

Prosperity of the Scientific Life among the Muslims

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Islam has overthrown totally all of the concepts of Jahilism* including ignorance, fables, and submission to delusions and hallucination. It brought about a genuine conscience and a tremendous development in the conceptual and scientific fields. It has also used all means to crystallize the concepts, publicize science, and eradicate all of the social aimless and unconscious traditions.

The Islamic culture has covered all of the territories that became under its control. Ibn Hazm said, "When the Prophet was deceased, Islam was prevailing on the Arabian Peninsula entirely from the –Red- Sea passing by all of the Yemeni coasts to the –Persian- Gulf upward to the Euphrates to Syria. The cities of this area, such as Yemen, Bahrain, Oman and Najd... to Mecca, converted to Islam and established mosques. Every single village recited and recorded the Quran and conveyed it to their boys, men, and women. When Omar came to power after Abu Bakr, Persia, Syria, the Peninsula, and Egypt were entirely conquered. Every city there established a mosque, and copied and learned the Quran."

The great Islamic Empire saved equal opportunities of teaching. Knowledge became the commonest matter. Mosques, institutes, and faculties of knowledge and wisdom opened their portals before everybody. The Islamic State also provided all of the alimony that the seekers of knowledge may need.

Besides teachers, students, and librarians, the cultural and scientific cognizance –in the early ages of Islam- was common among Muslims. It is related that a young man intended to return home after he had accomplished his study in Baghdad. As he was in his way back, he listened to a scientific discussion between two of the shopkeepers there. He was highly admired and affected; hence, he returned the pack animal he had hired to its owner and declared, "It is quite inappropriate to leave a country the shopkeepers of which enjoy such a scholastic rank."

People also confined themselves to reading to excess that they used to reject any summon during reading. It is related that a caliph sent his servant to summon a scholar for communication. As the servant reached there, he saw that many books encompassing the scholar who was reading. "Tell the caliph that I am engaged with many wise now. I will attend if I finish," answered the scholar after he had received the caliph's invitation. The servant conveyed this answer to the caliph who asked him about those wise ones. "In fact," said the servant, "I saw none with him." The caliph ordered of fetching that man in any case.

The man was present before the caliph who asked, "Who were those wise ones that you had accompanied." The scholar worded:
They are the sitters that we do never feed up with their conversation
Honest and confident in presence and absence
In our oneness, they are the best of their talks are
Helping in eliminating the whole grief
We benefit by their past information
Morals, disciplining, opinions, and honor
We anticipate neither doubt nor bad association
Nor fear their tongues or fists
I do not lie if I say they are dead
Nor am I a fabricator if say they are alive.

The caliph understood that the man was referring to the books; therefore, he did not blame. They also were unduly concerned to their books. Except in conditions of harsh neediness, the personal books were not vended at all. Historians also related that Sharif al-Murtda purchased a copy of Ibn Dureid's al-Jamhara from a man –named Abu Ali bin Ahmed al-Fali-, and found the following poetry written with the handwriting of the vender on one of their pages:

These books have been my pleasure for twenty years. Then I vended
After them, my anxiety and longing have been dragging
I have never thought I would vend them
Even if my debts will lead me to life imprisonment
But for weakness and poverty, and children
Little and on them my affairs are based
And I said while I could not control my tears
The saying of heart-burnt and sad
It happens that exigencies take out the honorable from their tenacious lord.

The Sayyid returned the books to their owner and granted him the price. They also decided the abomination of sitting to shopkeepers except the booksellers. In any case, the scientific life and conceptual movements were highly prosperous in the Islamic ages. Associations and the caliph sessions in addition to public circles used to discuss scientific .questions and theological and philosophic schools as well as the other sorts of high culture

CENTERS OF THE ISLAMIC CULTURE

Yathrib, the place of Hegira, was the public center of the Islamic education, and the midpoint from which the scientific and cultural movement extended to the other points of the Islamic

and Arab world. The Prophet's Mosque was the higher institute of receiving scientific and religious affairs. It was also the center of managing governmental affairs and political and military issues.

For many Islamic eras, this mosque has been the center of Muslims. The Imams of the Prophet's progeny used to deliver their considerable lectures that covered a great deal of sciences and knowledges. Imam as-Sadiq made it the center of his grand university that contained four thousand students including the founders of the Islamic sects such as Abu Hanifa, Malik, and Sufian bin Uyeina.

Imam Musa bin Jafar also delivered his lectures and scientific lessons in that mosque. Qeba Mosque was also the center in which delegations gathered for holding scientific circles. It is the place where the Prophet instructed his companions, sent them to call to Islam, and taught the people of the Arabian Peninsula the good deeds and forbade the evil.

Mosques were the public teaching faculties. They were spreading all over the Islamic State. For instance, Kufa Mosque was exclusively significant since the master graduates of the school of Imam as-Sadiq joined it. They were about nine hundred. Al-Hassan bin Ali al-Wesha said, "I saw in Kufa Mosque nine hundred teachers, each says: Jafar bin Mohammed told..." Al-Maqdisi counted 110 scientific sessions in the Grand Mosque of Cairo. Al-Mansur Mosque in Baghdad was the most famed teaching center in the Islamic kingdom in which Ibrahim bin Mohammed –known as Naftawayih– delivered lectures for fifty years.

The first Islamic scientific foundation is Darul-Quran in which some readers lived for receiving knowledge. Dies, the Oriental, says, "Since the early era of Islam, it seems there have been places in which Muslims gathered for receiving and studying the Quran. These places must have been like primary schools that provided the principals of reading and writing, as al-Wahidi asserts and mentions that Abdullah bin Uummi Mektum lodged in Darul-Quran in Al-Medina." Mosques were not dedicated to religious studies. Sessions of literature, linguistics, and poetry had a good share in these studies. Moreover, the other conceptual sciences such as theology, philosophy, medicine, and botany were discussed there. With the expansion of the scientific movement, the Islamic governments established many faculties and schools all over the Islamic State.

Sharif ar-Radi established a school named Darul-Elm (House of knowledge) in which students lodged and received their alimony. There was a huge library comprising all sciences in every school or faculty. Scholars used to dedicate their books in the mosques. Ibn Heyan- the judge of Nisapur- established a teaching house, library, and lodging for the foreign students. He also saved their alimony.

The teaching institutes and cultural centers contributed in spreading sciences and arranging .conceptualities and progressions of Muslims

EMIGRATION FOR KNOWLEDGE

Islam has called to emigrate and travel for obtaining knowledge. God says: Why should not then a company from every party from among them go forth that they may apply themselves to obtain understanding in religion, and that they may warn their people when they come back to them that they may be cautious.

Muslims all over the ages responded to this original call, then many groups of them emigrated to the various Islamic provinces for joining the teaching institutes there. They also spent most of their ages enduring the pains of dreariness, and traveling for nothing other than seeking knowledge and God's favor. As soon as Imam Jafar as-Sadiq established his grand university, the students all over the Islamic provinces hurried to join it.

A. Al-Ahl said, "People of Kufa, Basra, Wasit, and Hijaz sent their sons and dearest among all of the Arab tribes... especially sons of al-Harith bin abdil-Muttelib and al-Hassan bin Ali... in addition to great groups of the free and sons of the slaves and the non-Arabs among the celebrities of the Arabs and Persia, and Qum in specific."

The Islamic countries, as a whole, participated in sending their sons to the University of Imam as-Sadiq for acquiring his sciences and receiving the religious rulings from that grandson of the Prophet (s). The Islamic society achieved a scientific renaissance, the shining waves of which extended to all of the ages.

The celebrities of Muslims embarked upon the seeking of knowledge, disregarding the sufferings of traveling. Ibn Isaac says, "Makhul said: I wandered this earth for seeking knowledge. In Egypt, I missed no single knowledge. Then I came to Syria and garbled their sciences." Saeed bin al-Museyab said, "I was traveling for several days and nights for the sake of studying a single hadith." It is also related that an-Nisai listened to the hadiths in Khorasan, Iraq, Hijaz, Egypt, Syria, and the Arabian Peninsula.

As Abut-Teyib at-Tabari intended to emigrate for learning from Mohammed bin Ayub ar-Radi, his wife prevented him. When he knew of ar-Radi's decease, he moaned, tore his clothes, smeared in dust, and shouted, "I have been informed of the death of the man that you had prevented me from joining him." Hence, his wife consoled him and permitted to emigrate for learning.

Abdullah bin al-Mubarak said, "I examined the scholars and checked the Syrian, Iraqi, Persian, and Hijazi people, but I could not find literature but with three men; Ibn Awn whose impulse is literature, and Abdul-Aziz bin Dawud, whose profession is literature, and Wahab al-Maliki who

was born with the literature.”

Muslims in the golden age were competing with each other on learning and recording the hadiths. They used to welcome and receive the scholars warmly for listening and coming by their information. When Imam as-Sadiq arrived in Kufa, people crowded around him to ask for fatwas and religious rulings.

Mohammed bin Maruf al-Hilali reported, “I traveled to Hira for meeting Jafar bin Mohammed –as-Sadiq–, but I could not reach him for the crowds that encompassed him. On the fourth day, he saw me and asked to approximate him. Hence, people left. I followed when he went to the tomb of Imam Ali. I heard his words while I was accompanying him.”

Historians relate that people of Baghdad welcomed Abu Bakr Jafar bin Mohammed, the famous scholar, before he reached the land. He promised he would deliver a lecture in a certain place. Thirty thousand individuals attended the lecture and 316 were dictating.

Ali bin Mohammed al-Basri related: As we attended the session of Abu Isaac Ibrahim bin Ali for receiving the knowledge of hadith, he was sitting on his house and people were filling the street to excess. I intended to take a good place; hence, I went there in the dawn, but I found some people had preceded me. There must have been more than thirty thousand persons who attended these lectures.”

Abdullah bin al-Mubarak was asked what he should do if he realizes he would die a few hours later. He said, “I will take initiative to learning.” This highly considerable spirit is one of the Islamic inspirations and illumination. They prove the fact that Muslims were greatly concerned with learning. Circumstances that helped in the emigration for learning were the extension of the Islamic State and the unity of the formal language, which was the Arabic, in addition to the .nonexistence of foreign languages in studies or courses

Specialization

Muslims of the first ages competed with each other on specialization in the conceptual and reported sciences. Many of them came into sight. Husham bin al-Hakam, Husham bin Salem, Muminuttag, Mohammed bin Abdullah at-Teyar, and Qeis bin al-Masir; those master scholars majored in philosophy and theology.

Those magnificent masters were the choice of the graduates of the University of Imam as-Sadiq. Zurara bin Ayun, Mohammed bin Muslim, Jamil bin Derraj, Yazid bin Muawiya, Isaac bin Ammar, Ubeidullah al-Halabi, Abu Basir, Eban bin Teghlib, al-Fadl bin Yesar, Abu Hanifa, Malik bin Anas, Mohammed bin al-Hassan as-Sheibani, Sufian bin Uyeina, Yahia bin Saeed, and Sufian at-Thawri; all those majored in the field of jurisprudence.

Al-Mufeddal bin Ammar specialized in the wisdom of existence and the secrets of creation.

Jabir bin Hayan al-Kufi specialized in chemistry. It is to mention that this man was the most famous chemist in the Arab world, as Vandyke affirmed. He invented many fascinating discoveries that are mentioned in the books involved, like the non-incendiary papers and those shining at night under the supervision of his great master, Imam as-Sadiq (a). Abdurrahman Badawi says, "Searchers of the Islamic history can never observe a personality stranger than

Jabir bin Hayan.

He was so ambiguous and encompassed with secrets to the degree that he was about to be a legend. He was also a high thinker that bewilderment will be the feature of everybody who notices his deep scientific and philosophic vital viewpoints. He also enjoyed a general spirit that is covered by the essence of illumination and human trend tending to unveil all of the secrets.

Scientific, theological, and civilizing researches can never contain this personality in any means. On the contrary, such efforts are being remoter whenever they delve into the personality whose amount increases whenever the sides are stroked. Today, we are the furthest from realizing this personality and cognizing the main lines and the guiding currencies."

.Precisely, Islam preceded modern faculties in founding the specialization of scientific studies

Freedom of Study:

Students of religious, as well as other, fields –in Islam– enjoy perfect freedom in selecting the materials they desire to study. No regulation might define a certain age of teaching. Likewise, no provision might restrict the propriety of pursuing certain sciences. The students' desires, which were offered to God, were the only motive beyond studying.

The students of the Religious University of Najaf, as well as others, hold perfect freedom of discussing the teachers. This characteristic proves the students' superiority and perception

Recording and Compilation:

It is quite sure that Islam, since its first stages, adopted the invitation to record and convey the sciences since recording and conveyance influence greatly the development of the scientific and cultural life. The Prophet (s) said, "Record the knowledge." Some companions asked him the method of recording. "Write it down," tutored the Prophet.

Narrators also related that a man complained before the Prophet of his ill retaining. "Seek the help of your right hand," said the Prophet who referred to writing.

Imam as-Sadiq (a) also urged oftentimes his students on recording the lessons and lectures that covered mostly all of the arts and sciences. Abu Basir narrated:

Imam as-Sadiq (a) said to me, "What prevents you from writing down? You will not memorize before you write. A group of people of Basra have just left me after they had recorded the answers of their questions." He also said, "You should write down. You will not memorize before you write." The Imam's students responded to the illuminative instruction that carries the spread of knowledge to people. Thus, they competed with each other on obtaining

knowledge. Eban bin Teghlib, for instance, compiled the following books:

Maanil Qur'an (Meanings of the Quran)

Al-Qira'at (The recitals)

Al-Fedhail (The virtues)

Al-Usul fir-Riwaya (Principals of narration)

Gharibul-Qur'an (The allegorical of the Quran)

Mohammed bin Ali al-Kufi –known as Muminuttaq- compiled the following:

Al-Imama (The imamate)

Al-Marifa (The knowing)

Ithbatul-Wasiya (Proof of the will)

Ar-Reddu Elel-Mutezila Fi Imametil-Mafdul (Refutation the Mutazilites in the matter of the preceded leader.)

Amru Talha, az-Zubeir and Aisha (Affairs of Talha, az-Zubeir and Aisha)

If'al Wela Taf'al (Do and do not)

Al-Munazara ma'a Abu Hanifa (Disputation with Abu Hanifa)

Al-Mufeddal bin Omar compiled at-Tawhid (Monotheism), which is one of the most remarkable Islamic writings discussing the topics of creating and composing the human beings along with the secrets of creation. The book also provides many medical searches.

Husham bin al-Hakam -one of the honorable students of Imam as-Sadiq- compiled seventeen books regarding various sciences and arts.

Jabir bin Hayan compiled a thousand-page book of chemistry including the five hundred theses of the Imam. Those theses were the most fertile sources of chemistry. Muslim and Oriental scholars, as well as scientists, praised Jabir since he equipped the Islamic society with the most abundant scientific wealth he had received from his master, the Imam and the pioneer of the Islamic conceptual and scientific movement. In addition, there is a great deal of other students who compiled volumes in various sciences and arts, such as Zurara bin Ayun, Abu Basir, Ismail bin abi Khalid, and others. Agha Buzurg, the late grand master of Islam, exposed two hundred volumes compiled by the Imam's students.

Scientists were encompassing Imam Musa bin Jafar. They used to carry clays and writing

instruments so that they would record any single letter that the Imam would utter. Hence, the Islamic scientific movement was widely spreading in the Islamic districts, and the scholars transferred the Islamic heritage to the next generations

Fading of Teaching

The illumination of teaching was extinguished when Hulagu, the tyrant, seized Baghdad the capital of the Islamic caliphate in 765. The Mongolians caused the ever most terrible sufferings to the Islamic people.

When the Western powers rent asunder the Islamic homeland into small states, the scientific and conceptual life began to dwindle gradually until it disappeared. The intellectual indolence and the mental slump subdued the Islamic provinces totally. The West then went on implementing their horrible policy of castrating the mental prosperity and intellectual outburst. This policy also aimed at killing the cognizance and publicizing humiliation and ignorance. An Arab educationist says, "In the early twentieth century, schools were moveless. They included a few students who were unaware of their surroundings or interiors. They were of one composing, cultural, and unproductive matrix.

This was the outcome of the outer control of knowledge. Hence, it is not strange for us to earn such a humble collapse that threatens the aspects of our life wholly. The controller of our education was a foreign element that aimed at producing humble and unprolific generations, who should never contribute in opinions and be unable to overcome the life difficulties. Hence, teaching was far away from discussing and exposing such difficulties."

Nowadays, the conceptual renaissance began to flow all over the Islamic homeland, and Muslims began to remove away the dust of ignorance and retardation to join the developed countries that held fast on the caravans of life and light.

The current governments are required to utilize this phenomenon and provide, first of all, the necessary experts of teaching in schools and faculties, and create moralities -in the spirits of the youth- in addition to self-reliance, systemization, caring for the home affairs, and sacrificing for the protection and independence of their homeland.

The governments are also advised of arousing the hatred of the imperialists and Zionists in the minds of the youth by proving and referring to the menacing dangers of those powers that have been plotting the Islamic and Arab homeland. This is surely one of the most significant social liabilities that the governments of the Islamic countries should concern.

The Islamic society has had to encounter various sorts of calamities and dangers from the imperialists and their agents. The imperialists have created the causes of discrepancies and enmity besides the dispersion of the spirits of frenzy, egotism, and negativity. They have

spared no efforts for screening the heritage of the Muslims' great religion for depriving them of the constituents of dignity and elevation.

From that cause, the new generations should be brought up on antagonizing and abhorring the colonialists by means of dispensing with their educational systems that impede our march of progress, prosperity, and national investment of our riches. It is also obligatory to show the great powers of Islam in the fields of education, policy, and sociology as well as the whole fields and affairs of life. Those powers should be within the teaching methods since they are the best way of achieving the Muslims' renaissance and development