INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE FROM IOE PERSPECTIVE

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Webster’s Dictionary defines Epistemology as a branch of Philosophy dealing with the study of the nature of knowledge, its origin, foundations, limits, and validity. It is derived from Greek “Episteme” which means knowledge and “Lagos” which means word, so epistemology in Greek terminology means knowledge of word. Oxford Dictionary tells us that Epistemology is the theory of knowledge especially with regard to its methods and validation. Dictionary of Philosophy discusses it and says that it is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with various theories of Knowledge. The term epistemology is, thus, derived from the Greek term episteme.
Epistemologists’ are chiefly concerned with the topics that pertain to subjects such as: what is knowledge, and what is the origin and the scope of knowledge so on and so forth. Islam revolutionized human thought and as such there is much in the Holy Quran and in the teachings of Holy Prophet (SAW) which is the source material for Islamic Philosophy and epistemology. With the birth of Islam there was also the birth of various branches of Knowledge and Islamic Philosophy was one of the most important branches among them. There are some people who attribute the clandestine activity of translating the Greek edifice of knowledge and sciences into Arabic from Syriac and Greek languages during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods as the outcome of Greek influence
QURAN BASIS OF ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY

But I do not accept this thesis on the basis of its falsity. Because it was the Quran which guided Muslims to use their reason and to develop an intellectual curiosity about various things and the phenomenon of nature. The Quran has employed various categories like Tadabbur to lay emphasis on understanding the Quran deeply, Tafaqquh to fathom the religious spirit behind the commandments of din in an encompassing manner, Takakura to study the nature of the universe and its various phenomena scientifically, Taaqul to ponder on the common sense notions having deeper moral and spiritual implications for man’s destiny, and finally the ilm and Hikmah to lead human mind to the highest pinnacles of knowledge and cognitive excellence and persuasiveness, encompassing all the contours and horizons of science and technology. These terms are collectively and individually pregnant with very deep underpinnings and each term covers different spheres of cognitive and scientific activity. For example Taaqul is a general term which denotes common sense understanding of any phenomenon without very sophisticated fathoming of philosophical or scholastic implications. While as taffakur is in most cases dealing with the niceties and intricacies of the creation of the universe man or the nature of things, thus leading to a higher and serious ratiocination and intellectual and scientific enterprise in most cases in the Qur’anic context.
Tafaquh and Tadabbur in general indicates deeper comprehension of the din and the Quran respectively but at the same time goes higher from the common sense approach to the higher ideals set out by the religion of Islam. In the case of former the social dimensions of life with its manifold activities are taken care of and in the later the deeper and consequential implications of the Book of Allah are deciphered to the extent that everything becomes so clear that no doubt remains there with the certain injections convincing the hearts and minds of the believers. Ilm and Hikmah stands there like a canopy and encompass all the epistemological, scientific, and cognitive activities which could be envisaged in any particular setting and space and time.
Thus Islam provides its own framework for a very far reaching epistemological dynamism and thus ushers in an indigenous revolution of knowledge explosion. It has its own weltanschuan and every aspect of its world of knowledge scientific activity and Scholastic outgrowth takes place under its persuasion. It was under the impact of such Qur’anic epistemological framework that a new world of cognitive innovations was brought to fore which uprooted the classical and old fashioned deductive legacy of Hellenistic world. Muslims started laying their hands on everything which was beneficial in knowledge and science as their prophet (SAW) had told them: “the word of wisdom is the lost she camel of a believer, and wherever he finds it he should pick it up”. It was an epistemological revolution and changed the course of history for all times to come.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

Instead of deduction in the manner of Greeks, more emphasis was laid on induction. Moreover, as a dominant civilisation, marching ahead so triumphantly, Islam mastered the sciences of the vanquished nations and conquered countries apart from conquering their lands and minds. Islamic Epistemology is, thus, a vast subject and is spread over the theories of knowledge initiated under the guidance of the Quran and the patronage of the Prophet (SAW). The Qur’anic vision about the universe in the formation of Islamic epistemological paradigm, the Quran and the Sunnah have provided the impetus and have rendered this subject very much advanced and developed to the extent where it became different from all other subjects discussed by the Greeks or their adherents from the Christian world
ARABIC LANGUAGE AND ISLAM

Furthermore, this epistemological framework provided by Islam was strengthened by a language which was very rich and fertile for allowing this new epistemological revolution to fruition in its lap. Arabic language is thus the only language which was produced and developed under the complete influence and tutelage of Islam and the Quran. Even Persian and Urdu languages cannot contend this language because the former was impacted so strongly by the Zoroastrian Avestan weltanschuunag and the later by composite culture shaped under the influences of so many diversified cultural and religious denominations respectively. “It immunized itself against all problems of hermeneutics by freezing the language of revelation, its vocabulary, lexicography, grammar, syntax, literary forms, standards of literary excellence and criticism and keeping identically the same language and all the categories of the understanding it embodies in constant use and absolutely free from change through fourteen centuries, to the present day. The God...Given revelation was to remain forever pure, available and readily comprehensive...and it did” (Islam, Movement for World Order, p-2 www.iiit.org/Portals/0/faruqi/Islam-movementforworldorder.pdf)
METHODOLOGY

Therefore, as a first step in the direction of Islamisation, efforts should be made to describe and discuss appropriate methodology in each field of knowledge, and then prescribe ways and means to permeate Islamic attitude and spirit into the contemporary knowledge, and methodology. Fortunately, the process of Islamisation has been effective in various forms since the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Islamic jurisprudence is, perhaps by far, the most developed subject area both in theory and practice which is solely responsible for the evolution of the principles of Islamisation. Unfortunately, all sciences including engineering and technology of today which flourished at the hands of Muslim scholars in the medieval age are void completely of Islamic attitude and spirit. The ummah is experiencing a crisis of duality in education (Islamic alongside secular) with many intellectual and practical consequences. Ghazzali’s cry of alarm about the ailment in Tahafut al Falasifah and his appeal for treatment in Ihya Ulum al Din has not been heeded by Muslims according to Abdul Hamid Abu Suleiman, because more focus was on the symptoms and not on actual malaise.
CLAIMS OF KNOWLEDGE
The, distorted concept of civilisation has added the woes and only appearances were addressed instead leaving the actual cause of decline unaddressed. The inherited ideas information, cultural and religious beliefs, facts and doctrines which one acquires from his forefathers mentors and school teachers has been considered to constitute knowledge. Or some people consider knowledge based on the preaching, teaching propaganda, indoctrination, scientific findings, and trash from occultism and even taboo. But if all information and exposure is considered to be knowledge then two important questions surface: what are the claims of knowledge and what is the difference between knowledge and belief. The Muslim scientists of today are obliged to the Muslim ummah to bring the spirit of sciences back in accordance with the spirit of Islam. Concrete proposals with specific plans ought to be further pursued, both academically and practically in the process of Islamisation.
MUSLIM PHILOSOPHY OR ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

Moreover, Islamic philosophy as such which is being taught in our universities and educational institutions, is devoid of the Islamic content as whatever has been passed on the name of philosophy from the Muslim adherents of Greek like Ibn Sina and Farabi is considered Islamic by the students or they are made believe that it is so. While as from Ghazzali to Ibn Taimiyah and Ibn Qaim, this corpse of Knowledge, including epistemology has been severely criticized for inclusion in it of the pagan Hellenistic and un-Islamic elements. The process of Islamisation of Knowledge has given impetus to this desire that we need to purge epistemology and Muslim philosophy from all these foreign and un-Islamic influences which have been received by it from time to time. Apart from showing the scathing response in form of critique to it by Ghazzali and Ibn Taimiyah, we need to judge this edifice on the basis of pristine Islamic scriptural perimeters of the Quran and Sunnah and the insights of our great traditionists jurists like Ibn Salah, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, and Ibn Qaim also need to be taken into consideration while expounding the perimeters of Islamisation of epistemology in such a scheme.
Sulayman Abdul Hamid says rightly: “In fact, nothing will change unless we rectify, before all else, the ways in which we think!. This in turn will lead to the rectification of ways in which we teach, and then to the rectification of our social system and institutions. Only in this manner will the Ummah be able to revitalise itself.”

We have not to snub our identity, resources and increase in them is also not the solution, sacrifices, or in calls to honour values and principles, or in sermonising, or in becoming emotional is not the solution. Asalah (the innovative application) of original Islamic principles to changing circumstances is the solution not outside or external solutions like individualism, totalitarianism, secularism, atheism, capitalism or Marxism. "In the final analysis, contemporary Islamic Asalah will lead to reordering of priorities and a restructuring of methodology and thought so that the means for sound Islamic education will be provided. Moreover, a reconstruction of institutions, organisations, social systems, and political institutions will also take place, so that complementarity and sound progression will propel society towards a constructive reorganisation on the basis of Islamic values and purposes."
TAKING STOCK OF OUR LEGACY

We need to analyse our intellectual legacy or what it holds sacred. The fears and, the lack of self esteem and self confidence is eating at our vitals, and the misgivings that we have planted in ourselves make it impossible for us to look honestly at the events, and the accompanying factors and shortcomings, of our past. “If the methodology of thought does not undergo change, and if its approaches are not rectified, the Muslim mind will remain unable to take a critical or penetrating look at anything. Instead, it will continue to gravitate from one failed solution to the next. There can be little doubt that continuing along this path can only lead to further disintegration and collapse.

Traditionally two divisions were made for the preservation of and interpretation of the textual sources of Islam. Knowledge was divided into revealed and rational naqli and aqli. “Owing to this division, the principles dealing with texts were developed into highly complex sciences, while the secondary principles and all the fields of knowledge related to them were essentially ignored. It was for the above reasons that no social sciences, in the proper sense, ever developed from Islamic principles and approaches.”
There was a general tendency perpetuated under the Hellenised influence that there has had been an imaginary struggle between reason and revelation, and it resulted in a “portentous rift between the juridical sciences of fiqh and those of theology (ilm al kalam). It was carried from outward differences to of appearances to a “serious intellectual rift that had deep seated effects on the relationship between concept and purposes of religion on the one hand, and between social life and institutions on the other. One result was that the sciences of theology became entangled in philosophical arguments and rational debates in most cases over metaphysical issues related to the “world of the unseen”, having no relevance to the Islamic mind or to those issues which were of concern to it.” Such intellectual acrobatics gradually exhausted the Muslim mind and blurred true Islamic vision, thus negatively affecting the Muslim intellect when it came to matters of the “seen and the unseen” (i.e., revelation, reason, faith, determinism and free will, the divine names and attributes, and a whole list of futile intellectual sophistries that contributed nothing to the ummah, its thought, or its faith. The result of this was that the sciences of fiqh, and Islamic thought in general, formulated no cleat theological basis that could represent the purposes and principles enabling the Ummah to progress and develop both socially and organizationally. In this manner, the Islamic mind and thought became the prisoner of a specific and limited methodology that was incapable of growing and of keeping pace with changing realities, needs, and possibilities.
DEISLMISATION OF PHILOSOPHY AND TASAWUF

Moreover, so-called Muslim philosophy either took help from the Greek notions like emanation, intelligences, causes and such other categories or became immersed in illuminist terminology under the hands of latter Gnostic and Unitarian Sufis. Even the people like Ghazzali had to reconcile with non Islamic neoplantonic details for elaborating revelation and Islamic epistemology.

Therefore, we will involve in two prolonged methodology to carry this short project work in form of book and lectures. First we will de-Islamise the notions like Neoplatonism, Intelligences, Wahdat al wujud, incarnation, demotion, illumination Unitarianism etc. and then try to see what our past reformers like Ghazzali and Ibn Taimiyah has done for Islamising these disciplines. And finally we will reorient the whole subject in light of IOK project.
THE SOURCE OF ISLAMIC METHODOLOGY

Such sources of Islamic methodology as Revelation coupled with the rational discourse visa vis universe and making the universe also the subject of knowledge were which was lost sight of and the fundamentals of Islamic methodology: unicity, Khilafah, moral responsibility obliterated in the so called peripetic scheme of philosophical debates, will be probed in historical perspective before bringing this paradigm back in the debate. Causality was a basic concept in the life and thought of Muslims, but its validity was challenged by some philosophers Ibn Rushd’s protest notwithstanding mysterious reasons. Ibn Taimiyah however tried to restore Islamic foundations of epistemology and kalam to an appreciable level. Fitrah and aqidah explain that Allah created the universe, subjected it to laws and standards, then entrusted it to man to care for, to master, and to strive to civilise and reform.
MODERN ANTI GOD PHILOSOPHIES

Coming to present scenario we find the (modern materialist) Western epistemological paradigm is based on the assumption that the centre of the universe exists within it and not beyond it; in other words, it is imminent, not transcendent. This means that either God does not exist at all or that if He does, He has nothing to do with humankind's epistemological, moral, semiotic or aesthetic systems which exist within the world of temporality. This leads to the eradication of the created world and man and consequently of the human and nature duality. In other words, a metaphysics of immense has replaced the traditional metaphysics of transcendence.

Human beings are thus an inseparable part of the material natural order. Human are natural beings (natural humans) who belong to nature, emerge from it, live within it and have no existence or will independent of it. Therefore, they are reduced to the world of nature matter and its inexorable laws. They have no will or human purpose (telos) independent of the natural motion of nature matter, which is indifferent to them. The duality of humankind and nature, which forms the very basis of Western humanism, is thereby eradicated.
WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

The proposal for two month manual to work on my book on Reorienting Epistemology in the light of IOK project will also include teaching Islamic epistemology at Universities in Indonesia and also helping the researchers to develop text books on integration of Knowledge. There will be many one day general workshops on epistemology divided into half lectures and half discussions. After the objectives, the background 2-4 papers will be given to the researchers to read these and then the guidelines and materials prepared for the discussions will be given to the researchers accordingly. Finally the assignments will be prepared to make the chapters of my book Insha Allah!
STEPS TO BE TAKEN

• The age of intellectual enslavement preceded by an age of political and military subjugation.

• The main cause of its subsistence is present academic and educational system based on western concepts of education, developed after western fashions, run by men educated and built up in western tradition and contains text-books, curricula and sciences which are western in their appearance, contents and spirit.

• The problem of the text –books and the sciences which are taught has proved very difficult and cumbersome.

• Textbooks on many subjects cannot be written unless the relevant science and field is purged, purified and then recodified.

• Every science, social or human, even physical and chemical, comprises of a set of ideas and informations arranged and systematized according to the ideas and beliefs, outlooks and dispositions, social conditions and intellectual environments of its founders and experts.

• They codify and design their sciences according to their intellectual, academic and ideological requirements.

• The sciences designed, systematised and developed by a particular people or nation are fashioned after its own basic concepts and outlooks and nurtured by its own historical developments.
The Social Sciences we have inherited from the West are a clear example of this fact.

These have originated in the west, developed in a peculiar western historical background and have a definite European colour and nature in their contents as well as in their spirit.

These Sciences cannot be imported and implanted in an environment which is totally different from that of Europe.

Even in Europe when the environment has changed the need was felt to critically redefine and re-examine the stock and recodify and re-interpret it according to the new requirements and environments.

The example of Russia and Communist world is before us. They have rejected all western sciences and dismissed them as Bourgeois sciences and felt the need to reconstruct all the sciences in light of the Marxist–Leninist ideology.
Muslim world should not hesitate to follow the communist example, it should reject all the sciences it inherited from the West in their present form and contents and should reconstruct them a new on the basis of Islamic ideology and faith.

We should treat the Western Sciences as a raw –material which should be through e-examined. What is useful and in consonance with our Ideology should be retained, reconciled and reformed and the rest should be rejected and thrown away.
This process which has been termed as the process of Islamising the knowledge should be in three phases:

1. In phase one all the social and human sciences of the West should be critically examined and their drawbacks and shortcomings should be pointed out. The elements which are in repugnance with our ideology should be also pointed out.

2. In phase two the rest should be recodified and re-stated so as to be in total conformity with our intellectual traditions.

3. In phase three, it should be integrated with our classical literature on the subject so that, on the one hand, the intellectual experiments and discoveries of the modern world are fully and suitably utilized and, on the other hands, our traditional sciences are also revitalized and re-invigorated. (Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, pp-157-158, Knowledge for What? National Hijra Council. Islamabad, Pakistan, 1986)
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FINAL ANALYSIS

In the final analysis, contemporary Islamic Asalah will lead to reordering of priorities and a restructuring of methodology and thought so that the means for sound Islamic education will be provided. Moreover, a reconstruction of institutions, organisations, social systems, and political institutions will also take place, so that complementarity and sound progression will propel society towards a constructive reorganisation on the basis of Islamic values and purposes.