



## ISLAMIZATION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE: FROM PROF. KAMAL HASSAN'S PERSPECTIVE<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

Kamal Hassan, a Malay Muslim intellectual and thinker of Malaysia became known in the world as the conceptualizer of International Islamic University Malaysia [IIUM] which became known in the world within the four decades of its existence as the model of Integrated and Holistic Higher Education. Kamal Hassan not only conceptualized the model of higher education but provided the University with an ideological and philosophical foundation. He served IIUM for 35 years in various capacities including its rector. During his tenure as rector, Kamal Hassan included in the Constitution of IIUM, Islamization of Human Knowledge [IOHK] as its Mission. Now IOHK and IIUM are interrelated and represent a successful model of higher education. However, the views of Kamal Hassan are not fully known to many people inside and outside the University. The aim of this paper is to investigate the position of Kamal Hassan on the relationship between IOHK and IIUM. It will be done based on the qualitative method of content analysis. It is expected that this investigation will not only highlight the views of Kamal Hassan on IOHK and its role in IIUM but also emphasize on the need for sustainability of IOHK in IIUM. It will help to appreciate and maintain the salient features of IOHK and its importance in IIUM.

**Keywords:** Islamization, education, knowledge, sustainability, Kamal Hassan

### ABSTRAK

Kamal Hassan, merupakan seorang intelektual dan pemikir Islam Melayu berasal dari Malaysia. Beliau terkenal di dunia sebagai tokoh yang pengkonseptualisasi Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia [UIAM] yang dikenali di dunia dalam tempoh empat dekad kewujudannya sebagai model Pendidikan Tinggi Bersepadu dan Holistik. Kamal Hassan bukan sekadar mengkonsepkan model sebuah pendidikan tinggi, tetapi menyediakan asas ideologi dan falsafah bagi universiti tersebut. Beliau berkhidmat di UIAM selama 35 tahun dalam pelbagai jawatan termasuk menjadi rektornya pada suatu ketika dahulu. Semasa menjadi rektor, Kamal Hassan berjaya memasukkan dalam Perlembagaan UIAM, agenda Islamisasi Ilmu Kemanusiaan [IIK] sebagai salah satu agenda utama IIUM. Kini IIK dan UIAM saling berkaitan dan mewakili model pendidikan tinggi yang berjaya di mata dunia. Namun pandangan Kamal Hassan tidak diketahui sepenuhnya oleh ramai orang di dalam dan luar Universiti. Tujuan utama makalah ini adalah untuk menyiasat idea-idea Kamal Hassan berhubung dengan IIK dan UIAM. Ia akan dilakukan berdasarkan kaedah kualitatif dengan menggunakan teknik menganalisis kandungan. Penyiasatan ini dijangka bukan sahaja akan menonjolkan pandangan Kamal Hassan mengenai IIK dan peranannya dalam UIAM, tetapi juga menekankan tentang keperluan untuk kelestarian agenda IIK di UIAM. Ia akan membantu untuk menghargai dan mengekalkan ciri-ciri penting IIK dan kepentingannya di UIAM.

**Kata Kunci:** Islamisasi, pendidikan, ilmu, kelestarian, Kamal Hassan

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## INTRODUCTION

The need for the establishment of the Islamic universities in time space context based on the Islamic philosophy of higher education was realized by the Muslim intelligentsia during 1970 onwards. In response to this realization, in 1982, Kamal Hassan, a Malay Muslim intellectual and thinker, was asked by the then Prime Minister of Malaysia to prepare the working paper for the establishment of the international Islamic university in Malaysia. Based on the paper of Kamal Hassan the International Islamic University Malaysia [IIUM] was established in 1983. This move was followed by the emergence of another movement related to knowledge and education called the movement of Islamization of Knowledge [IOK] [IIIT, Islamization of Knowledge, 1989]. Later, in the context of IIUM, Kamal Hassan, as its third rector from 1999 to 2006, argued that IOK does not specify the scope of knowledge which requires Islamization. Therefore, Kamal Hassan identified and limited the scope and suggested the use of the phrase Islamization of Human Knowledge [IOHK] instead of IOK. Hence, Kamal Hassan popularised the phrase Islamization of Human Knowledge [IOHK] in IIUM and elsewhere. From the 1980s onward the movement of the establishment of Islamic universities and IOHK simultaneously spread all over the Muslim world.

Consequently, we observed the establishment of several Islamic universities in the Muslim world and several international conferences were held on IOHK. A few universities were founded based on the philosophy of Islamic education such as the International Islamic University Islamabad [IIUI], Pakistan and the International Islamic University Malaysia [IIUM]. These universities commenced during 1981 and 1983 respectively. Earlier, several international conferences were held on the issue of education of Muslims in the contemporary

context. It was comprehended by the Muslim intellectuals and thinkers that if the Muslim world plans to benefit from the modern Western educational system and disciplines it needs to adopt a critical and analytical approach to the study of modern disciplines in all branches of knowledge. It was felt that the Muslim Ummah cannot ignore and at the same time adopt the modern system of education without a thorough examination of the philosophical foundation of modern disciplines and system of education. Therefore, they wanted to study the modern disciplines in all branches of knowledge but with a conscious and independent mind set. It was expected that they could benefit from modern disciplines and branches of knowledge if they study them from a critical point of view. Hence, it was contended that a critical and analytical approach will help them to benefit from the modern disciplines. This critical approach became known as the movement of IOHK. Kamal Hassan explained unreservedly the need of IOHK in IIUM and included it in the Constitution of IIUM. Hence, in IIUM, a critical approach was adopted taking the Islamic Revealed Knowledge [IRK] as the criterion of critical examination instead of and rather than depending merely on rational and empirical faculties. According to Kamal Hassan, the rational and empirical faculties were fully used but in the light of the Islamic Revealed Knowledge [IRK]. During 1990s, however, IOHK became, as said earlier, an integral part of IIUM curriculum and academic programmes.

Kamal Hassan had realized that the IIUM would become known and attract thousands of students from all over the world due to the adaptation of IOHK in its academic programmes as its Vision and Mission. It was mainly during the tenure of Kamal Hassan as the 3<sup>rd</sup> rector of IIUM both IIUM and IOHK became integral to each. IOHK as part of IIUM was popularised by Kamal Hassan and finally became its Mission. This is the reason that an investigation of

the views of Kamal Hassan is needed so that the importance of IOHK may be reemphasized in IIUM.

For estimating the views of Kamal Hassan on IOHK we need to understand the relationship between IOHK and IIUM. Kamal Hassan's views on IOHK may be divided into four parts. First a brief introduction about Kamal Hassan and his career and the shift in his career from Civil Service to the Islamic scholarship. This part will be followed by a discussion of his ambitions for IIUM, IOHK, and the Islamic Ummah as well as his perception of Islam and his appointment for developing the concept paper for the establishment of IIUM. In the third part, I will discuss Kamal Hassan's emphasis on the need for the Islamization of the Self. Lastly, I will elaborate the concept of Relevantization of Islamic sciences which Kamal Hassan introduced and included in the discourse of IOHK. The need for Relevantization of the Islamic sciences, those had been conceptualized and developed in the past centuries. Relevantization has become an integral part of the discourse on IOHK in IIUM. Kamal Hassan, in fact, added a few new dimensions in the discourse on IOHK. I will share some of his views which Kamal Hassan considered as essential in the discourse on IOHK, such as a justified rationale for IOHK, Islamization of the Self, Relevantization of religious or Islamic sciences, scope of IOHK, and finally sustainability or future of IOHK in IIUM.

### **KAMAL HASSAN AND HIS CAREER**

Mohd Kamal Hassan began his academic career as a tutor at University Malaya [UM] in 1966-1968. He joined the National University of Malaysia (UKM) as a lecturer in 1976 and served as the Head of the Department of *Usul ul-Din* and Philosophy. In 1979 he was promoted to the post of Associate Professor. He moved to IIUM in 1983 as *Shaikh al-Kulliyah* at the Centre for Fundamental Knowledge [CFK] and was appointed as Professor on July 1<sup>st</sup>,

1983. Later in 1989 he became the founding Dean of the *Kulliyah* of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS now AHAS KIRKHS) and served as the third Rector of IIUM from 1999 to 2006 (Mumtaz & Abbas, 2023).

During Professor Kamal's service at IIUM, he accumulated a very long list of national and international recognitions, awards, professional appointments, and academic positions. Kamal Hassan served as a Distinguished Professor at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC), IIUM from 2011 to 2017, finally he retired, after more than 40 years of sterling service to Malaysian education. He spent 35 years at IIUM. Towards the very end of his life, he held many post-retirement positions. His last position held at IIUM was as an Honorary Advisor for the Centre for Islamisation (CENTRIS), IIUM. Finally, he was appointed as the Director of Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia-IKIM). He died while serving at IKIM (CENTRIS, 2013).

Initially, he planned to become a Civil Servant but changed his mind and chose the career of Islamic scholarship. In 1982 at the age of 40 he was chosen by the then Prime Minister of Malaysia, to write the concept paper and rationale for the establishment of the International Islamic University in Malaysia which became known as IIUM. By that time, he had established himself as one of the known scholars of the Islamic scholarship. Kamal Hassan demonstrated his sound scholarship of Islam who had an original, universal, moderate, balanced, comprehensive, holistic, academic, intellectual, cultural and civilization understanding of Islam. Kamal Hassan lived with a clear vision of Islam as the Leading Way of Life and Universal Worldview. He provided IIUM with a solid philosophical, epistemological, and ideological foundation because of which

IIUM emerged as an integrated and holistic model of higher education. Kamal Hassan showed an unwavering spirit in the establishment and maintenance of IIUM, right from its inception to the very last days of his life (23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023) (Mumtaz & Abbas, 2023).

The great contribution of Kamal Hassan lies in the conceptualization of an Islamic university focusing on the development of spiritual and moral excellence of the entire community of IIUM. Later, Kamal Hassan emphasized the need of IOHK, a movement that attracted and created interest among the leading Muslim intellectuals during 1980 to 2000. He left behind several writings which are mainly on contemporary Islamic thought, contemporary issues, study of religions, society, spirituality, ethics, morality, modern and Islamic education, cultural and civilizational development. He concentrated on the development of (i) an Integrated and Holistic Model of Higher Education, (ii) Islamization of Human Knowledge and Relevantization of Islamic sciences, and (iii) the Spiritual and Moral Development and Education of Human Beings from the Islamic Perspective. He also left behind him a big collection of books and journals which are now available in Mohd Kamal Hassan Library at level 4 rectory building in IIUM.

### **THE AMBITIONS OF KAMAL HASSAN FOR IIUM, IOHK, AND THE FUTURE OF THE ISLAMIC UMMAH**

For the development of the Islamic Ummah, Kamal Hassan suggested a well-thought strategy. According to him the entire Muslim intelligentsia had argued that the decline of humanity and Muslim Ummah was caused due to the failure to understand the essential and paramount role of Islamic Revealed Knowledge [IRK] in education and human resource development. He contended that during the era of Western imperialism and colonialism, Muslim thinkers, intellectuals,

and revivalists have expressed the deep reservations and anxiety against the agnostic and hegemonic culture and civilization of the modern West because they were the product of an educational system which had neglected the fundamental and foundational role of IRK in education. Hence, the emergence of secular modernity and material progress that this culture and civilization espoused, and the reigning paradigm of human knowledge became devoid of transcendent meaning and truth in life. Consequently, everything was developed based on a worldview which was free from true meaning and purpose of life. The Islamic reformist critique has argued that the Islamic intellectual and cultural values offered more wholesome alternatives of culture and civilization for modern man because they were grounded in a worldview with inherent harmony and complementarity between divine revelation and human reason (Mumtaz & Abbas, 2023).

In the Muslim countries which were considered the Third World after the so-called independence, the nationalist leaders who were under the influence of the Western education and Western culture could not really achieve the goals of development and modernisation. Therefore, he said, the Muslim thinkers continued to urge for the transformation of the secular system of education to an Islamic system of education. And this was the realization which caused the need for the emergence of both the IIUM and IOHK movements. The discourse of IOHK became dominant in IIUM during the 1990s. This discourse first emerged in the years of 70s and 80s, then in the 1990s it became the SOUL of IIUM. According to Kamal Hassan IIUM used the term Islamisation of Human Knowledge [IOHK] instead of Islamisation of Knowledge [IOK] because IOHK, according to him, conveys the specific scope of existing

branches of knowledge (Mumtaz & Abbas, 2023).

Kamak Hassan argued the reform of the Muslim Ummah must be based upon educational reform in accordance with the worldview of the unity of knowledge, revelation and intellect, religion and science, this world and the Hereafter, and human beings' role of servanthood and vicegerency of Allah [SWT]. He further contended the dualism and dichotomy of the religious and the secular education into water-tight compartments following the Western model of education is repugnant to the Islamic worldview and epistemology. For him the mission of "IOHK" is meant to provide the solution to this unwarranted dichotomy and the crisis of the Muslim mentality and personality accruing from this serious educational fault. According to Kamal Hassan the continued dominance of secular, atheistic, agnostic, or materialistic Western thought, culture, and civilization would only lead to more crises, disasters, and injustices in the world (Mohd. Kamal, 2022, January 13). He genuinely asserted Islam as being a *Tawhidic* worldview, culture and civilization possesses the right solutions to the problems of mankind, based on its inherent harmony between life and science, and revelation and reason, the material, and the spiritual dimensions of life, as has been witnessed in its history and clearly emphasized in the message of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (Mohd. Kamal, 2022, January 13).

### **ISLAM: ITS CORRECT PERCEPTION**

Kamal Hassan realized that for maintenance and development of IIUM along with its suitable curriculum and the implementation of IOHK in teaching and learning the correct perception of Islam and its world is required as a prerequisite. Islam and its worldview cannot be an obstacle towards intellectual, cultural, and civilizational development. Hence, he argued perhaps one of the causes of our

backwardness lies in our conception and attitude towards Islam.

Kamal Hassan asserted that Islam does not confine its followers to certain rituals and customs. Referring to the great contributions of the founders of Islamic movements in the modern period such as Said Nursi [1877-1960], Sayyed Abul Ala Mawdudi [1903-1979], Sayyid Qutb [1909-1966], Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi [1926-2022], Mohamad Nasir [1908-1993], and HAMKA [Hadji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah] [1908-1981] for the exposition of Islam and its worldview, in spite of their different backgrounds, they unanimously "articulated holistic nature of Islam as a complete way of life and not as a mere religion in the narrow Western understanding of the word" (Mohd. Kamal, 2017: 76). They argued Islam can address the complex contemporary issues and problems of humanity. They highlighted the holistic and ideological nature of the Islamic worldview. Kamal Hassan further argued it is not difficult for us to understand the true and complete picture of Islam and its worldview. The "full-scale exposition of the foundations and characteristics of the worldview of Islam as revealed in the verses and passages of the Quran" have been provided by the founders of the Islamic movements (Mohd. Kamal, 2017: 76). According to Kamal Hassan for implementation of IOHK the Muslims must understand and follow a more comprehensive and balanced view of Islam. He said: We need to "perceive and understand Islam, not as a mere "religion" in the secular Western understanding...as a set of rituals of religious worship or as a private matter between the individual believer and his/her God, but as an all-encompassing way of life which submit completely to the will of Allah SWT, to be represented by a universal community [*Ummah*] of believers and manifested in a holistic civilization (Mohd. Kamal, 2017: 78)". He wanted the Muslims should carry "the holistic vision or the comprehensive

outlook of Islam (Mohd. Kamal, 2017: 79) along with “the broader *Ummatic* and civilizational vision of Islam (Mohd. Kamal, 2017: 79)”.

He added, “Islam is not only a religion but a complete system of living which encompasses all aspects of our activities and actions. Islam has been revealed to bring about a change in the existing system if it is not based on Islamic world. The existing system must be replaced by a superior and properly structured system. So that, the followers of Islam can advance contemporary societies and contribute significantly to scientific and technological progress (Mohd. Kamal, 2009a: 23)”.

Kamal Hassan felt that IIUM’s philosophy of education being based on Islam can play an active role for cultural and civilizational development because for him Islam is not merely a religion but a universal worldview, the way of life, source of values and morals. Hence, from the beginning, Kamal Hassan emphasized on the inclusion of the study of Islamic Revealed Knowledge [IRK] through the study of the courses related to IRK disciplines as Fundamental Knowledge. This was the reason that Kamal Hassan included in the scheme and structure of IIUM the establishment of Centre for Fundamental Knowledge [CFK] which was responsible to serve the spiritual and moral needs of students’ population through teaching the courses dealing with IRK (IIUM, 1990).

### NEED FOR IOHK IN IIUM

Kamal Hassan says when the second rector, Dr AbdulHamid AbuSulayman [1936-2021] joined the University on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1988, IIUM entered a new face of its development. In the beginning of this new phase [1989 onwards] the concept and movement of Islamization of Knowledge [IOK] was introduced. IOK, its importance for education and knowledge, its fundamental role in IIUM was

intensively discussed and debated by all important stakeholders of IIUM especially by Kamal Hassan. Kamal Hassan became convinced with the integral role of IOK in IIUM and adopted it with a minor addition that is he used the phrase Islamization of Human Knowledge [IOHK] and remained committed with both IOHK and IIUM. For him ‘human knowledge’ refers to all “the intellectual constructs of the un-infallible human reason which are coloured or influenced by worldviews, values or perspectives opposed to divinely revealed worldview, values or norms” (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 61). Dr AbdulHamid AbuSulayman introduced the movement of IOHK in IIUM and Kamal Hassan as its 3<sup>rd</sup> rector included it in the Constitution of IIUM as its Mission. Kamal Hassan used all his scholarly energies to explain the integral relationship in between IOHK and IIUM. In most of the official documents and publications of IIUM, Kamal Hassan contributed his views on both IOHK and IIUM. Explaining the strong connection between IIUM and IOHK Kamal Hassan asserted that we need to include in our system of education the *Islamic values* that would shape the personality of students. We cannot imitate the existing educational system, Kamal Hassan said. We need to come up with a special *type of education* that could contribute to the elevation of the Muslim mindset and enhance the ability of Muslims to become great once again. In this way, he said, IIUM must be capable to “contribute positively to the wellbeing of the nation by producing knowledgeable, skilled, spiritually and morally sound manpower in all branches of knowledge, especially science and technology and ICT and ensure that the nation remains peaceful, competitive, resilient, and not submissive or forced to accept the humiliating demands of powerful nations or international organizations, and be subjected to the whims and fancies of those nations (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 49). Kamal Hassan elaborated the goal of the education in

IIUM as being “the production of a new generation of competent Muslim professionals and capable young [*scholars*] leaders with a strong Islamic identity to bring about the necessary *societal changes* that would transform the Muslim and other communities across the world” (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 49). Kamal Hassan viewed IOHK as a process through which the goal of IIUM can be achieved. For him IOHK was and is an epistemological, methodological, and educational movement. He argued: Contemporary human knowledge, scientific and technological disciplines produced in the modern world [called as natural, applied, and social sciences] must be remoulded and if necessary, further developed based on Islamic epistemology (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 49). Hence, for Kamal Hassan, IOHK in IIUM was necessary. He said IOHK will liberate the Muslim mind and societies from all the negative impact of secularized knowledge, Western culture, and system of education. Then only Muslims can rethink everything and contribute positively towards the development of an alternative but a healthy model of civilization (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 49). We can better understand the role of IOHK in IIUM as explained by Kamal Hassan if we investigate the vision and mission of IIUM.

## VISION OF IIUM

According to Kamal Hassan the vision of IIUM is to become a Leading International Centre of Educational excellence which aims to (2001: 59-60):

1. revitalizes the intellectual dynamism of Islam and the ummah.
2. integrates Islamic Revealed Knowledge and values in all academic disciplines and educational activities.
3. seeks to restore a leading and progressive role of the Muslim

ummah in all branches of knowledge.

4. contributing to the improvement and upgrading of the qualities of human life and civilization.

## MISSION OF IIUM

The mission of IIUM would,

1. Undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge [IRK] and human sciences in a positive manner.

2. Produce better quality intellectuals, professionals, and scholars by integrating quality of faith [*iman*], knowledge [*ilm*], and good character [*akhlaq*] to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world.

3. Promote the concept of Islamization of Human Knowledge [IOHK] in teaching, research, consultancy, dissemination of knowledge, and the development of academic excellence in the university.

4. Nurture the quality of holistic excellence which is imbued with the Islamic moral-spiritual values, in the process of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration, and student life.

5. Exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers, and workers who are motivated by the

Islamic worldview and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture.

6. Enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilizational dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations.

7. Develop an environment which instils commitment for lifelong learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students.

The above abstract value-laden statements were summarized and reduced by Kamal Hassan into the five words. Kamal Hassan expected they would be known and memorized by everyone in IIUM: INTEGRATION, INTERNATIONALIZATION, ISLAMIZATION, COMPREHENSIVE EXCELLENCE. To make them even easier to remember, Kamal Hassan has come up with an acronym for them, i.e., IIICE. The above terms have been further elaborated, the First INTEGRATION, refers to the process of integration of:

1. Islamic Revealed Knowledge [IRK] and 'acquired knowledge' or revelation and reason (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 59-60).
2. Faith, knowledge and good conduct or professional knowledge and Islamic ethics.
3. Islamic moral and spiritual values with modern science and technology.
4. Transcendental values and modernity.
5. Malaysian and non-Malaysian students and staff as Muslim brothers and sisters.

The above process of integration must be actualised and implemented seriously in IIUM by everyone.

The second, INTERNATIONALIZATION, refers to the process of achieving world-class standards in:

1. Teaching, evaluation, research, and publication.
2. High proficiency and widespread use of English and Arabic.
3. Quality of academic discourse among staff and students.
4. Strengthening the international character of IIUM staff and students' population.
5. Promotion of IIUM in foreign countries as one of the top Islamic universities in the world (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 60).

The concept ISLAMIZATION refers to two major concerns of IIUM. The first is the process of critical analysis, evaluating, critiquing, reforming, or reconstructing aspects of various sciences and disciplines such as social, humanities, natural sciences and all other professional subjects/disciplines which are founded based on those worldviews and philosophies which go against Islamic worldview. The Islamic worldview contradicts the philosophies of materialism, secularism, humanism, atheism, liberalism, scientism, and communism. He said: "There are many theories, ideas, orientations, and school of thoughts in economics, law, education, psychology, literature, political science, communication, sociology, architecture, etc., which are value-loaded and not in conformity with Islamic values, tenets, and norms. Muslim scholars who are well-versed in those disciplines are expected to



critique, revise, reject, replace, or reconstruct the negative elements” (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 60) with those of Islamic values and principles. Moreover, he argued that in some of the disciplines such as economics and law the Muslim scholars need to come up with their own new perspectives based on Islam’s own concepts, theories and epistemology and worldview. He said: This is what we mean by Islamization of Human Knowledge. It is required because human reason is influenced and coloured by worldviews, values, and perspectives which may be contrary to the Islamic perspective and values (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 61).

Kamal Hassan re-emphasised and said Human Knowledge in the context of IOHK mainly refers to the contemporary disciplines that are the product of modern Western secular worldview such as social sciences, humanities, applied sciences, and natural sciences which are, in fact, value loaded. They are by nature materialistic, agnostic, or atheistic. They are deeply grounded in modern Western philosophical underpinnings and assumptions (Mohd. Kamal, 61).

### **ISLAMIZATION OF THE SELF**

For Kamal Hassan the Islamization of Human Knowledge or the principle of critical approach and investigation of every discipline from Islamic perspective not only became an essential and integral part of IIUM as being an Islamic university but also demanded the Islamization of the self. Therefore, he said it is expected that all the Kulliyah must form a committee on Islamization of the Curriculum. As a result of this IIUM “students who are exposed to the integrated and Islamized curriculum would emerge as more balanced personalities with an integrated and holistic vision of life” (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 61) and they would possess a clear vision and mission in life. In this way, the graduates of IIUM would demonstrate the superiority in

spiritual and moral domains of life. Kamal Hassan was clear in his understanding about IOHK, therefore, he said: Our academic staff would play a more dynamic role as ‘educators’, moulders of character and importers of values, and not mere “lecturers” or “imparters of knowledge” (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 61). He further said it was mentioned in IIUM’s offer of contract letters that they are expected to play their role as “educators” who will not only teach in a formal way but would take serious interest in shaping the minds and character of students under their supervision based on the Islamic worldview (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 62).

Explaining the role of academic staff of IIUM, Kamal Hassan reminded to all: As “knowledge workers” in IIUM, our academic staff – both locals and internationals – must orient themselves to the mission of Islamization, at least, at two levels: personal Islamization, i.e., Islamization of the self and academic Islamization i.e., Islamization of the curriculum. The Islamization of the self, he said, is crucial in playing the role as educators in addition to lending authenticity and substance to the Islamization of the curriculum in which staff are involved (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 62). Adding more for the clear understanding of the Islamization of the Self, Kamal Hassan said: It is important, therefore, for the staff to understand the differences between “education” and “indoctrination”, between “critical thinking” and “criticising” or between “academic instruction” and “politicizing” (Mohd. Kamal, 2001: 62). Kamal Hassan emphasized on two important facts: first, the academic staff of IIUM must be capable of approaching every school of thought and piece of knowledge from a critical point of view for they should equip themselves with a clear vision of Islamic worldview and its vision of life and society. This is something which is not easy for everyone. It requires conscious intellectual efforts. The

Islamization of the Self is not confined to mere moral and spiritual development. It expands to epistemological and methodological dimensions of the Self. Islamization of the Self thus represents an intellectual and scholarly understanding of Islamic worldview, objectives of life and society. The Islamizer of human knowledge must be capable based on deep understanding of Islam to know what is good and harmful for the well-being of humanity. The criterion of critical analysis of the modern Western disciplines should be made according to Islamic worldview. It is imperative to the Islamizer to distinguish clearly right from wrong in terms of knowledge and ideas. He/she should know as the Islamizer what the objectives of Islamic life and society are, then only he/she can identify the problematic areas which exist in the modern Western disciplines. The private and personal piety is not sufficient to make life and society good. It requires right perspectives, directions, and strategies and these requirements demand a profound understanding of Islam as the worldview and the way of life, the source of culture and civilization. In terms of the philosophical foundation, methodology, aims and objectives, the modern Western branches of knowledge are different from the Islamized branches of knowledge. In truth and reality, the modern Western branches of knowledge are the products of the modern Western philosophy, methodology, and aims of disciplines. Therefore, Kamal Hassan emphasized the need for the Islamization of the Self as a prerequisite to IOHK. The necessity of the Islamization of the Self has now become one of the basic and fundamental pillars of IIUM. Prior to Kamal Hassan, Ismail Faruqi and AbdulHamid AbuSulayman had identified this need of the Islamization of the Self in a different way. They said: Mastery of the fundamental principles of Islam, on the part of educated Muslims is the main pillar of the edifice of the Islamization of Knowledge (IIIT, 1989:

62). The Islamizer must “have a firm grasp and command of the fundamentals of Islam” (IIIT, 1989: 62), not as doctrines or faith but the whole philosophy of life, society, culture, and civilization. Mastery of Islam also includes the mastery of “the entire thought-content of the scholars, reformers, and leaders of the Ummah over the centuries concerning various fields of knowledge” (IIIT, 1989: 63).

Second, based on the Islamization of the Self, the academic staff must be capable of producing their own ideas, knowledge, theories, and models. In other words, they must be producers of knowledge and must refuse to simply remain as the consumers of knowledge. Pointing out this important dimension of IOHK in IIUM, Kamal Hassan asserted Islamization of the Self was always emphasized in IIUM. He said: “...since the time of Dr. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, the mission of IOHK in IIUM was never separated from the spiritual-moral dimension of character development which is called ‘Islamisation of the Self’ (Mohd. Kamal, 2013c: 35). He was always expecting that everyone who understands the importance of IOHK would give full attention to the dimension of the Self - Islamization. He wanted all discourse on IOHK to be filled with this dimension. He said in IIUM this has always been emphasized. Every Kulliyah and department must include a discussion on the need of the Islamization of the Self on a regular basis in their activities (Mohd. Kamal, 2013c: 35). Kamal Hassan further argued that the mission of IOHK in IIUM which includes the reformulation of epistemology and development of new thought, was officially included in the Constitution of IIUM which later became “the major intellectual focus” and the SOUL of IIUM.

## RELEVANTIZATION OF ISLAMIC SCIENCES

Commenting on the application of the same term “Islamization of Human Knowledge” for Islamic religious sciences, Mohd Kamal Hassan suggested that it would be misleading. Instead of Islamization we should use another term “relevantisation”. Thus, Kamal Hassan explains his point:

It should be explained, at this juncture, that as far as the Islamic religious sciences, studies, knowledge or disciplines which Muslim scholars have founded and developed on the basis of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* are concerned, they [known in Islamic tradition as *'ulum al-din* or *'ulum naqliyyah* or *'ulum shariyyah* or in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as *al-dirasat al-islamiyyah*] too are in need of reform [*islah*], renewal [*tajdid*] and constant improvements in areas or matters which are subject to change over time [*mutaghayyirat*], to maintain their relevance to the contemporary issues of mankind, environment and civilization (Mohd. Kamal, 2009c: 8 & Mohd Kamal, 2013c: 42).

He stresses that,

A convenient term which we prefer to use for the sound development, reform, renewal, and improvement of the Islamic revealed knowledge disciplines in IIUM is “relevantisation” rather than “Islamization,” because those disciplines were originally based and grounded on the belief system and normative values of Islam themselves (Mohd Kamal, 2013c: 42).

Hence, according to him

“Relevantisation” is a more appropriate challenge to the nature of I.R.K. disciplines which, in

dealing with the classic heritage of Islamic thought and civilization, are susceptible or vulnerable to the inset of rigid traditionalism [*jumud*], blind adherence [*taqlid*] or self-imposed isolationism (Mohd Kamal, 2013c: 42).

However, he does not deny the need for reformulation of these religious sciences. Therefore, he prefers to argue that:

In this respect, the term “relevantisation” is to emphasize the necessity of IRK disciplines and academics to keep abreast with contemporary challenges and to possess the intellectual and doctrinal capability- achieved through the methodology of *ijtihad* [exercise of sound juristic reasoning] and the *maqasid al-shariah* [objectives of Divine Law] – to address adequately the issues and problems of contemporary individual, society, state, culture, and civilization (Mohd Kamal, 2013c: 43).

Kamal Hassan argued strongly that religious sciences or Islamic sciences, such as *Usul al-Din*, *Usul al Fiqh*, *Shariah Studies*; *the Qur'an and Sunnah Studies etc.* do not require the application of the same term as Islamization. Rather, he advocated the use of a new term *relevantization* or contextualization for religious sciences as said earlier (Mohd Kamal, 2013b: 1). For Kamal Hassan, relevantisation means “the academic and intellectual effort of re-examination or re-evaluation of classical or ancient Islamic works, treaties or manuscripts with the aim of highlighting their relevance, usefulness or otherwise, novelties or uniqueness (Mohd Kamal, 2013b: 1)”. It also means “Integration...of useful and beneficial ideas, methods of research, analysis, perspectives or theories from the natural sciences/applied sciences/social sciences/human sciences (Mohd Kamal,

2013b: 1) into the departments of Islamic revealed knowledge disciplines [*Usul al-din* and Comparative Religion, *Fiqh* and *Usul al-Fiqh*, *Al-Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, General Studies and Arabic Language and Literature] in the Kulliyyah” of IRKHS.

## SCOPE OF IOHK

According to Kamal Hassan all branches of knowledge require Islamization. All branches of knowledge or disciplines such as natural, physical, and applied sciences are subject to Islamization of Human Knowledge. Kamal Hassan clarified some basic misunderstanding that surrounds the movement of Islamization of Human Knowledge. Many people think that Islamization of Human Knowledge is mainly concerned with social or human sciences. All other branches of knowledge, particularly natural sciences are free from Islamization because they are perceived as value neutral. But this is not true for Kamal Hassan.

Kamal Hassan argued that the natural, physical, and applied sciences are also based on the secular scientific paradigm and epistemology of the modern West (Mohd Kamal, 2009b: 4). Therefore, the natural sciences too are subject to Islamization of Human Knowledge. He urges all scholars and experts of all branches of knowledge to take the issue of Islamization of Human Knowledge seriously because it is an urgent need of both Muslims and humanity.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

For Kamal Hassan the sustainability or future of IOHK in IIUM must be guaranteed. As the third Rector of IIUM he constantly reminded everyone in IIUM about the mission and identity of IIUM. Therefore, he expected that the entire IIUM community, especially the deans of the Kulliyyah and heads of various departments, would equip themselves with “the spirit of collective responsibility and accountability to Allah [SWT]”. All and

everyone in IIUM should remain “committed to the mission [IOHK] and give due attention to it” (Mohd. Kamal, 2013c: 32-33). He suggested that all Kulliyyah should “form committees for Islamization” of human knowledge and appoint coordinators whereas, he also expected, that all the departments while complying with the university’s mission of IOHK, would maintain a balance “between the need to fulfil the conventional or professional requirements of their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with the need to promote Islamic perspectives in several courses” (Mohd. Kamal, 2013c: 33). Kamal Hassan made a bold but genuine statement which deserves our attention. He said: “The success of the IOHK programme, in the academic as well as in the non-academic aspects, depends very much on the quality, attitude, mindset and personality of leadership at the respective Kulliyyah, centres or departments” (Mohd. Kamal, 2013c: 36).

He further said in this regard the responsibility goes to the top but collective leadership of the university. It must give due attention and importance to the mission of the University. For the sustainability of the mission of the University, he reminded the Senate that as the highest authority on academic matters, it must focus on “IOHK mission and its sacred commitment to the renaissance of the Muslim Ummah” (Mohd. Kamal, 2013c: 36).

According to Kamal Hassan it is not possible to achieve the noble goals of IIUM without adopting the IOHK approach in teaching, learning, and education. Due to some unpleasant reasons, he said, in some Kulliyyah it was to some extent marginalized, but it was never abandoned. However, he reminded, IIUM organized from time to time a few workshops in which the importance of IOHK was reemphasized. Kamal Hassan said all in IIUM were reminded to continue the mission of IOHK in their respective Kulliyyah. He noted: “In

the subsequent meeting on the strategic planning of IIUM it was decided that one of the strategic goals of IIUM was to become an international referral centre for the Islamization of Human Knowledge". Hence, as a policy it was adopted as the mission of IIUM. Kamal Hassan said it was recorded that "Islamization is not one of the strategic pillars of IIUM: it is its foundation" (Mohd. Kamal, 2013c: 36) and Soul. Consequently, according to Kamal Hassan, the CENTRIS was established as a centre for Islamization which is responsible for coordinating IOHK efforts in the University. The main goal of CENTRIS is to train IOHK coordinators of all Kulliyah and expedite IOHK efforts. According to Kamal Hassan, the CENTRIS provided a POLICY STATEMENT which says: Islamization is the soul of IIUM. IOHK is an alternative paradigm of *constructing* and *developing knowledge* as well as education in accordance with the worldview of Islam. It was made clear to everyone that the IOHK does not mean IIUM aims at imposing Islam or its values and norms upon non-Muslims, nor rejecting any good and useful knowledge, system, institution, practice, skill, or idea coming from the West or the East.

Finally, according to Kamal Hassan: It is this mission of IOHK which distinguishes IIUM from other universities. As such it must remain as the fundamental feature of the university which should never be marginalized or regarded as unimportant as compared to other goals or objectives [Mohd. Kamal Hassan, 2013a: 42].

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