectual discourse with the application of reasoning (*ijtihād*) to produce new ideas instead of memorizing commentaries as practiced later.

The art of integration was also practiced by some schools of thoughts or sects. The application of both rational and traditional arguments to defend Islam was practiced by Sunnites (*Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah*) including *Ahl al-Hadīth*, Ash’arites and Maturidites. The Shafi’ite model was the best for employing a moderate and integrated method in legal matters (*Usūl al-Fiqh*) meanwhile the Ash’arites for theological matters (*Usūl al-Dīn*). The acquisition of Hellenistic philosophy among Muslims was related to the rise of scholastic theology (*‘ilm al-
Kalām) and the group of theologians (Mutakallimūn). They used reason within the parameter of revelation to clarify misconceptions about Islamic doctrines to non-Muslims and Hellenized converts. Muʿtazilites was the first group that employed the Hellenistic philosophical tools of Greek logic to defend Islam in theological matters. Their interest in the semantics of miraculous Holy Quran (iʿjāz al-Qurʿān) had evolved the Arab science of rhetoric and eloquence, an integration of Arabic grammar and Greek rhetoric. Initially, they believed in the authority of revelation and used reason for allegorical interpretation of the Holy Qurʾān and in order to understand the anthropomorphic verses, which describe God’s attributes. However, their method was contested by the literalists who believed in literal interpretation of the Holy Qurʾān. Some traditionalists had attempted to make modifications among different traditions and they were called as ‘the people of opinions’ (Ahl al-Raʿy) as in the case of Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Malik. It should be reiterated that the victory of the traditionalists over the rationalists during Inquisition (mihnah) period had reflected in the intellectual standards of Islamic education and the supremacy of the Islamic law. However, the traditionalist inescapably was affected by the rationalists in terms of using reason in its methodology.

The art of integration was also practiced among Muslim intelligentsias at their individual level. They adopted constructive attitudes and sincere efforts to integrate between dualistic entities of revelation and reason and theory and practice. They intellectually endeavored to modify certain Hellenistic works and treaties while translating and thereby contributing to Islamization of knowledge. For example, Ibn Sina adopted the basic philosophical concepts from Aristotle’s ‘De Anima’ but these concepts were modified to be compatible to the Islamic worldview. For example, Aristotle’s definition of soul was redefined by him as an incorporeal substance. These philosophers, Rosnani admits, rectified the ancient epistemological theories that separate ‘knowledge from action’ and ‘theory from practice’ and successfully produced an integrated system in the flourishing of empirical knowledge and scientific-philosophical activities. This reflected their integrated personality with strong ability of integrating theory (ʿilm) and practice (ʿamal) and their engagement with the scientific-philosophical knowledge, which was meant to strengthen their Islamic doctrine and practice. Fazlur Rahman highlights that they took almost three hundred years to develop theological, legal-moral and political systems into a systematic structured education system, which was very dominant in shaping communal direction and culture. These classical Muslim scholars had transformed knowledge to become more integrated and Islamic in nature. Furthermore, this classical time witnessed the practice of life-long education and journey for knowledge as experienced among many great personalities such as Ibn Sina and al-Ghazali. Their educational thoughts were practical and life oriented and contributive to human civilization.

8. THE HOLY QUR’ĀN AND ISLAMIC INTELLECTUALISM

The role of the Holy Qurʾān in motivating the Muslim individuals, groups and learning institutions to play very significant roles in the practice of integration, in fact, cannot be denied. Thus, the theory pertaining to the origin of philosophy and science in Islam in relation to the Ancient Greek should be scrutinized thoroughly. The Orientalists, Rauf claims, assumed that the classical Muslim scholars were
merely adherents of the ancient inheritance, mainly the Greek and the Roman. They are attributed to have made translations and commentaries without contributing any new works, and then transmitted those works to the West, which later led to the Renaissance.54

Indeed, the philosophical-scientific activities among Arab Muslims began much earlier before the coming of the Greek and Muslims’ discoveries had stimulated the spread of those Hellenistic sciences. For an instance, Thābit ibn Qurra’s family gave remarkable contributions to Mathematics and Astronomy. Leaman affirms that previously, Muslims began to debate the legal and theological issues using philosophical arguments55 and afterward the advent of Greek philosophy and logic the proper execution of these debates were further improved.56 It is noted that the Greek philosophy and science could never come into Islamic thought and Arab culture unless the latter was receptive to this assimilation57, which was based on tolerance.58

Açıkgenç asserts that the philosophical thought in Islam was a response of “the Qur’anic invitation of the believers to contemplate on the universe and on a host of other subjects that may be classified in the philosophical scope.”59 Examples of such Qur’anic verses are Yūnus, 101; al-Arāf, 185; Āl’Imrān, 190; al-Dhariyāt, 20-21; al-Jāthiyah, 3-5. Thus, the Holy Qur’an is the genuine source of Islamic education and its disciplines including science and philosophy. Initially, the Qur’anic injunctions developed intellectualism with the emergence of subjects such as Sciences of the Holy Qur’an (‘ulum al-Qur’ān), Hadīth, Jurisprudence and its principles (fiqh wa usūl al-fiqh), Scholastic Theology (‘ilm al-kalām), Sufism (tasawwuf) and others. Other non-religious disciplines such as Medicine, Science, History, Geography60 and other such subjects were also accepted in Islam.

It is imperative to acknowledge the role of the Holy Qur’an in integrating both revealed-transmitted knowledge (‘ulūm al-wahy or al-naqliyyah) and rational-acquired knowledge (‘ulūm al-aqliyyah or iktisābiyyah) that contributed to the rise of Muslim civilization. Hence, the negligence of either one is due to human error, which, in turn, poses challenges to their own doctrines. However, Muslims are still indebted to the ancient civilizations, especially the Greek and Roman, because the assimilation of the Hellenistic intellectual works into the Muslim civilization had enormously influenced the formulation of an integrated system of Islamic education and had accelerated the excellence of the Ummah.

CONCLUSION

In sum, the classical golden era of Islamic civilization between 750 until 1100 A.D. was able to produce numerous Islamic intelligentsias who were proficient in various disciplines. Some Muslims’ names, as George Sarton highlights, are al-Jabir, al-Khawarizmi, al-Razi, Masudi, Wafa, al-Biruni and ‘Umar Khayyam. They were chemists, algebraists, clinicians, geographers, mathematicians, physicists and astronomers.61 Al-Kindi (260-873 A.D.), Āl-Farabi (339-950 A.D.), Ibn Sīna (428-1037 A.D.), Ibn Tufail (581-1185 A.D.), al-Tabari (923 A.D.) were all-rounded philosophers and such like Abū Hanīfah and al-Māwardī were political thinkers. The first Western names such as Gerard of Cremona and Roger Bacon were to emerge only after 1100 A.D. Another 250 years Islamic history produced personalities such
as al-Ghazali (505-1111 A.D.), Ibn Rushd (595-1198 A.D.), Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (1201-74 A.D.), Ibn Khaldun (1406 A.D.) and.63

ENDNOTES

2 The school of laws or Islamic legal thought is associated to the study of Islamic jurisprudence (Usūl al-Fiqh) meanwhile the school of theology or Islamic theological thought is related to the study of Islamic theology ('Ilm al-Kalām).
3 It was when he received the first divine revelation, he was acknowledged as the messenger of the entire humankind (Saba’).
5 Totah, Khalil A. The Contribution of the Arabs to Education. (Columbia University: New York, 1926), 12.
9 Three terms applied to designate places of these types, namely dār (house), bait (room) and khizānah (closet); and another three to denote content i.e. hikmah (wisdom), ‘ilm (knowledge) and kutub (books). For details, see George Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West (Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), 26-27.
10 Wafq or religious endowment is a legal term, which denotes the dedication of property for charitable uses in the service of Allah; thereafter it no is sold and transferred.
12 It happened prior to Muslim Arabs’ conquest of territories lying in the Near East; Syria in 64 A.D. Syria was a meeting ground for two previous world forces namely the Roman and the Persian whose people played a significant role in disseminating Greek traditions and scientific knowledge especially, medicine. See Qadir, Philosophy and Science, 31-41.
15 Bayt al-Hikmah was founded by al-Ma’āmūn in the ninth century A.D while Dār al-‘Ilm by al-Hakim in the eleventh century A.D.
16 Nizamīyyah bore the name of Nizam al-Mulk, the founder of madrasah.
20 Totah, The Contribution of the Arabs, 56.
22 Muʿallim is a title for elementary instructors; Muʿaddib (teacher of manners) is a title used for either elementary or secondary instructors; Mudarris is a professional title attached to the title of muʾīd (helper) or assistant to a professor; Shaykh is a special title given to indicate academic or theological excellence (master teacher or professor); Imām is the supreme religious teacher. See Nakosteen, History of Islamic Origins, 56-57.
23 Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity, 36, 37 and 45.


24 Subjection means non-participation in every form of national activity including administration, education and economic policies as an attempt to impose another ideology. This also meant deliberate denial of benefits of technological revolution of the 19th century, which led to national material poverty and enforced mass illiteracy.

25 The struggle between traditionalists and rationalists in the early period of the Umayyad dynasty changed the geographical basis of Kufah and Makkah into the personal designations. In term of theological thoughts, all these schools representing the school of ahl-Sunnah Wal-Jama’ah and are known as the Sunni. For more detailed information about them, see The madh‘abs: Schools of Islamic Legal Thought in Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, The Evolution of Fiqh: Islamic Law and the Madh‘abs (Tawheed Publications, 1998) 63-90; ‘Abdul Rauf, The Muslim Mind, 29-30, 112-166 and 165-177.

26 For detailed information about the theological sects and their thoughts, see Sharifl, A History of Muslim Philosophy; Sheikh M. Saeedl, Studies in Muslim Philosophy (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 3rd edn., 1974); Qadir, Philosophy and Science, 42-70.

27 For more characteristics of the Umayyad, See Nakosteen, History of Islamic Origins, 197.


30 The founder of the former was Abu Hassan al-Ash‘ari while of the latter was Wasil Ibn Ata (d.131 A.H.).

31 Mu‘tazilite school of thought flourished under the caliphs’ patronage such as al-Ma‘mun, al-Mu‘tasim, al-Wathiq and al-Mutawakkl. This school gained political power mainly during the time al-Ma‘mun.

32 For details, see Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, 79-80

33 More details about dichotomy between politics and religions. See Abu Sulayman, Crisis in the Muslim Mind; Tāhā Jābir Al-A‘lāwī, ‘Ijtihād [Reasoning] (Herndon, Virginia: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993); Al-Fārūqī, Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles, 26-27.

34 Live in seclusion by having austere ascetic lifestyle to seek psychological comfort and liberate self from the material world.


36 Makdisi, The Rise of Colleges, 77-78.

37 Qadir, Philosophy and Science, 24-29.

38 Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity, 34.


40 Ibid. 106.

41 Theology is a science regarding the unity of God (‘ilm al-tawhidl or principles of faith (usūl al-din) or science of theology (Ilāhiyyāt) that was categorized as theoretical sciences whereas law (fiqh or Shar‘ah) was classified as practical sciences.


44 The Ash‘arites took the middle position between the Jabarites and the Mu‘tazilites’ views on human free will; and between the Sufis, the Mujassimites, and the Mushabibites and the Mu‘tazilites’ views on God’s Attributes

45 More details about Scholastic Theology, see ‘Abdul Rauf, The Muslim Mind, 199-205


47 For an instance, yad Allah, which literally means Allah’s hand but Mu‘tazilites, interpreted it as Allah’s power in order to maintain the immateriality of God and dissimilarity of God’s attributes with the creatures. For more explanation, see Fakhry, A History of Islamic Philosophy.

48 The literalists maintained that God possessed all the attributes, including the anthropomorphic attributes, mentioned in the Qur‘an. They were the Attributists (Sufis), the Anthropomorphist (Mujassimites) and the Comparers (Mushabibites). See Qadir, Philosophy and Science.

49 Abd Al-Quddus Qasmi, “Education According to Old Curriculum,”, 63-65

50 Al-Ghazali brackets Ibn Sina as Aristotle is bracketed for centuries. See Massarat Hussein Zuberi, 19. Ibn Sina’s philosophical thoughts are summarized under logic, psychology and metaphysics. His speculative system is similar to Descartes and Kant. For detailed explanation, see Chapter Eight: Ibn Sina in Saeed, Studies in Muslim Philosophy.


52 Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity, 85.

53 The Holy Qur‘an is considered as the core of Islamic-based education in which its original word Qur‘an is derived from ‘Qara’ which means ‘to read’ and thus, it denotes reading not only philologically but educationally as well.

54 Orientalists are the Western scholars studying Eastern cultures and Islam without referring to Islamic norms and who do not intend to contribute to Islam.


58 Three features have been identified for the adoption of foreign culture, see H. A. R. Gibb, ‘The Influence of Islamic Thought on Medieval Europe,’ in Qadir, Philosophy and Science.
Justice, tolerance and sympathy were identified by 'as the tripartite Islamic virtues' that contributed to the achievement of excellent man's historical process and intellectual integration. See 'Abdul Rauf, *The Muslim Mind*, 262.


For detailed information regarding the development of those sciences, see 'Abdul Rauf, *The Muslim Mind*, 152-232.


Ibn Sina and al-Farabi were leading interpreters of Aristotelian philosophical thought.

Al-Ghazali has propounded the educational philosophy based on his personal experiences and his thoughts are similar to Plato's.