

# The Islamization of the Social Sciences: A Review

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## The Islamization of the Social Sciences: A Review

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### ABSTRACT

The Islamization of Social Sciences (IOSS) intends to comprehend Islam within the context of the contemporary world. This is aimed So that Muslims would be able to carry their political, social and economic affairs in consonance with the injunctions of Islam and in relevance to the modern exigencies to ensure a socially healthy, politically cohesive to face the challenges of the 21st century. Steeped into their own tradition, the Muslim scholars working for the project ably try to apply the systematic and scientific approach in every field of Social Sciences and provided Islamic intellectual thought and knowledge in such fields. The present work tries to provide a comprehensive survey of the writings on IOK since its inception in the 1980s with special emphasis on the writings on Islamization of Social Sciences (IOSS) and providing a breakdown of categories of writings available on this subject. The objective of the study is to analyze

the works and researches carried out in the field of Islamization of knowledge especially in the field of Social Sciences. The study aims to find the success and failure of the project.

**Keywords:** Social Science; Islam; Islamization of Social Sciences; Islamization of Knowledge.

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## INTRODUCTION

Human beings are the most unique social beings on earth, living interdependently, on account of their bio-social necessity, for collective and individual survival. Social Sciences study the activities of human beings in society at both individual as well as corporate level for collective existence, to identify the social problems and make attempts to provide solutions to these problems, for a smooth survival of the society (Spector & Kitsuse 2017). The present era is the era of crises where society faces complex problems and it has become difficult even for social scientists to isolate and address a real social problem. The social scientists are not clear about the central problems which their respective disciplines are facing and which they could address (Spector & Kitsuse 2017). With the development of science and technology on rational and empirical bases in the West, social scientists also tried to build the Social Sciences on the same basis. But certain questions could not be answered by using the reason and empirical methodology only but have the solution in religious scriptures or revealed knowledge or tradition. Both Islam and the West have their methodology and philosophy to provide solutions to these problems. Muslim scholars laid the foundation of systematic experiments and observations, in both natural and Social Sciences in the medieval period, before the 'renaissance period of the west', inspired by the teachings of Qur'an, insisting human beings for achieving scientific knowledge through observations and experiments:

*(Allah) Most Gracious! It is He Who has taught the Qur'an. He has created man: He has taught him speech (and intelligence) (Al-Qur'an, 55:1-4).*

*And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: Behold, in that are Signs indeed for those who reflect (Al-Qur'an, 45:13).*

Many other verses in the Qur'an insisted on human beings acquiring scientific knowledge which led Muslims to develop the physical sciences as well as Social Sciences. The basis of Social Sciences for Muslims is Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad, from which all rules are extracted, and are more relevant and justifiable due to their divine origin. The Western developed Social Sciences can neither be rejected totally nor accepted wholeheartedly but need a reformation to a certain degree, within the limits of Shari'ah. This reformation of the Western Social Sciences within the limits of Shari'ah is known as the 'Islamization of Social Sciences' (Dass 2016). The traditional Social Sciences when incorporated with the modern will definitely help in a better understanding of the human world for improving their condition. The contemporary Social Sciences although based on empirical and observational methodology, have neglected the non-sensual, non-scientific, spiritual and religious aspects, without which Social Sciences are incomplete.

The Islamization process was initiated by the Muslim Scholars like 'Ismā'il Rajī Al-Fārūqī, Syed Naquib al-'Attās, and others during the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, aiming to modify the Western developed Social Sciences in a way that will be acceptable to Islam (Dass 2016). From the last few decades Islamization of Knowledge has been an important part of the Islamic revivalist movement. With the launching of this movement, Muslims got a new impetus, producing a considerable amount of research work that resulted in recognition of scientific disciplines in Islamic academic circles as 'Islamic Social Sciences' which attracted the attention of both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars. Islamization of Social Sciences searches for bringing Islamic experience and spirituality into knowledge utilizing the sacralisation (to make sacred) of academic discourses (Niyozov & Memon 2011). Ibrāhīm Ragab considers that Islamization of Social Sciences is the heart of Islamization of knowledge as he writes, "It is almost self-evident that the Islamization of the Social Sciences-for a number of important epistemological and methodological reasons and for practical operational considerations - should be seen as the heart of the Islamization of knowledge movement" (Ragab 1999, p. 27). This research aims to discuss what is Social Sciences?, how Social Sciences have been defined by Muslims as well as by non-Muslims?, how the Social Sciences were developed in both Muslim and non-Muslim institutes in the course of history?, what is the scope of Social Sciences and how far they influence the behaviour of people in a society?, and what is the origin and philosophy of Western Social Sciences and Muslim Social Sciences, and the relation of religion with the Social Sciences? The questions regarding the definitions of Social Sciences and scientific study of social phenomena and its methodology in social phenomena will be discussed. The research aims to establish that Islamization of Social Sciences can have a better effect in overcoming the crises in morality, in both Muslim and non-Muslim lands. Islamization of Social Sciences is an important constituent of the ongoing Islamization of knowledge movement and the proponents of Islamization of knowledge particularly endeavoured to Islamize the Social Sciences.

### CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES: DEFINITIONS, ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Social Sciences, as the name indicates is related to society and its social issues and aims to understand all spheres of social life, social problems and provide solutions to the problems related to society. 'Social Sciences' is an umbrella term for a wide variety of disciplines of knowledge, aiming to evaluate different social phenomena and working for keeping the human society intact. Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century natural sciences and Social Sciences were studied as one discipline and in later period they got separated, forming the two main branches of knowledge. The natural sciences study both physical sciences as well as life sciences while as Social Sciences study the relation of humans and their related issues in economy, politics, etc (Fuller 1991; Mbum et al., 2014).

3 Social Sciences as defined by Britannica Macropaedia is that science, 'which deals with human behaviour in its social and cultural aspects. It includes the following disciplines: Cultural (or Social) Anthropology, Sociology, Social Psychology, Political Science, and Economics.' It also includes, 'Social and economic geography and those areas of education that deal with the social contexts of learning and the relation of the school to the social order'. It keeps history as 'marginal to the humanities and Social Sciences' due to the difference of opinion among scholars. Likewise law, behavioural

sciences have been often applied to the disciplines designated. Social Sciences played a vital role particularly after the political and industrial revolutions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and their development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Social Sciences did not appear before the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a recognized discipline although its origin can be traced before this period. The origin goes back to the ancient Greeks and their rationalist inquiries into the nature of man, morality and state (Zagaebski 1996). In the subsequent centuries, the impulse of rational inquiry weakened and got its new impetus in Middle Ages dominated by theology, particularly Islam. Before the sixteenth century, the Western and Muslim thinking on social issues were alike and all social issues were referred to as religion.

Some Western scholars alleged that religion is the hindrance in the progress of human civilization and worked out to keep religion away from the contemporary natural and Social Sciences. Dr. Asad Zaman defined Social Sciences in terms of religion as,

Social Sciences is the name of the efforts to provide answers to fundamental questions which emerged as a result of the abandonment of religion. Because it provides an alternative to traditional answers based on religion, it is fundamentally incompatible with religious ideas (Zaman 2009, p. 13).

The Western Social Sciences provided solutions to social problems as an alternative to traditional religious solutions, i.e., to develop Social Sciences in contrary to religious beliefs. For this reason Muslim scholars consider the 'Western Social Sciences' as incompatible with religious ideas and hesitated in accepting them, as Zaman further argues,

Social Sciences is the name of Western efforts to answer these fundamental questions [How was the universe created? How did man come into being?, How should we behave towards each other; what is the basis for morality? How should we organize society? What is the nature of knowledge? How can we differentiate between valid and invalid ideas?], without invoking God or religion...that is why we cannot accept Western Social Sciences on facevalue (Zaman 2009, p. 14).

From the above discussion, it is clear that Western Social Sciences is anti-religious and developed against religion and religious laws and beliefs. Social Sciences as a discipline is hardly a century-year-old but the forces which resulted in its emergence are about two centuries old. Subjects that came under Social Sciences achieved autonomous status in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and this was not merely a conventional expression but has logic and conceptual implications, as Davies writes:

Disciplinary boundaries are an outgrowth of particular conceptual propositions; the naming and ordering of things is not merely a matter of convenience but a convenient expression of the logic of conceptual implications. The labels applied to disciplines describe their boundaries and their content; what one seeks to learn about and how one searches for this knowledge. They have been formalised in the course of intellectual history and bear the marks of history of ideas within a civilization, being thus inseparable from a world view rooted in particular concepts (Davies 1988, p. 142).

During the renaissance period of the west, theology lost its importance and philosophy of Western social scientists like Rene Descartes (1596-1650), Edmund Burke (1729-1797), Auguste Comte (1798-1857), Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859), Max Weber

(1864-1920), and Karl Marx (1818-1883) dominated. These Western philosophers think that science and religion are incompatible and may mislead human beings as Roger Wolcott Sperry writes:

Religion and science are separate and mutually exclusive realms of human thought, presentation of which in the same context leads to misunderstanding of both scientific theory and religious belief (Ragab 1991, p. 1).

This is the common belief of most of the Western scholars who played a key role in the development of Social Sciences. The main social issues of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries were the land question, rise in prices and interest, which appealed to the Christian values and morality in England. The enlightenment period in the West is marked as the period of coming out from the darkness and ignorance set forth by religion, and entering into the age of science and reason. With the development of contemporary Social Sciences, all the issues related to society were discussed rationally without taking any support and aid from religion. Thus, Social Sciences came into sight in the West as a substitute to religion, and before the renaissance period, religion was governing and solving social issues and now Social Sciences based on logic, philosophy, observation and reason started to address these problems. The main cause for the loss of faith in religion was caused by the moral degradation of the popes. The popes started to collect wealth and living a luxurious life which as a reaction gave rise to Protestants who tried to save the Christianity from corrupted Catholic Church but they themselves got divided and started to fight with each other. These situations became the cause for the loss of faith in religion in the West and Europeans realized that religion cannot be a solution for solving social issues. So they left the religion altogether and started to find solutions on the basis of reason and logic by which the contemporary Social Sciences came into existence. Thus, the contemporary Social Sciences came into existence as a challenge to religions particularly Christianity (Zaman 2009).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, new ideologies and theories like Marxism, Existentialism and Freudianism came into existence which brought changes in the specialization and professionalization of Social Sciences. Religion, which was the basis of humanism at both spiritual and physical levels, was shattered. The contemporary Social Sciences try to find the solution of many fundamental questions without taking help from religion and revealed scriptures. The impact of the three revolutions in natural sciences – Newton's natural order, Darwin's theory of natural selection, the struggle for existence, the survival of the fittest and the evolution of species, and Einstein's theory of relativity had a great impact on the development of contemporary Social Sciences (Zaman 2009).

### **CRITICISM OF WESTERN SOCIAL SCIENCES**

The period of the emergence of Social Sciences as a discipline in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries was dominated by logic and reason, and a period of transition from theism to atheism. It is obvious that rational thinking affected the Social Sciences as mentioned above and its development took place without the consideration of religious beliefs and principles. The Western Social Sciences are mainly criticised because of overreliance on experimental and empirical data, and total negligence of revelation and religious scriptures. The Western developed Social Sciences are also criticised because of their biased approach towards other traditions/nations, as they fulfill the needs of the West while ignoring the interests of other nations (Davies 1988). Ansari has defined these

criticisms in his book, *The Qur'ānic foundations and the Structure of Muslim Society* in which he explained the possibilities of Islamic Social Sciences based on Qur'ānic guidance, as he writes,

As a system of Knowledge, the Qur'ānic Guidance is thoroughly grounded in the Logic of Knowledge, wherein the different knowledge-domains emerge inter-related in a logical sequence that manifests itself thus, starting objectively: Metaphysics, with its function of providing the world-view and consequently the system of values, stands at the base. Out of it emerges Moral Philosophy which, in its practical aspects, assumes the form of the Moral Code. Expanding into the dimensions of organised society, Moral Philosophy gives rise to Social Philosophy which, for practical purposes, crystallises into the different Social Sciences like Politics, Economics, and Law. Then, from the side of the subject, Psychology and Aesthetics shoot off to constitute organically-related complementaries for the 'tree of knowledge whose roots are in Metaphysics (Ansari 2008, p. 161).

Besides Ansari, there are other contemporary Muslim scholars like Al-Fārūqī, Al- 'Attās, Zaiudin Sardar, Syed Hussain Nasr who criticised the Western Social Sciences and suggested that the contemporary Social Sciences need reformation. Jamil Farooqi came across to know that the west finds no difference between natural and Social Sciences phenomena, and used the same methodology to both of them on same grounds (Farooqui 1994). The exclusive dependence on reason and empirical tradition, and total exclusion of spirituality resulted in an incomplete understanding of human beings. The Muslim scholars in the contemporary times have realized that the Social Sciences developed in the west are neither suitable for its particular circumstances nor favourable to a proper appropriation of realities within the Muslim world (Oben & Ajimase 2011). Muslims scholars realized that Western knowledge is culture-bound and reflects the culture of a particular nation. Jamil Farooqi argues that the Western developed Social Sciences are materialistic devoid of moral and ethical aspects. He says:

Nature and course (of Social Sciences) were determined principally by the need to accommodate rapid changes in the material aspect of Western societies triggered by accelerated scientific and technological advancements. Western thought, in the name of using the scientific method, divorced itself gradually from, and later discarded completely, the metaphysical, moral, ethical and spiritual aspects of humanity and society (Farooqui 1994, p. 190).

Davies mentioned that the terms like 'otherness' and 'primitive' used by Western scholars reflect their biased approach towards other nations and regions. The word 'otherness' has been used to distinguish the Westerners from the other nations and the word 'primitive' reflects that the West is superior and advanced to other nations. The methodologies and the material applied to the contemporary Social Sciences developed in the West are 'Western in content and form'. The study of this biased knowledge only leads to see what the West wants to be seen by them. So, the disciplines developed by the West which are biased and culture oriented are useless for Muslims. Western Social Sciences are developed to subordinate the religion under its imperialistic control in many ways, as Aminah Beverly McCloud writes:

Their form and the objects of their desire are intimately and now inextricably tied to the insatiable appetites to control infrastructures, educational systems, political institutions, social and family relations, and even the religious lives of those who were once part of their empire and are now subjects to them, along with their own. Rapid technological development in Western societies enabled rapid dispersal of the products of Western sciences, flooding every academic enterprise, further enabling the sense of their positions of authority and their authors as authoritative. Western empires have sent small armies of researchers out into the world to explore every aspect of creation for information to increase their knowledge for the sake of control and profit (McCloud 2012, p. 197).

The motive of Western scholars for developing the Social Sciences was to control the Eastern nations politically and socially. Ismā'īl Rajī Al-Fārūqī argues, order that the analysis might remain scientific, the social scientists illegitimately reduced the moral and spiritual component of social reality to its material effect or carrier. His (Western) methodology remains to this day devoid of tools by which to recognize and deal with the spiritual (Nadvi 2005).

### **SOCIAL SCIENCES IN EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD**

As argued by the proponents of Islamization of knowledge project, the Islamic Social Sciences are more relevant and humanistic, and Muslim intellectuals and scholars in this regard aim at social transformation within the already established prophetic framework of values and principles (Zif 2011). Amongst the early Muslim scholars, Ibn Khaldūn distinguished himself in the field of Social Sciences. Ibn Khaldūn corrected, developed and enhanced the Social Sciences disciplines introduced before him by other Muslim scholars. The chief concern of these earlier Muslim scholars was to discuss the issues related to the social organization, trade and living conditions of people.

The earlier Muslim scholar, Al-Maqdasī (born in 946 C.E.), wrote extensively on society of Islam. He gives the details of his visit to different places, mentioned the geography, population, social groups, ethnic diversity, political situation, mineral resources, currencies, etc (Dass 2016). So his work tried to discuss both geography and Islamic society and the function of such a society related to different social issues. He also mentioned the urban Islamic setting, its evolution, complexity, politics and economy. He mentioned the defensive structures of every city which he visited and gave the account of their walls, thickness, height, access in and out their location according to the general topography and its relation to the rest (Dass 2016). Al-Maqdasī also draws his attention towards exchanges, markets, their expansion and decline, and also the account of the dwelling factors like cleanliness, morality and state of learning (Dass 2016).

The master of the Social Sciences in the medieval period was none other than Ibn Khaldūn, born in Tunis in 1332 C.E. in a prominent Andalusian religious family, *Banū Khaldūn*. He is not only the master of Social Sciences but is also known as father of modern Sociology. Although he is primarily known as a historiographer but he is also the first Muslim social thinker who developed the new Social Sciences known as '*Ilm Al-Umrān*' (Sociology in modern terminology). His famous history book *Kitāb al-Ibr* comprises of seven parts; first being the most famous *Muqaddimah*, whose significance



overshadowed the importance of *Kitāb Al-ʿIbr*. In accordance with modern sociology, the *Muqaddimah* can be arranged as; general sociology, rural sociology, political sociology, urban sociology, economic sociology and sociology of knowledge (Baali 1981). Ibn Khaldūn's sociological thought is based on the *Muqaddimah* in which he mentioned the new term *ʿIlm al-ʿUmrān* or *ʿIlm Al-Ijtimāh Al-Basharī* translated in as Science of social organization or civilization or the science of human association or the science of culture and defined it as “*This science...has its own subject, viz human society, and its own problems viz the social transformations that succeeded each other in the nature of society*” (Khaldun 2015, p. 77).

*ʿIlm al-ʿUmrān* is entirely an original science as claimed by Ibn Khaldūn himself that he was inspired by Allah to develop this branch of science independently (Dhaouadi 1990). He defined the laws of society and social change in the *Muqaddimah*. Ibn Khaldūn was a keen observer as he gained first-hand experience of various societies during his travel. In his *Muqaddimah* he compared many dynasties before and after his time giving the time period of different dynasties and discussing the reasons for successful dynasties. Ibn Khaldūn had a strong belief in social organization, which ties the society together and without the existence of this social organization human existence is impossible. He also discussed that there must be a ruler who governs the society and its people, the strength of which depends on the social cohesion (*ʿAsabiyyah* or group feelings). He also discussed the chief economical, psychological, environmental and social factors for the development of society. He stressed that societies are like living organisms which experience the cyclic birth, growth, maturity, decline and ultimately death. He also identified the impact of climate, available resources, government policy and taxation on social change. He also analysed the group relations, and social cohesion to show how group feelings give rise to new civilization and political power. He also discussed the Berber transformation from a Bedouin life to settled life and how these tribes gain power by the strong group cohesion. By gaining the power, the *Berber* tribes get settled and went through a transformation from a state of high internal cohesion to a state of internal conflict and decadence and got finally overthrown by the new strong tribe.

Ibn Khaldūn confirms that the culture is developed by the society which is learned and shared with other groups of society and that culture can change with the passage of time. The culture is also affected by the geographical and atmospheric factors like climate, colour and conditions of men, thus Ibn Khaldūn discussed the science of culture four hundred years before August Comte. Ibn Khaldūn also identified psychological, economic, environmental and social factors that contribute to the progress of human civilization and history. He also examined the rhythmic relation and repetition of rise and fall in human civilizations and scientifically illustrated the socio-economic changes of the ruling tribes, their declining group feelings and eventually their fall. Ibn Khaldūn explained how the group feelings (*ʿAsabiyyah*) are important for political power. For him the *ʿAsabiyyah* is:

That emotional attachment to a group which causes men to overcome their selfish aims to act in the collective interest...[He] saw *Asabiyyah* as dynamics that gives cohesion and power to the societies, and argued that the absence of it is the reason of disintegration of social cohesion (Khaldun 2015, pp.288-89).

The *Khaldūnian* concept of society and its related issues need to be studied thoroughly by comparing it with the concepts developed in the West. The study will become a methodological tool in the development of other Islamic Social Sciences in the process of Islamization of Social Sciences project.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CONTEMPORARY PERIOD**

The Social Sciences in Islamic circles is still in infancy in the contemporary period and needs to be given much attention as there are great challenges for the development of Islamic Social Sciences. The Islamic Social Sciences are based on the *Tawhīdī* paradigm; unity of truth, which explains that there is one and only one reality behind the creation of this universe that is Almighty Allah, Who is supreme, creator and ultimate cause. He is the All-Knower and the whole knowledge of this world belongs to Him. The humans are created with the purpose to obey Him as mentioned in the Qur'ān, "I have created jinns and men, that they may serve Me (Allah)" (*Al-Qur'ān*, 51: 56). So this verse challenges all the claims of Western scholars who proclaim that there is no such philosophy behind the creation of humans - human life is purposeless. As mentioned earlier, the knowledge of Social Sciences in Islam is based on the *Tawhīdī* paradigm which satisfies both soul and physical body. The Islamic Social Sciences should be developed within the parameters of Islam, founded in Qur'ān and *Hadīth*, and the views of earlier Muslim scholars about sociology should also be taken into consideration, not on the principles founded by the natural sciences, as Al-Fārūqī maintains:

The *Ummatic* sciences should not be intimidated by the natural sciences. Their place in the total scheme of human knowledge is one and the same with the difference lying in the object of study, not the methodology. Both aim at discovering and understanding the divine pattern; the one in physical objects, the other in human affairs. Understanding the pattern in each realm certainly calls for different techniques and strategies; but as examples of the divine pattern the two are subject to the same laws of verification (Al-Fārūqī 1971, p.16).

The main importance of Islamic Social Sciences is that it follows the divine path which leads to seek THE pleasure of Allah and eternal salvation. The human beings have been created by Allah and thus, it is essential that humans must develop the Social Sciences under the divine knowledge related to the society, individual, group, religion or science. Man has to accept the sovereignty of Allah on earth, acting himself as a vicegerent of Allah, and has to follow the necessarily social commandments of Allah, so the study of these social commandments and its relation should be properly called as *Ummatic* sciences and not Social Sciences (Langgulung 1987).

Western scholars have bifurcated the subject as humanities and Social Sciences but the Muslims reject this claim and consider it only one subject under *Ummatic* sciences. The Western classification of science and Social Sciences also needs to be reconsidered in accordance with the Islamic perspective. The main difference lies in the objective of study and methodology, not the subject matter. The aim of Islam for discovering and understanding of knowledge of physical objects and the other human affairs is to understand the divine pattern. Prof. Ragab writes about the Social Sciences:

But when it comes to the utilization by scholars from the Islamic (Shariah) sciences of Social Sciences theories and findings, the situation becomes somewhat different. Social Sciences literature can hardly be utilized as it is without a rigorous critique and a process of sifting out what is usable – a task that should be carried out by social scientists. However, certain components of the Social Sciences could be directly utilized with minor modifications, such as certain research methods and data collection techniques (Ragab 1999, p. 34).

The Muslim social scientists can derive the Islamic legacy related to Social Sciences from the Holy Qur'an and *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad. They can certainly develop their Social Sciences disciplines from which the whole Muslim *Ummah* will be benefited. Prof. Ragab further argues that:

It is my contention that certain Social Sciences disciplines (especially psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, communication, social work, and psychotherapy) can very productively use Islamic (Shariah) sciences at their current level of development. Such Islamic scholarship has hardly been tapped yet, with its treasures yet untouched (Ragab 1999, p. 34).

It is difficult to develop some contemporary Social Sciences disciplines like economics and political science on the lines of Islamic one. So, they will mostly depend on the *Shari'ah* sciences and less on contemporary knowledge, and it is hard to reconcile them. The Western Social Sciences reveal their interests and if applied to any other society, without any modification, will mislead that society. Responding to the situation, many Muslim experts feel the need to develop their own Social Sciences which will be different from the West, fulfilling their own interests, thus, saving their own societies from falling into the trap of the West. The West insists that the knowledge is value free, but knowledge can never be value free.

### **ISLAMIZATION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Islamization of Social Sciences is a main issue in the Islamization of knowledge project which has more practical implications with respect to Islamization of other branches of knowledge, thus deserves more attention. The proponents of Islamization have rightly given priority to the Social Sciences and tried to modify them in the light of Islam. There is a great compatibility between science and revelation, and the same is true with Social Sciences. The separation of the two (revelation and Social Sciences) will lead to disorder of the social system (Safi 1993). Louay Safi finds the importance of revelation in Social Sciences as:

In these fields it is clear that the influence of transcendental principles emanating from divine revelation is not confined to providing the basic conceptual and motivational foundations, but rather extends to the formation of their central theoretical elements (Safi 1993, p. 470).

Al-Fārūqī in the ideology of Islamization focused more on Islamization of Social Sciences and humanity than any other branch of knowledge. The aim of the proponents of Islamization of knowledge (IOK) is to reform the contemporary Social Sciences because the Social Sciences developed in the West is exclusively rooted in logical positivism and reflects Western worldview and ethos as Al-Fārūqī argues that the Western Social Sciences are incomplete and necessary Western - hence useless for

Muslims (Farooqui 1994). These Social Sciences disciplines of knowledge were raised in the West with scepticism, with its hostile nature towards other nations and religions - a peculiarly Western phenomenon. Realizing the hostile nature of Western Social Sciences, Muslims developed a strong case for introducing morality in Social Sciences disciplines including political science, psychology, economics and sociology. The development of these disciplines (Western Social Sciences) presumably amoral is serving the vested interests of the dominant class of society at national level and that of imperialism at the global level. Other than the Islamists, the people of other nations and religions, other than the West, felt the need of introducing moral values to these Social Sciences disciplines. For Muslims there is a need to join hands with them so that a universally accepted moral vision will get evolved (Siddiqi 2011, p. 230).

The aim of the IOK movement is "integration of Islamic revealed knowledge and the modern human sciences" (Siddiqi 2011, p. 230). Aim of the Islamization of Social Sciences is to connect the Social Sciences with Islam, which is the divine prototype applicable to it. This divine prototype is the ultimate reality which should be followed to make the human society nature oriented. The Social Sciences when incorporated with Islamic values not only become normative but become a modality inclined on reality, based on *Fitrah* existence, on which the humans have been shaped by Almighty Allah. Al-Fārūqī relates:

Islamization of the Social Sciences must endeavour to show the relation of the reality studied to that aspect or part of the divine pattern pertinent to it. Since the divine pattern is the norm reality ought to actualize, the analysis of what is, should never lose reality ought to be. Moreover, the divine pattern is not only normative, enjoying a heavenly modality of existence removed from actuality. It is also real in the sense that Allah has predisposed reality to embody it, a kind of *Fitrah* existence which Allah, in his mercy, implanted in human nature, in the human individual or group, in the *Ummah* as an ongoing stream of being, which moral action pulls out into actuality and history (Ragab 1999, p. 32).

The Islamic scientific analysis demonstrates the human inborn divine pattern which ought to be followed to reconcile the human nature with reality. So the aim of the Muslim social scientists that are keen to make a welfare society is to focus on introducing the divine pattern in human affairs. Islamization of Social Sciences poses a challenge to the Western Social Sciences as it tries to keep in consideration the religious faith while studying the Social Sciences, which the conventional Social Sciences neglect. According to al-Fārūqī (1987) all learning must be under the principle of *Tawhīd*, whether it may be at individual or collective level or at religion or scientific level. It should be taken into consideration that Almighty Allah is the Sustainer, Creator, Provider, and Ultimate metaphysical Cause.

The Islamization project laid special attention towards the areas covered by Social Sciences because of its greater importance in society as, Mawdūdī says:

At this stage we have only one task before us: To prepare suitable leaders and workers for bringing about moral, intellectual and social revolution in the world. For this task experts in medicine, engineering or sciences are not needed. We only need people with high class insight into the religion of Islam and the Social Sciences. At present we have to focus

only on five faculties of higher education: Philosophy; History; Economics; Law and Islamic Sciences (each is followed by some details on syllabus) (Voll et al., 2011, p. 18).

Ibrahim Ragab suggests two steps for Islamization of Social Sciences;

- 1 Generating an 'integral theoretical framework' that combines insights gleaned from Islamic revealed knowledge and from the human sciences.
- 2 Validating that theoretical framework in well-designed research projects and professional practice field demonstrations.

'Ismā'il Rajī al-Fārūqī has defined the methodology in Islamization of knowledge as to redefine and reorder the data and relating the data and re-evaluate the conclusions and goals and do the whole process in such a way so that the disciplines developed should serve the cause of Islam. 'Ismā'il Rajī al-Fārūqī has worked out the twelve point work plan for the process of Islamization. Ragab (1999) finds that the initial aim of the Islamization of Knowledge is to reform the modern Social Sciences as the discipline is embedded in the empiricism and rationalism, and reflects the Western epistemology and ontology, which is in contradiction to the Islamic worldview. Ragab suggested two legitimate pathways for Islamization of Social Sciences, the first is the reformation of the Social Sciences in which social scientists will work for critical re-examination of the contemporary disciplines of Social Sciences, their methodologies and frameworks and move in such a way so as to be utilized in revealed knowledge. The second he suggested is 'Reformation of revealed knowledge disciplines' in which Islamic scholars are expected to critically re-examine the Islamic disciplines, their methodologies and move in such a way so that Islamized Social Sciences can be utilized in its fullest (Ragab 1999, p. 32).

Ibrahim Ragab further suggests that for making the Islamization project successful the proponents of Islamization should focus on Islamic ontological and epistemological assumptions that are related to the nature of God, man and society, before going into actual Islamization process.<sup>94</sup> The principles of Islamic methodology for Islamization have been put by Al Fārūqī as:

- 1 The unity of Allah
- 2 The unity of creation
- 3 The unity of truth and the truth of knowledge
- 4 The unity of life
- 5 The unity of humanity

These are the important parameters which must be taken into consideration before developing the methodology for Islamization of Social Sciences. The process of Islamization involves the searching of the relevant contemporary Social Sciences material and its critical study from Islamic perspective and finding the concepts that will be relevant to Islam.

#### **METHODOLOGY IN ISLAMIZATION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (IOSS)**

Prof. Ibrahim A. Ragab (formerly Professor of Social Policy and Planning, of Helwan University and Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt.) discusses that there are two ways for the starting of IOSS process;

1. **Using contemporary Social Sciences concepts as point of departure:** Using the modern Social Sciences concepts of reference will help in two ways. First is that there is abundant material, concepts, terms, theories which have been developed

over centuries by social scientists who have spent their whole life for the cause. Second is that the scholars as well as the common people are familiar with these terms. The definitions and terms used have been agreed upon and large material is available in the form of well-formed text books. The scholars will feel more comfortable in using these text books and terminologies as they are well acquainted with these books and terms. These terms will be only used as the starting point towards searching the Qur'anic and *Hadith* concepts related to these subjects. Then in the process of Islamization these terms will gradually be modified or replaced by other terms developed from Qur'an and *Sunnah*. The main drawback of this methodology is that the researchers may fall in the seductive trap of unjustified modern Social Sciences categories and conceptual schemes. By using these concepts as a reference it may be an insult for the proponents of Islamization and will be labelled as unintelligent, unthinking, brainless, and thoughtless who while condemning these ideologies fall themselves in these intellectual traps.

2. **Using Islamic revealed knowledge as point of departure:** In this approach the Qur'an and its related terms will be directly used which will remove the ambiguity and will take directly to the Islamic frame of reference. They are derived from divine origin and have an inherent validity. The main problem with this methodology is that the Islamic terms and concepts leave a big gap as Islamic scholarship has been stunted from a long period disconnected from the concepts developed over centuries henceless relevant with contemporary issue. Ragab writes about the Muslim scholarship that, "we have to remember that most of the great Muslim thinkers of the past produced voluminous encyclopaedic works, with relevant Social Sciences ideas splashed throughout, with no conscious effort at systematizing them in ways that render them directly usable by contemporary trained social scientists" (1999, p. 32).

The Islamization of any discipline of Social Sciences will actually depend on the researcher's background and it would be the decisive factor in choosing the starting point. During the process of Islamization, attention should be paid to the difficulties and overlapping, inconsistencies and gaps should be fully reviewed. The researcher should be free in abandoning any modern concept. The methodology in Islamization of Social Sciences will be carried in two phases: the first phase consists of a critical review of the relevant material (both Western and Islamic) and the second phase involves the validation of the material through research and practice developed in the first phase.

### ***PHASE I***

The phase is carried out in three steps as;

#### ***First Step: Critical review of relevant Social Sciences literature:***

This step examines and analyses the Social Sciences material and consists of three steps including systemic review, rigorous critique and sifting material. The literature review will include a thoughtful study of relevant disciplines, studying the epistemological and ontological concepts upon which the Western Social Sciences is based. The researcher should be very much careful while going through the following steps;

- 1) **A systematic review:** The literal review includes the identification of conceptual frameworks and research findings related with the discipline under study. The concepts

acceptable to Islam should be identified and special attention should be given to those concepts which are dissenting from the Islamic ones. The dissenting concepts are very important and valuable for the Islamization process as identification of these concepts will become the base for the Islamization exercise. The literature review process will be seen from Islamic point of view based on Islamic ontology and epistemology by taking the historical development of modern Social Sciences into consideration.

2) **Rigorous Critique:** The critical study based on Islamic *weltanschauung* related to God, man and society should be carefully studied. The critical study includes the study of broader issues related to Social Sciences like the historical factors which shaped the modern Social Sciences.

3) **Sifting Material:** This includes the selection of material which has been tested in the rigorous critique by leaving the failed concepts. The outcome of the rigorous research findings and systematic investigation should be the least controversial, which corresponds with the objective reality. Models and analytical tools are considered to be neutral, hence can be used as such and can be slightly modified, if needed in accordance with Islamic concepts but the most important things are the theoretical frameworks and theories, which are most problematic in relation to Islamization of Social Sciences.

#### **SECOND STEP: CRITICAL REVIEW OF ISLAMIC MATERIAL:**

The parameters used in first step will help to understand the second step in a modern way. In this step the researcher identifies and searches the relevant concepts related to particular concept from the revealed knowledge. At the initial stage the Western epistemology can be used if needed but as soon as the concepts become clear they should be replaced by Islamic terminology.<sup>96</sup> Davies suggests that the term *ʿIlm al-ʿUmrān* used by Ibn Khaldūn should be used instead of Western anthropology. In this step the Islamic material is studied and searched according to the importance of the Islamic sources.

1) **Search the Qurʾān:** Searching of Qurʾān helps in identifying the keywords which are directly or indirectly related to a particular concept under study. Identifying and sorting out of the keywords will be helpful to solve a particular phenomenon. *Taffasīr* (exegesis of Qurʾān) of different *Muffasirūn* (one who interprets Qurʾān) could be consulted in order to understand the acceptable interpretations of these identified verses.

2) **Search the Ḥadīth:** The searching of *Ḥadīth* means to find out the relevant *Aḥadīth* and concepts related to the particular subject. Explanations of *Ḥadīth* by different scholars will help to gain the access to Prophet's applications of Qurʾānic concepts and prophetic perspective.

3) **Works of Muslim Scholars:** This involves the searching of the concepts related directly or indirectly to the subject under study, put forth by the prominent Muslim scholars, particularly the early scholars. Early Islamic scholarship is important as it tries to integrate the Islamic knowledge with scientific knowledge and thus will help in bridging the gap.

### THIRD STEP: DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIFIED INTEGRAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This is the most important step in Islamization of Social Sciences as this step involves the actual Islamization. It is the most difficult step in which the researcher has to go through unexplored area which the predecessors have not met yet and there is no experience in this field. This step involves the careful combination of the already sifted material; both from Islamic sources and Western sources. Some of the logical steps are defined as;

- 1) **Cataloguing and Organizing:** This step involves the organization of the material related to particular fields. This can be done by confirmed explanations, observed simplifications and possibly a collection of ideas recovered and freed from their hypothetical, secularized and reductionist orientations.
- 2) **Rearrangement and Reinterpretation:** The research findings and concepts obtained in the above mentioned steps involve reinterpretation.
- 3) **Statement of the Results:** The conclusions should be clear and will be used as building blocks for a coherent deductive system which will lead to the derivation of hypothesis for testing in research and practice.

### PHASE TWO

#### Validating through Research and Practice

The development of 'integral theoretical framework' does not mean that they are sacred without any limitations. Although the framework of knowledge is developed from the Islamic revealed knowledge and human experience, yet the process of integration is a human effort and humans can make mistakes in understanding the revealed knowledge. The researcher selects the verses which seems to him relevant to his subject but it is not sure that the verse he selects is relevant. Similarly the researcher chooses the hadith which seems to him relevant to his subject and it is also not sure that the hadith he selected is relevant. Besides there may be different interpretations and explanations of Qur'anic verses and *Aḥādith* in which the *Muffasirs* and *Muḥadith* may also differ. The interpretation and explanation chosen by the scholar may sometimes be wrong, so according to Ragab, "the researcher has to make layers over layers of decisions to select and choose among the large number of options open to us.... over and above all of these layers of decisions on how to put together material from Islamic revealed knowledge sources, the researcher is expected to make comparable decisions with regards to Social Sciences material, and then yet to combine both".<sup>97</sup> So to overcome the chance of human error in the development of 'integral theoretical framework' it needs to be tested to check its truth value, which will be a scientific inquiry under the parameters of Islam. The process can be done through following steps:

#### Hypothesis Testing

The developed 'integral theoretical framework' should be tested in 'total reality' that is through sensory and super-sensory aspects; (*Ālam Al-Ghayb* and *Ālam Al-Shahādah*.)

#### Validation

Validation of Hypothesis through testing takes place in well-designed pieces of research controlled by practice episodes within the helping professions.



**If Hypothesis is confirmed**

If the hypothesis is confirmed the level of confidence in that framework increases and will lead to further development of the integral theory.

**If Hypothesis is not confirmed**

If the hypothesis is not confirmed, then we have to review the whole material and the decisions taken. This may arise due to misunderstanding of the revealed knowledge.

**No Contradiction**

As a general rule there will be any contradiction in the revealed knowledge and the scientific facts of world because both are created by one God - Allah. So the true understanding is needed to understand the both.

**Theory to research**

The natural theory of research for integral theory will continue as mentioned above which will lead in the gradual progress of Social Sciences. The above mentioned theoretical plan explaining it step by step has been worked out by Prof. Ibrahim Ragab based on Al-Fārūqī's twelve point work plan and other writings. Al-Fārūqī's plan is a general ruling for all kinds of knowledge including both natural sciences and Social Sciences while as the plan worked out by Ragab has been devised particularly for the Social Sciences disciplines. In comparison to the Al-Fārūqī's work plan Ragab has defined the steps elaborately and has also mentioned the steps required if there is a failure of any other step.

**CONCLUSION**

The primary notions of the IOK project is concerned with the reformation of contemporary Social Sciences which are steeped in the positivist and empiricist tradition, and reflect the Western ontology and epistemology which are at odds with the Islamic worldview while comparing it with other branches of knowledge. It seems that the Western Social Sciences are incompatible with the Islamic Social Sciences as claimed by many Muslim scholars. The assumption here is that both revealed knowledge and the contemporary Social Sciences emanate from different ideologies, based on irreconcilable ontologies and epistemologies. The Western Social Sciences is entirely dependent on sensory and empirical analysis and totally neglects the revelation while as the Islamic Social Sciences are primarily dependent on revelation. The task before the social scientists is to address the general issue of integration related with both the branches of knowledge and at the same time attempting to connect each other. To make the two branches of knowledge compatible for developing the integrated knowledge, social scientists have to start by critically examining each discipline of knowledge with a view to reform them by incorporating them in a systematic and creative way.

Muslims have to remain optimistic while dealing with the Western Social Sciences' critique as it is a clear fact that it also contains some truth which needs to be sorted out for developing the Islamic Social Sciences. There were many scholars like Max Weber who maintained the role and importance of religion in human affairs. The Muslim social scientists need to realize the practical utility of the subjects developed by the early Muslim scholars like Ibn Khaldūn. The Islamic Social Sciences should be made relevant in the contemporary societies without neglecting the parameters of Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*. The whole process can be done under the project of Islamization of Social Sciences (IOSS) for which many methodological theories have been carried out.

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