Educational Theory: A Qur'anic Outlook

'ABDUL-RAḤMĀN ṢĀLIḤ 'ABDULLĀH

Umm Al-Qurā University

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EDUCATIONAL THEORY
A QUR'ANIC OUTLOOK

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Foreword

For the last several centuries dominance of the West has influenced Muslims in several ways. While Muslims have benefited from Western technological advancements, certain un-Islamic concepts have penetrated into Muslim societies. Muslims drifted away from their original path. They kept on borrowing ideas and concepts from abroad believing as if they evolved from their own heritage being totally unaware of the basic and subtle contradictions with Islamic teachings. They lost the leadership and became a sort of blind followers. Consequently, several Muslims developed confused and mixed thinking. Recent past, however, has experienced several movements among Muslims to regain their originality. Muslims are attempting to come back to their platform and are striving to follow a complete and total Islamic life.

Islam as against the conception of religion in Western societies, is not a narrow, private matter for individuals, touching only the periphery of their lives. Rather, Islam is something which is simultaneously private and public, a balanced whole, which permeates the whole fabric of society. Islam aims at comprehending life in its totality. There is no sphere of human activity to which Islam does not lay any claim.

Unity, wholeness and integratedness are the basic characteristics of Islam. Islam aims at gaining unity at all levels. It rejects dualities. Society is one and is governed by all-inclusive mutually reinforcing rules. There is no separation between secular and religious domains. All are one. Likewise, human personality is considered as an integrated whole with all its dimensions receiving due attention. Islam aims at developing a just society and an individual who would function as Vicegerent *(Khalīfa)* of Allāh on this earth. If a society and an individual are to be produced in Islamic. image, we can not afford to implement a carbon copy of education systems imported from abroad. The whole education system with all its requirements must concentrate on the central purpose of Muslim education. In order to achieve this goal we need to search our own original sources and develop a theory of education which is simultaneously indigenous and practical.

In this book Dr. 'Abdul-Raḥmān has attempted to present a theory of education based on original Islamic sources. He has dealt with topics like, nature of human nature, nature of knowledge, the role of intellect ('Aql) in acquiring knowledge, qualities of a good teacher, and guiding factor for content organization and methods of teaching. He urges Muslims to search for complete truth in their own sources rather than to rely on the inadequate Western conceptions about knowledge and theory of education. As an example Dr. 'Abdul-Raḥmān has negated the false assumption of duality of knowledge i.e. man produced knowledge and revealed knowledge. His thesis is that by separating the man-made knowledge from revealed knowledge not only an individual is deprived from attaining the truth, he is misled as well. Dr. 'Abdul Raḥmān's book is stimulating and poses challenges for all Muslims in general and educators in particular to critically analyze the ways education is perceived and imparted to Muslim youth. We pray to Allāh that He may accept his work and help Muslims mould their educational systems according to Islamic principles.

The Center for Research in Education & Psychology of the Umm Al-Qurā University is indeed privileged to publish this work. As a continuing project plan, it will certainly welcome future studies aimed at the Islamization of education. This book is produced in English so that non-Arabic speaking Muslims and non-Muslims may benefit from it.

The Center appreciates the keen interest taken and the strong encouragement extended by Dr. Rāshid al-Rajeh, al-Sharīf, Acting Rector of the Umm Al-Qurā University in approving the publication of this book. Dr. Maḥmūd Asadallah, Dean College of Education, also deserves special gratitude for facilitating the publication of this book. May Allāh accept their efforts and bless them with the best of rewards.

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In the end, I pray to Allāh Almighty to accept it as a modest endeavour towards serving the cause of Islam and in meeting some of the challenges stemming from the anti-Islamic quarters.

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PREFACE

Every society aspires to bring up its members in accordance with its ideals. Because such ideals differ from one society to another, the educational theories differ accordingly. The fact that there exists a strong relationship between the ideals of any society and its educational principles and practices suggests that educational concepts cannot be borrowed in the same way that consumer goods are. The adoption of foreign educational concepts usually leads to changes in the ideals of the society which adopts them.

Islam is a way of life and not mere rituals. The Qur'ān, which is considered by the Muslims as Allāh's eternal Word, lays the foundations of the Islamic way of life. Hence any genuine discussion of Islamic education requires sound understanding of its principles. It should be pointed out at this stage that although the Qur'anic principles have influenced the practices of Muslim educators during the past centuries, these practices should not necessarily be equated with the Qur'anic principles, and that this applies especially perhaps to times of stagnation. This is not to say that the study of the history of Muslim education is irrelevant or of little use, but the fundamental criteria by which educational theory and practice are evaluated must always remain the Qur'anic principles.

In the present study we are mainly concerned with the formulation of a theory of education based upon the Qur'ān. However, understanding the meanings of the Qur'anic *āyahs* is not a matter of personal intellectual activity. It rather requires acquaintance with the Qur'anic sciences *('Ulūm al-Qur'ān)* and the consultation of books of interpretation *(Tafsīr)*. In this study, we have relied upon some of the standard books of interpretation, these being: Bayḍāwī, Ibn Kathīr, Qurṭubī, Rāzī, Ṭabarī and Zamakhsharī. The description of

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these sources as standard may give rise to some objections on the grounds that even some Muslims do not consider them to be so. Indeed we are not unaware of the fact that the Shiites will not accept these sources as primary or standard, and that they have their own standard books of interpretation. By consulting the primary sources cited above we do not intend to ignore the other sources or deny their existence.

In addition to the books of *Tafsīr*, we have relied also upon several books of *Ḥadīth*, mainly Bukhārī and Muslim. Weak *(ḍa'īf)* and fabricated *(Mawḍū')* *Ḥadīths* do not contribute to our perspective. The lack of authenticity of some *Ḥadīths* which are quoted by some writers is referred to in the body of the thesis on more than one occasion. Many secondary sources both in Arabic and English have been consulted, and these appear in the bibliography as well.

Despite the importance of Islamic education, little research has been done in this area compared with other areas like history and philosophy. Not only this, but research in Islamic education has given greater emphasis to the history of educational institutions and the educational ideas of some Muslim educators. Studies which relate to the theory of education which is based on the Qur'ān will be reviewed in the introductory chapter. The role of philosophy of education in the Islamic theory of education is discussed in Chapter One. The following two chapters deal with the nature of human nature and the acquisition of knowledge through mind *('aql)*. The aims, content and methods of education are explored in Chapters Four, Five and Six respectively. The conclusion draws together the main ideas very briefly. It is hoped that putting together the various components of the Islamic theory of education will shed light on its nature and provide the Islamic educator with a general framework of Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

SURVEY OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

We shall be mainly concerned in this survey with reviewing theses which relate to the present study. Published works were reviewed in two previous theses, and for this reason they will not be considered here. However, a brief review of the two reviews may be useful.

In his M.A. thesis, Mājid al-Kīlānī makes a short survey of the previous literature.[1] He classifies the related literature into two main categories: historical studies and studies which deal with the foundations of Islamic education. Few studies belonging to either category are mentioned. As for the second category which concerns us, he holds the view that these are no more than scattered readings in the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* written by scholars who have specialized in religious sciences. The study of M. Quṭb is believed to have its shortcomings on the grounds that Quṭb is not well acquainted with educational thought. Hence, his study is said to be limited to certain aspects of educational theory.[2]

Although Kīlānī's main criticism of Quṭb's study may be justified, it lacks supporting evidence. Attention is not drawn to those aspects which are neglected and no attempt is made to evaluate those aspects which are tackled by Quṭb. In addition to this, Kīlānī's survey is not comprehensive. He fails to refer to some works written by educators, for example that of M.F. al-Jamālī.* If acquaintance with other theories of education is essential for the Islamic educator — as Kīlānī suggests implicitly if not explicitly[3] — Jamālī's work is highly relevant since it is written by a professor of education who is well acquainted with Western educational thought.

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* His book "*al-Falsafah al-Tarbawiyyah fī al-Qur'ān*" will be referred to in the following chapter.

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Alī K. Modawi devotes two chapters of his Ph.D. thesis to a survey of previous literature. His survey is limited to published works and articles. In Chapter Two, Modawi discusses the educational views of three scholars: Ibn Sīnā, Ghazālī and Ibn Khaldūn.[4] In the following chapter, he makes a survey of modern writings on the subject. The chapter is divided into two main parts. In the first part, Modawi discusses the literature on the practice of what he calls traditional Islamic education. Several subdivisions are made, these being: description of the existing practice, liberalization, modernization and integration. The second part deals with writings on the philosophy of Islamic education. Here one finds that he also makes subdivisions which are: philosophy, principles, objectives and characteristics.[5]

In discussing the relevant literature to each subdivision, Modawi selects one or more book or article. In discussing liberalization, he refers to Tibawi's book *Islamic Education*. His discussion is limited to Tibawi's treatment of the efforts of Muḥammad 'Abduh to modernize the existing educational institutions. No other work or article is mentioned.[6] In discussing literature on philosophy, he assesses the work of Quṭb and two articles written by El-Garh and Tibawi.[7]

Modawi makes it clear that his survey is not meant to be comprehensive. At the end of Chapter Three he writes:

> In this chapter and the last one a selection of the literature pertaining to the subject was reviewed and discussed.[8]

Since he is involved in selecting some of the literature to be discussed under each issue, one expects to find criteria for such selection, which is not the case. The absence of any clear criteria makes his survey rather confusing. It would be difficult to accept his classification of Quṭb's book as a work on philosophy of education, since in fact its content has nothing to do with philosophy. It might be more appropriate to classify it as a book which deals with principles or characteristics. The present writer feels that several subdivisions of Modawi lack clear demarcation. It is not clear whether there exists a difference between what he calls "liberaliza-

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tion" and "modernization." As a matter of fact, Modawi himself uses the two terms interchangeably on one occasion. In discussing the liberalization movement of Muḥammad 'Abduh, he writes:

> The type of modernization which Abduh called for is... reflected in the two memoranda which he wrote on the subject.[9]

After discussing this liberalization which is referred to in the quotation as modernization, he moves on to the discussion of modernization.[10]

Because Modawi classifies his discussion into several subdivisions, his discussion of the previous literature is restricted to the ideas which relate to the issue under consideration. One finds, for example, that the review of Tibawi's book is limited to the treatment of Muḥammad 'Abduh's movement. The reader does not get a clear picture about the other parts of its content. Nevertheless, Modawi brings out the main ideas which relate to each issue. In addition, he analyzes these ideas and offers constructive evaluation. However, this does not mean that the whole of his evaluation is accepted by the present writer. He mentions, for example, that Tibawi[11] identifies the Islamic theory of education with "the theory behind the practice of Muslim education in the past centuries."[12] This conclusion cannot be reconciled with Tibawi's stated view — in the same article — that the Qur'ān governs the different aspects of education, so that his criticism of the philosophy of education of Ikhwān al-Safā' comes from their deviation from the Qur'anic principles.[13] In fact, Modawi himself quotes Tibawi when he emphasizes the fact that the Qur'ān is the basis of Islamic education.[14]

Before moving on to a review of the theses which relate to our study, it is useful to mention that an international conference on Islamic education was held at Makkah in 1977. The conference was organized by King Abdulaziz University and was attended by 313 prominent scholars who came from more than forty countries. It aimed at defining the principles of Islamic education and suggesting the appropriate means to help in achieving the aim.[15]

The papers which were read at the conference are being published under the general editorial of S.A. Ashraf. So far four books have

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been published in this series and five more are still to come. *Crisis in Muslim Education* is the first book to appear in the series. It was written by S. Husain and S. Ashraf, the general editor, and is meant to be an introduction to the rest of the books. The discussion here covers the different aspects of the problem; extracts from some of the papers are added to the discussion of each aspect. The second book, edited by S.N. Al-Attas discusses the educational aims, while the third book, edited by M.H. Al-Afendi and N.A. Baloch deals with teacher education.

Because the conference dealt with practical as well as theoretical problems of Islamic education, it is to be expected that we will find different views as to what it has achieved. W. Montgomery Watt, who believes that the conference was dominated by what he calls "conservative 'Ulema"[16] seems to reject its approach of finding solutions to secularism, which is considered a fundamental threat to Islamic education. His criticism of its recommendations is expressed in the following comment:

> They take for granted that Islam has nothing to learn in the central matters of human knowledge and wisdom... They have no realization that Christian intellectuals have been struggling with similar problems for a century, and not entirely without success.[17]

One might make the general statement that the participants in the conference held in common a belief in the finality of Islam and the relevance of its principles to the contemporary situations. Yet it should be noted that they have different practical and academic backgrounds. Their specializations include several fields of knowledge like the sciences of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*, education, English, etc. As a result, one finds differences in their treatment of the issues under consideration. When discussing the creation of man, Hadī Sharifi* refers to the view of what he calls Islamic mystics and philosophers.[18] The influence of philosophy is evident in the remark of S. Ashraf, who when discussing revelation in Islam says:

> Revelation was the result of the contact of the

* *Professor of Philosophy and Sociology of Education at the University of Tehran.*

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individual will with the Supreme Universal Will.[19]

It appears from this quotation that revelation is dependent upon the contact between man and Allāh. But in the Qur'ān we read:

> And thou hadst not expected
> That the Book would be
> Sent to thee except as
> A Mercy from thy Lord.[20]

This *āyah* is understood to mean that the Prophet did not know beforehand that revelation would come to him.[21] His will has nothing to do with revelation. In fact, Ashraf made it clear in a letter in reply to the present writer that revelation is independent of man's will. The letter reads:

> ***Wahy*** is a divine gift given only to the Prophet directly by Allāh. It cannot be earned by his own labour... Allāh had chosen some persons and given them this gift.[22]

It would be misleading to conclude from this brief discussion that such an attitude is reflected in the writings of all scholars, or that the views of Ashraf and Sharifi are anti-Islamic. What we are attempting to establish is that differences in the backgrounds of the participants make it difficult to classify them under one category. However, this does not mean that they have nothing in common. In addition to their belief in the finality of Islam, they share the attitude that the Islamic educator may benefit from any human experience which is not in conflict with Islamic concepts.[23]

As far as the theses are concerned, the earliest one which I have been able to trace in the field of Islamic education was submitted to the University of Birmingham in 1937 by A.H. Fahmy.[24] The thesis starts with a historical treatment of the period which extends from the rise of Islam up to the downfall of the Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 A.D. The main topics which are discussed are the aims of education, methods of instruction, the content of education, the education of Muslim women and the status of teachers in Muslim society. It concludes with a discussion of Muslim education in the light of modern educational ideas.

Because the thesis deals with the development of educational ideas since the rise of Islam, it might be expected to be of some relevance to our study. In fact, any historical treatment of Muslim education will be lacking if it does not take into consideration the role of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadith*. This becomes more pertinent when the early days of Islam are being studied, especially in areas which are directly concerned with the principles of the Qur'ān such as the aims of education.

Examination of Fahmy's thesis reveals that the primary sources of interpretation *(Tafsīr)* and *Ḥadīth* do not contribute to his perspective even when discussing the educational aims, which are classified into religious, intellectual and utilitarian.[25] Even when discussing the religious aims Fahmy makes it clear that it is essential to take into account the views of Muslim philosophers.[26] Reliance on philosophical writings instead of books of *Tafsīr* may be the cause of some misconceptions. Discussing the status of knowledge in Islam Fahmy says:

> For, like the Greeks, they pursued knowledge for its own sake, and like them, they were great lovers of poetry and music. Still, it must be admitted that the Muslims did not reach the same standard as the Greeks with regard to aesthetic development and the disinterested pursuit of virtue and knowledge.[27]

Our discussion in Chapter Three will reveal that the Qur'ān provides us with a clear conception. Hence the Greek conception cannot be taken as a model since it gives undue weight to reason from the Islamic point of view.

This should not give the impression that Fahmy's analysis always results in misconceptions. The general attitude is favourable to Muslim education. Fahmy views Muslim education as having constructive elements which should be admired. Giving equal opportunities for all students and holding the teacher in high esteem[28] are only a few examples of the positive attitudes reflected in this thesis. Fahmy concludes the thesis by saying that Muslim

education has made "lasting contributions towards the advancement of knowledge in the field of humanitarian and democratic ideas."[29]

The first Ed.D. thesis which relates to our topic is a comparative study made by Yusef Abdul Lateef, a member of the Qadiani movement. He defines the aims of his study as follows:

1. To make educators as well as others aware of the aims and the meaning of the Qur'ān.
2. To focus some light upon Islamic scholarship.
3. To provide relevant information about Western and Islamic education.[30]

Lateef defines what he means by Western and Islamic education.

The first is used in reference to theories of education developed by American and European educators such as Bruner, Piaget, Skinner and Thorndike. Islamic education is used to refer to education which is basically founded upon the principles of the Qur'ān. Mirza Ghulam Aḥmad, Ibn Khaldūn, Fazlur Raḥman are some of the contributors of his perspective.[31]

Lateef deals with his issues in seven chapters in addition to an introductory chapter in which he defines his aims, terms and methodology. In Chapter Nine Lateef summarizes his views. The historical, philosophical, social and psychological foundations of education are discussed in the second chapter. Human growth is discussed in the following chapter, while Chapter Four is devoted to the discussion of the nature of teaching: its aims and methods. Teacher education and the social system are dealt with in the following two chapters respectively. The nature of the content of the curriculum is discussed in Chapter Seven; here the different subjects of the curriculum such as art, music, science, social studies, mathematics and physical education receive Lateef's attention. Contemporary issues such as educational change and technology in

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* This movement appeared in India about a century ago during the British ocupation. Central to its doctrines is the notion that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, its founder, is a Prophet.

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education form the content of Chapter Eight. Chapter Ten is unique in that it is not related to the body of the thesis. Its content is confined to a composition for orchestra entitled "Renunciation" which is written as a present to the University of Massachusetts.

The whole design of the thesis is copied with slight modifications from a pattern designed by an American Publishing House. Describing his methodology in this study, Lateef says:

> In 1970, the Scott, Foresman Publishing Company was making preparations to publish a teacher's handbook on education. During the process of their preparations they sent a draft copy of the proposed book to the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts to get teachers' reactions. The dissertation uses the Scott, Foresman table of contents slightly modified.[32]

Thus, while discussing his issues, he mentions the Western view and then moves on to the Islamic view. Afterwards he moves to the next issue.. In order to illustrate his methodology let us see how he tackles the issue of grouping which may be considered as typical to his approach.

Lateef first discusses the Western view by saying:

In regard to grouping Eric Hoyle mentions the following.[33]

Then after quoting this educator his discussion of the issue from the Western viewpoint comes to an end. Discussing the issue from the Islamic viewpoint starts with a short statement followed by a quotation attributed to Ibn Sīnā. His statement which precedes the quotation reads as follows:

> Islam teaches that if it is best to put particular students in groups, the aim being to increase either teaching or learning effectiveness, then do it. For example, the Islamic school within the Ahmadiyyah Movement, in Rabwah Pakistan,

> groups blind students together for the purpose of memorizing the Qur'ān.[34]

Here, Lateef oversimplifies the issue and treats it — as is the case with other issues — in a somewhat superficial way.

It would be very easy to divide the content of this thesis into two main divisions: Western education and Islamic education. No serious effort is made to compare the two theories of education since comparison is mainly restricted to the exposition of the two points of view side by side without further analysis. As a matter of fact, the removal of the material which relates to Western education would not seriously affect his main aim.

In his discussion of certain issues, Lateef tends to read far more into his sources about Islamic education than can be justified. His adoption of a Western model may be one of the causes of this defect. While discussing classroom management, he quotes an *āyah* which refers to the moon, the sun and the stars as Allāh's signs. The quotation is followed by this comment:

> The understanding here is that when an Islamic scholar reflects on the amazing order that exists among the heavenly bodies he then realizes that God, the Creator and Manager of this infinite creation, loves order... When the pupil understands this his thinking means the beginning of orderly and well-arranged human actions.[35]

When discussing the role of technology in Islamic education, he refers to a *Ḥadīth* which urges the Muslim to seek knowledge even if it were in China.[36] The reader would find it difficult to jump with Lateef from the signs of Allāh to classroom management, or from urging to seek knowledge to modern technology in education. The forcing of certain meanings on certain texts cannot be justified, especially in the absence of relevant evidence or adequate analysis. The lack of analysis becomes even clearer when it is observed that the objectives of Western education are dealt with through a simple quotation from K.Price.* Educational aims in Islam are discussed in

* *Education and Philosophical Thought*. Boston: The John Hopkins University, 1969.

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eleven lines and the nature of the content of social studies is explained by citing a quotation from the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldūn.

The last point to be mentioned concerning Lateef's thesis is that the sources which relate to Islam in general and to Islamic education in particular are limited. None of the sources which relate to *Tafsīr* and *Ḥadīth* and which contribute to the perspective of our study are consulted. This may be attributed to the fact that Lateef is a member of the Qadiani movement.[37] When he writes about Islamic education, he is in fact expressing the Qadiani views. Referring to the limitations of his study, he says:

> My interpretation also reflects my intellectual and spiritual development as a result of my past and present involvement in Islamic life and education.[38]

Thus the terms "Islamic" must be understood within this context.

The third thesis to be considered in this survey was submitted to the Jordanian University in 1977.[39] In his thesis, Mājid al-Kīlānī traces the development of what he calls the "Islamic theory of education" from the rise of Islam up to the present. He discusses in the first chapter the Qur'anic foundation of this theory. He makes it clear that these principles — which he calls the "Islamic philosophy of education"— must be viewed as general guidelines which leave the door open for differences of opinion.[40] The main topics which he discusses in his first chapter are the nature of man, aims of education and the nature of teaching. He concludes the chapter with a brief discussion of some general principles which are considered an adequate guide to Islamic education. Examples of these principles are the harmony between *īmān* (belief) and science, continuity of learning and continuous contact of the student with the tutor.

In the following six chapters, Kīlānī traces the development of the educational theory by examining the educational ideas of philosophers, theologians, jurists *(fuqahā')* and scholars of *Ḥadīth*. Shāfi'ī, Fārābī, Ibn Saḥnun, Ghazali, Ibn Khaldūn and Mawdūdī are some of the many scholars with whom the study is concerned. In his last

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chapter, **Kīlānī** deals with the prospects of Islamic education for modern times. He emphasizes that the foundations of Islamic education are capable of meeting the needs of Muslim communities. Several factors which are thought to be relevant to the development of a progressive humanitarian conception of Islamic theory of education are discussed briefly. Being open-minded, getting acquainted with other ideologies and designing the curriculum in accordance with the principles of Islam are some of the factors which he discusses.[11]

With the exception of the first and the last chapter, the study is mainly historical. The foundations of the educational theory as derived from the Qur'ān and the *Hadīth* occupy a small part of the thesis. Because the historical and the ideal in Islam do not necessarily coincide, the present writer considers the title of the thesis inaccurate. The major part of the thesis deals with the educational ideas of the Muslims in past centuries. Had the phrase *'Ind al-Muslimīn* been used in the title rather than *al-Islāmiyyah*, it would have been a more accurate reflection of the content. In addition, we will argue in Chapter One that the main foundations of the Islamic theory of education are not liable to change, and hence the description of this theory as developing may be misleading.

Kīlānī's discussion in the first chapter which relates to our study is based on primary as well as secondary sources. He consults Muslim and Bukhārī, but he makes little use of sources on *Tafsīr*. Ibn Kathīr and Rāzī are referred to on a few occasions. His discussion of the nature of man as well as educational and methods within one chapter gives him little chance to undertake a deep analysis of the issues under consideration. Besides this, he makes no effort to clarify the relationship between philosophy of education and theory of education. He does not even give any justification for equating the principles of the Qur'ān with philosophy of education.

However, Kīlānī's treatment of Muslim education since the rise of Islam is comprehensive since he does not limit himself to a dicussion of educators in the restricted sense. He provides the reader with a rich bibliography, especially in Arabic. For these reasons, his work is useful, especially to researchers in the field of the history of Muslim education.

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A.K. Modawi's Ph.D. thesis[42] is more related to the present study. It is mainly devoted to the discussion of the Islamic theory of education. The thesis comprises eight chapters including the concluding chapter where results, conclusions and recommendations are stated. Modawi defines and formulates the problem in Chapter One. The main aim of his study is stated as being to establish a new theory of Islamic education and to compare it with Western-oriented theories of education which are dominant in the Muslim world.[43] Modawi makes it clear that he intends to build his theory on a current interpretation of the Qur'anic principles.[44] The concepts will be deduced from the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*. In addition to this, he sent a questionnaire to some Muslim scholars and held informal meetings with friends. These comprise his approach to achieving his aim. The questionnaire and the informal meetings are intended to be used as sources of insight.[45]

In Chapter Four, Modawi discusses several issues. He starts by discussing the nature of Islam and the attributes of the Muslim individual. He then moves to the treatment of the Muslim society which he describes as ideal. This ideal society which was formed by the Prophet was short lived The society which departed from the ideal still exists. The educational implications of both societies are briefly stated.[46]

Modawi gives in the following chapter a detailed analysis of the nature of human knowledge. His main argument is that scientific knowledge which depends upon the senses and the intellect fails to explain all human experience. The spiritual universe which exists inside man as well as around him cannot be explored by intellect alone.[47] Thus intuitive knowledge which is generated by the soul should be integrated with intellectual knowledge. Such an integration gives man's abilities infinite limits.[48] In order to support his view some Qur'anic *āyahs* are quoted. A discussion in some detail of modern Western writings which call for the extension of the boundaries of scientific research is offered.[49] Here his discussion concentrates on what he calls non-ordinary reality or paranormal phenomena such as telepathy.

In the following two chapters, i.e. six and seven, he outlines the philosophy of Islamic education and attempts to determine the

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nature of the Islamic educational theory. Philosophy of education and theory of education cannot be equated with each other since the latter derives some of its elements from other cultures.[50] Islamic philosophy of education is viewed as having strong links with Islamic philosophy of life. Modawi finds it similar to the Absolute Idealism which developed in the United States in several aspects.[51] Two functions of Islamic philosophy of education are recognized: speculative and analytic. Thus, besides its use in analyzing the educational concepts, it deals with the nature of knowledge and ethics. Here again, he emphasizes the intuitive aspect of knowledge.[52]

Modawi's discussion of the nature of the Islamic educational theory includes clarifications of the assumptions which are involved and the criteria which characterize it. The different main elements of the theory i.e. aims, methods and content are discussed in brief.[53] Some general implications for practice are derived from his theoretical analysis.[54]

Modawi considers his effort to establish a new Islamic theory of education as unprecedented. He writes:

> There are no writings, as far as the writer can discover, on the theory of Islamic education which are sufficiently exacting and embracing to satisfy the criteria of a theory derived and understood in a modern way.[55]

It seems from this that he was unaware of Lateef's thesis. However, his distinction between his theory and the practices of a specific Muslim society and his emphasis on the Qur'ān as the main source is in agreement with the approach of the present work.

His understanding of Islam as a way of life and not as mere rituals makes him call for the attainment of comprehensive aims which take care of the spirit, the body and the mind of man.[56] His understanding of the universality of Islam is reflected in the following statement:

> Islam should be appreciated not as the personal and private religion of a nation of Arabs, but as

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> a complete ideology which governs the life of a universal society.[57]

Because Modawi takes the Qur'ān as his starting point, he acknowledges the limitation of man's mind. He also rejects the present educational theories which prevail in the Muslim countries on the grounds that they are "founded by Western colonizers and upheld by their 'native products'."[58]

However, Modawi's approach to his issues made his results less fruitful than might be expected. Modawi makes it clear that he intends to derive his theory from a modern interpretation of the Qur'ān. He says:

> Islamic education as it relates to our own day cannot mean the form of traditional subjects in which the Qur'anic message was interpreted in medieval times; it can only mean the interpretation of the Qur'anic message in a way that meets with present needs.[59]

Because of his emphasis on modern interpretation, on this occasion and elsewhere, one expects a clear statement of the guidelines which should be followed while undertaking the new interpretation or at least a reference to accepted new books of interpretation. He neither consults the books of *Tafsīr* which were written in the medieval period nor those written in the twentieth century. His use of the *Ḥadīth* is no better, in spite of the fact that he makes it clear that he intends to consult these sources.[60] The following interpretation of an *āyah*[61] which refers to the hearts of human beings which go blind may shed light on his approach. He says:

> The meaning of this Koranic verse is that the human hearts are fitted with natural ability and circumscribe the immaterial spiritual universe, but human beings keep them idle, dull and blind them.[62]

It must be noted that he does not refer to the source of this interpretation. This lack of reference to primary sources is only too evident to the reader of the various chapters of the thesis. The

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primary sources of Islamic history are not consulted for the discussion of the formation of the Islamic society which emerged with the spread of Islam. The nature of Islamic religion is derived from two secondary sources written by Mawdūdī and Sayyid Quṭb.[63]

Although Modawi's conception of Islam as a way of life is acknowledged, yet some of his concepts are objectionable. He assumes that every being — including physical objects — has a spiritual element.[64] Our discussion of the *khalīfah* in Chapter Two does not agree with this conception. Besides, Modawi's reliance on intuition and intellect to justify moral values is less than convincing.[65] Least convincing of all is his reliance on literature which belongs to disputed areas in order to back his call for intuitive knowledge.

Modawi mentions on one occasion that differences between the three main religions of the world are man-made and hence may be viewed as differences of "labels, names or ceremonials."[66] He asserts that some religious men of the three religions participated in creating such differences. However, he expresses a rather different attitude when he rejects the implications of a Christian educator on the grounds that Christianity differentiates between the things of God and those of Caesar.[67] There is no reason for him to do so if he really accepts the first view.

To conclude: Modawi promises to establish a new educational theory derived from the Qur'ān. But it is to be noted that he fails to consult the primary sources in *Tafsīr* and *Ḥadīth*. If this is considered as essential for his enterprise, one may say that his main aim remains an unfulfilled promise.

The last thesis which relates to our study is that of Abū al-'Aynayn which was submitted as an M.A. thesis to Ṭanṭā University in 1978.[68] As the title indicates, Abū al-'Aynayn holds the view that the Qur'anic philosophy of life *(falsāfat al-Ḥayāh)* is discussed in Chapter Two[69] where the following issues are discussed: the Creator, the universe including the unseen creatures, man, Muslim society, international society and the hereafter. Because Abū al-'Aynayn shows in Chapter One the strong relationship between

philosophy and education, his discussion in Chapter Three is devoted to the philosophy of education in the Qur'ān. He starts by referring to the main characteristics of Islamic education.[70] He then discusses educational aims. This is followed by a discussion of the fields of Islamic education, which are given as: physical education, mental education, ideological education, moral education, emotional education *(tarbiyāh wūjdāniyyah)*, aesthetic education and social education. He does not show the relationship between aims and fields of education. On the contrary, his discussion suggests that they are not different from each other. The chapter is concluded with a survey of educational methods.

In the following two chapters, Abū al-'Aynayn is concerned with comparative studies. In Chapter Four,[71] he is preoccupied with comparing the Qur'anic philosophy of education with some of the contemporary schools of philosophy of education; these schools are: Existentialism, Realism, Pragmatism, Idealism and Socialism. His method lies in summarizing the main ideas of these schools of thought, referring to their educational implications and comparing these views with the Qur'anic views. He concludes from this study that the Qur'anic philosophy of education is superior to all these philosophies.[72]

He then moves to the following chapter to compare the Qur'anic philosophy of education with the philosophy of education which exists in the Muslim countries. His comparative study is preceded by a brief historical survey of Muslim society from the rise of Islam up to the present time.[73] The factors which handicap the progress of education are mentioned; some of these factors are: orientalism, the missionary activities of the Christians and the sending of Muslim students to pursue their studies in the West. He concludes by saying that philosophy of education in the Muslim countries is lagging behind because it is not derived from the Qur'ān.[74] Abū al-'Aynayn summarizes his views and states his recommendation in Chapter Six.[75]

In his study, Abū al-'Aynayn makes it clear that the Qur'ān lays down the foundations of Islamic education which are called "philosophy of education". These principles are believed to be

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comprehensive;[76] they are not restricted to certain aspects of life. His dissatisfaction with the existing systems of education in Muslim countries is not without its justifications since they are mainly borrowed from outside.

However, several points may be made. Abū al-'Aynayn strives to prove that there exists in the Qur'ān a philosophy of life without critical examination of the nature of philosophy. Our discussion in the following chapter will be devoted to showing that Abū al-'Aynayn's view is open to serious question. What concerns us here is that he quotes some modern Arab philosophers and takes their views for granted. He says that any activity which is not guided by philosophy may be misleading[77] although he does not show why this is so. He even quotes philosophers and accepts views of theirs which contradict the Islamic outlook. On one occasion he quotes Zakariyyā Ibrahīm's statement that "man is an animal who feels that his existence is a puzzle which challenges him."[78] Thus while he accepts here the description of man as an animal, he criticizes elsewhere Western philosophies of education because these are mainly concerned with educating the human animal *(al-insān al-ḥayawān)*.[79] If he rejects these philosophies for this reason, there is no justification for him accepting the view of the Egyptian philosopher who seems to deny the uniqueness of man. On another occasion, he calls upon the Muslim countries to go back to the Qur'ān because that will help to form their "national personality'[80] He even adopts Jāmīl Ṣaliba's view which reflects national attitude.[81] Here again, a concept alien to Islam is accepted without further discussion. As a matter of fact, Abū al-'Aynayn hardly evaluates the many quotations which appear in his thesis. He incorporates into his thesis the views of other writers without making the effort to show how these fit into the Islamic perspective. Evaluation of such views is essential especially when they seem to contradict the Qur'anic principles.

Education is defined as "the process designed by society to bring up the new generations in such a way that their capabilities are utilized to the utmost degree."[82] From the definition it appears that education does not begin before birth. But on another occasion, he mentions that this is the case.[83] To say that the embryo grows is not the same thing as saying that it can be educated. Here, Abū

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al-'Aynayn confuses education which is deliberate and growth which is not necessarily so. In Chapter One, he discusses the relationship between the philosophy of education and philosophy, and then compares the philosophy of education and the philosophy of society. The reader is left to speculate also on the relationship between philosophy and the philosophy of society. Even the conception of the "philosophy of education" is not clear. In his discussion of the functions of the philosophy of education, Abū al-'Aynayn mentions that it aims at studying critically educational theories. He then mentions how philosophy of education directs these theories.[84] If this is the case, then philosophy of education and theory of education are not the same. However, after a few lines he gives another definition of the philosophy of education which reads as follows:

> Philosophy of education is the theory of education which comes from the theories, thought and philosophy which appear in a certain civilization.[85]

What concerns us here is that he equates the philosophy of education with the theory of education, thus contradicting his previous view. This may be attributed to the fact that he adopts the views of two different writers on the two occasions.

Abū al-'Aynayn provides the reader with a rich bibliography, mainly in Arabic. He is careful to refer to his sources in the footnotes. The books of interpretation which he consults on a few occasions are Ibn Kathīr, Zamakhsharī and Sayyid Quṭb. The books of *Ḥadīth* do not contribute to his perspective. Although Abū al-'Aynayn does not review previous studies, he is not unaware of Modawi's thesis. However, he makes very little use of it since he even fails to make the distinction between "theory of education" and "philosophy of education" which is a major feature of Modawi's thesis. The Western sources on philosophy which must be of prime importance in any comparative study which involves Western philosophy are consulted on a very limited scale He mainly relies upon secondary works written in Arabic.

In conclusion we may make the following observations. Of the studies discussed above, two are mainly historical, although they

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touch upon the issue to be discussed to some extent, especially in the case of Kīlānī's study, Two are concerned with comparative studies, but in varying degrees. Lateef compares Western education with his view of Islamic education, while Abū al-'Aynayn devotes two chapters to comparative studies.

Our study is concerned with exploring the nature of the educational theory to be found in the Qur'ān as it is interpreted in the standard books of interpretation *(Tafsīr)*. It is not intended to be either a historical or a comparative study, and its aim is thus quite different from the works cited above. This does not mean that we have not consulted works of this kind, or made use of them when necessary, and many such works have been referred to in the text and included in the bibliography.

The only work which is perhaps comparable with the present thesis is that of Modawi. The main difference here is that Modawi tends to offer a new interpretation, while we have relied upon the standard sources. But Modawi does not make it clear whether this "new interpretation" is in terms of modern works of *Tafsīr*, or whether he is offering a new interpretation. For this reason it is felt that his methodology is very open to question, and it is the contention of the present writer that any attempt to provide a Qur'anic framework for an Islamic theory of education can only be made on the basis of a rigorous examination of the primary sources.

Four of the above studies take it for granted that philosophy of education is an appropriate concept in the Islamic theory of education, and the following chapter will attempt to assess the validity of this assumption.

We would like at this point to make one final comment. It will be obvious from our review of other works on the subject and from works quoted in the body of the thesis that to be taken as in any other field of educational studies, approaches to Islamic education vary from one writer to another. This is perhaps as it should be, and the present writer makes no claim to an exclusive monopoly of

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certainty in this matter. It is however hoped that this work will make a contribution to the construction of a framework of Islamic education for those who are determined to achieve an education system based upon the fundamentals of Islam.

Notes

1. *Tatawwur Mafhūm al-Naẓariyyah al-Tarbawiyyah al-Islamiyyah*, pp. 24-26.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
3. Kīkanī, *loc. cit.*
4. *A Theoretical Basis for Islamic Education*, pp. 19-34.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-106.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-49
7. El-Garh, "The Philosophical Basis of Islamic Education in Africa" in *West African Journal of Education, February*, 1971.
   Tibawi "Philosophy of Muslim Education" in *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 4, 1957.
8. Modawi, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-53.
11. He refers to Tibawi's article "Philosophy of Muslim Education" in *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 4, pp. 78-89.
12. Modawi, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
13. Tibawi, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.
14. Modawi, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
15. See the forward of A.S. Jamjūm in Al-Attas (editor), *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education*, p.v. See also, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 1/4/1977, "Muslim Education", p. 9.
16. "The Contemporary Political Relevance of the Religion of Islam" in *Scottich Journal of Religious Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 94.
17. *Loc. cit.*
18. "The Islamic as Opposed to Modern Philosophy of Education" in Al-Attas, *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education*, p. 84.
19. Ḥusain and Ashraf, *Crisis in Muslim Education*, p. 10.
20. *Sūrah* 28086.
21. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 3, p. 403. Qurṭubī, vol. 13, p. 321.
22. Letter dated 20/4/1981.
23. Husain and Ashraf, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
24. *The Educational Ideas of the Muslims in the Middle Ages.*
25. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 187-90.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 210.
30. *An Over-View of Western and Islamic Education*, pp. v, 1.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

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32. *Ibid.*, p. vi. This paragraph appears also on page 2 where the year 1910 and not 1970 is mentioned.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
34. *Ibid*, p. 81.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 213.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
39. Kīlānī, *Taṭawwūr al-Naẓariyyah al-Tarbawiyyah al-Islāmiyyah*
40. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 254-62.
42. *A Theoretical Basis for Islamic Education.*
43. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
44. *Loc. cit.*
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 128, 152.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 190-199.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 228.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 230-33.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 252-55.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 291-94.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 296-98.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
56. *Ibid.*, pp. 240-41.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 313.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 290.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
61. He does not refer to the location of *ayāh* which is *Surāh* 22:46.
62. *Ibid.*, footnote (2), p. 202.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-114.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 225.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 251.
68. *Falsafat al-Tarbiyah al-Islāmiyyah fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm.*
69. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-141.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 147-49.
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 257-304.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 304.
73. *Ibid.*, pp. 308-14.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 341.
75. *Ibid.*, pp. 349-372.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
79. *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 304.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 345.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

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82. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
83. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
84. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 64

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CHAPTER I

ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

From an Islamic viewpoint, the Qur'ān is the Word of Allāh which was revealed to the Prophet through the angel Gabriel. The Qur'ān, which is described in some of its *āyahs* (verses) as glorious *(majīd)* and clear *(mubīn)*, is given several appellations such as: Truth, Guidance and the **Book. But** the most frequent appellations are the Book and the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān is considered by Muslims as containing all that is required in order to lead a happy life in this world as well as in the Hereafter. In (6:38) we read:

> Nothing have We omitted
> From the Book.

If nothing is omitted, then the Qur'ān has an explanation for everything, and this is in fact mentioned explicitly in (16:89) which reads as follows:

> And We have sent down
> To thee the Book explaining
> All things, a Guide, a Mercy
> And Glad Tidings to Muslims.

Some Muslim scholars understood the phrase "all things" to include the different branches of knowledge. Their justification for this is that both knowledge acquired through analogy *(qiyās)* and the *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet are part of the *Sharī'ah.*[1] Hence, judgements reached through these sources are in fact proved by the Qur'ān. However such an interpretation cannot be accepted. Any scholar in Islamic studies would realize that the *fuqahā'* (jurists) who used *qiyās* did not always reach the very same view regarding a specific issue. Such views cannot be regarded as part of the Qur'ān. But what most

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interpreters understood from the phrase "all things" is that the Qur'ān contains the principles which are capable of directing human behaviour. They maintain that the Qur'ān provides man with useful knowledge *('ilm nāfi')*[2] which regulates his relationship with Allāh, his fellows and his environment. To put this in other words, the Qur'ān provides the Muslim with a definite outlook towards himself as an individual and as a member of his society.

The existence of a Qur'anic outlook towards this life as well as the Hereafter cannot be denied. Yet some might cast doubt on the educative aspect of the Qur'ān. They might hesitate to make a connection between the Qur'ān and education on the grounds that one fails to find in it even the most usual educational terms. In reply to such criticism several points may be made. The first point is that the derivation of the term *"tarbiyah"* (education) occurs on several occasions. As a matter of fact the terms *Rabb* (God) and *"tarbiyah"* are considered by Arab lexicographers to be derived from the same root.[3] Mawdūdī mentions that "to educate and take care of" is one of the several meanings implicit in the term *Rabb*.[4] Qurṭubī says that the *rabb* is a description given to anyone who performs a thing in a complete manner.[5] Rāzī makes a comparison between Allāh the Educator and the human educator. He mentions that unlike the human educator, Allāh the Educator knows well the needs of those who are being educated because He is their Creator. In addition to that His care is not limited to a certain group. He is concerned with educating all creatures; that is why He is described as *"Rabb al-'Alamin."*[6] Since we are concerned with the education of human beings, it is relevant to mention that Allāh is believed to have taught the first man on this earth the names of all things.* The derivatives of *'ilm* (knowledge) are numerous and this suggests that the Qur'ān does not lack the terms or the concepts which refer to education. As a matter of fact the most well-known names given to the revealed message are the Qur'ān and the *Kitāb* (Book). The former is derived fom *qara'a*[7] (read) while the latter is derived from *kataba* (wrote). Hence both of these names are linked to educational concepts.

The second point is that the Prophet himself identified his message with that of an educator *(mu'allim)*. He was concerned with

* This issue will be explored in Chapter three.

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teaching people the principles of the new religion and asking those who had already received the message to teach it to newcomers. Bukhārī narrates that the Prophet said:

> The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allāh has sent me is like abundant rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance.... This is the example of the person who comprehends Allāh's religion and learns and then teaches others.[8]

Since reading several *āyahs* at daily prayers is obligatory on every Muslim, it becomes clear that embracing Islam requires the acquisition of some knowledge. Semaan describes this process of teaching and learning since the beginning of Islam by saying:

> From an educational point of view, this was the first breakthrough in mass education.[9]

The third and the last point is that if one accepts that the Qur'ān has a certain outlook towards life — and there is no reason to doubt this fact — it becomes necessary to accept another fact which is built upon it, i.e. that the Qur'ān provides us with certain educational principles or guidelines. This acceptance stems from a belief that there is an organic relationship between education and the traditions and beliefs of a given society. In a democratic society the school tries to promote the democratic way of life among its pupils. The very same thing should apply to an Islamic society.

Since the Qur'ān provides the Muslim with an outlook towards life, its principles must guide Islamic education. One cannot talk about Islamic education without taking the Qur'ān as one's starting point. Our discussion in the following chapters will aim at showing that the Qur'ān lays down the foundation for educational aims and methods. Moreover, the Muslim educator will find in the Qur'ān the guiding principles which help in selecting the content of the curriculum. These general principles which govern the aim, methods and content of the curriculum constitute the foundations of the Islamic educational theory.

We have just introduced in our discussion the term "**theory**" without giving it a definite description. As a matter of fact, this term is used by educators in more than one sense, and hence it becomes necessary to examine its different meanings and see which one fits properly in the Islamic perspective.

In the first place, "**theory**" is used by educators to refer to certain hypotheses which have been proved to be true through observation and experimentation and whose function is to explain their subject matter. O'Connor expresses his acceptance of this definition of "theory when he says:

> We can summarize this discussion by saying that the word "theory" as it is used in educational contexts is generally a courtesy title. It is justified only where we are applying well-established experimental findings in psychology or sociology to the practice of **education.**[10]

Muḥammad al-Nujayḥī — a contemporary Egyptian educator — reflects in his writings the same view expressed by O'Connor when saying that advances in experimental psychology led to improvements in education and provided us with educational theories as sound as those in science.[11] Thus "theory" in its first meaning is restricted to the explanation of issues on scientific lines.

The second usage of "**theory**" refers to a body of related principles which are intended to guide practice. Here, the concern is not to offer mere explanations of phenomena, but to build or control experience. The educator who is aware of the obligations of his profession does not resort — while teaching in the classroom — to trial and error; he is rather guided by a set of principles. These principles are called "theory of **education.**" Undoubtedly these principles vary from one society to another depending upon the values and aspirations of each society.

The first meaning of "theory" is similar to its meaning in science. If the educational theory is to be understood in this way, then educators should not bother themselves with issues which cannot be

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proved in a scientific way. However, while it is quite true that the teacher should explain to his students the natural phenomena under consideration by whatever scientific data are available to him, he should not limit himself to such a role. The teacher who is aware of the responsibilities of his profession should be aware of the aims that should be achieved and what the teacher himself should do. These are by no means limited to science alone. Education cannot be understood as "a limited would-be scientific pursuit."[12]

The scientific theory which is descriptive is of help to educators, but it fails to be a paradigm for educational theory simply because in education, the theory is not merely concerned with explanation of how or why things happen this or that way. Its function is to guide the behaviour of those who are being educated. In Islamic education the Qur'anic values constitute the basic element of the curriculum and the school cannot but be concerned with bringing up the pupils in accordance with them. Practices have to be judged by educators and value judgements cannot be restricted to scientific findings. Psychologists do provide us with measurements which determine the I.Q. of each student or any other personality trait. What is to be done once these have been determined is a matter of value judgement and not scientifically established. A personality test may tell us that a particular student is shy when he is in the presence of the opposite sex. The teacher who is provided with such information behaves in accordance with the values of his society. In a Western society such a student may be judged as abnormal as far as this trait is concerned; he may be recommended to attend parties. The whole situation is reversed if the same student is judged from an Islamic view when shyness is considered as part of *īmān* [13](belief).

Moreover, if we accept scientific theory as a paradigm for educational theory then we have to leave aside all the metaphysical facts *(ghaybiyyāt)* of the Qur'ān. Science deals only with objects which may be observed by the senses. This means that scientific theory cannot include any element which cannot be observed and tested. As we will see in Chapter Three, the Qur'ān gives the sense a prominent role in the perception process. However they are not the only means of acquiring knowledge. The fact that the Qur'ān is a revealed Book implies that scientific verification falls short of testing

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the Qur'anic content. In (2:3) belief in the unseen on the part of the believer precedes reference to observable behaviour. The ethical system derived from the Qur'ān is accepted because it comes from Allāh and not because it was proved to be the best system by means of scientific experimentation. For these reasons it becomes irrelevant in Islamic education to look for scientific theory as our example. We are thus inclined to use the term "theory" here to refer to certain principles which guide the educational practices.

Islamic educational theory should mainly stem from the Qur'ān if it is to possess its own merits. The *āyahs* of the Qur'ān are not meant to be recited in a limited time allotted to what is nowadays labelled "religious education". They form in fact the foundation of the whole educational system. But to say this does not mean that other subjects are to be ignored. The Qur'ān considers whatever exists in the universe as well as man himself as Allāh's signs which must be studied. Izutsu observes that the Qur'ān calls the revealed word of Allāh *āyāt* without distinguishing them from the signs in nature which are also called *āyāt*.[14] What follows is that the findings in science and psychology do fit in the Islamic educational theory. The principles of the Qur'ān form the base of the theory and educators have to work out its details. The Qur'ān leaves the door open for the specialists to make their contributions provided that the Quranic principles form — as Fārūqī puts it — the yardstick.[15] This is in fact supported also by the *Ḥadīth*. Bukhārī narrates that the Prophet said:

> "Some poetry contains *hikmah* (wisdom).[16]

It is relevant to recall that the Qur'ān rebukes poets because they say what they do not practice.[17] The *ḥikmah* which is found in some poetry should not be attributed to the rebuked poets, but to those who believe in Allāh. As some poetry is viewed as having an element of *ḥikmah*, there is no reason to exclude other fields of knowledge and to deny that they have this attribute.

Thus, when principles derived from other fields of knowledge are adopted in accordance with the Qur'anic outlook, there can be no contradiction between what is being taught about the creation of the first man on earth and what is being taught in biology. Since all the principles are related to each other, the Islamic educational

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theory could be described as an integrated theory where the Qur'anic principles form the prime core. As long as the Qur'ān contains one unified outlook towards man and the universe, the educational theory which rests upon it should be unified.

When we say that the foundations of the Islamic theory are derived from the Qur'ān, the implication is that they are not liable to change. However, the findings of the specialists in the different fields of knowledge which find their way into the theory are not considered unchangeable for the simple reason that they are man-made products. If this is taken into consideration, could Islamic educational theory be described as changeable?

In his Ph.D. thesis, Modawi expresses his view regarding this issue by saying:

> ... the theory of Islamic Education unlike the ideal philosophy upon which it bears is refutable.[18]

Elsewhere he writes:

> As a detailed and general theory it is not constructed to hold good in all times.[19]

His justification for this is that the psychological and the sociological findings which have a bearing on this theory change from time to time, and this means that the elements of the theory have to be reorganized. He even speaks about the looseness of the principles of this theory by saying:

> Therefore, according to Hirst, adequate educational principles can be formed in a loose and open process of judgement to which philosophical beliefs, psychological and social theory, historical knowledge, etc. contribute in their appropriate way.[20]

There is no doubt that educators who go back to the Qur'ān to derive educational principles will differ among themselves. The Qur'ān which is considered Allāh's Word is addressed to man who is given *'aql* (mind) which is capable of grasping its meanings. The fact that we have different schools of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) implies that we

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expect to have variations in an Islamic theory of education. But to say this does not mean that the essentials of the theory are liable to change. The differences which may exist do not touch the foundations of the theory. The Islamic educator can make use of the findings of psychologists who study, for example, punishment. But their findings will not be taken as an excuse to abolish punishment in principle as long as it is an integral part of the Qur'anic outlook.* Regardless of the use man makes of scientific knowledge which enables him to control his environment, this knowledge will never be considered as the most important thing in the Islamic perspective.

Modawi's description of the Islamic educational theory as refutable, temporal and loose may be attributed to lack of clear understanding of the Islamic conception of education coupled with borrowing indiscriminately from Western philosophers of education. Since he does not give the Qur'anic principles their dominant role, he describes the principles of the Islamic educational theory in these words:

> Such principles are, as Peters has put it, logical hybrids.[21]

Had he subjected what comes from psychology and sociology to the Qur'anic outlook, he would not have taken such a stand. He makes a grave mistake by equating the role of the principles of the Qur'ān in the Islamic educational theory with those in philosophy in some Western writings. By assuming that they play the very same role and that philosophy alone cannot determine the central issue of education, he reaches the position that Islamic principles cannot alone direct educational practice. In justification of this he says:

> This is because as Hirst put it 'we cannot on philosophical grounds, satisfactorily answer the central questions of educational practice.'[22]

Of course no philosopher of education in a modern Western democratic country would be able to give final recommendations regarding social values without paying attention to what specialists in the different fields of knowledge say. But this does not apply in the

* This issue will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six.

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same way to the Islamic society where values are fixed and final. What Hirst and Peters say about the nature of educational theory should not be taken for granted in the Islamic educational theory regardless of the wide differences between the Islamic and the Western societies.

A further misconception that Modawi makes regarding the Qur'anic principles is that he views some of them as assumptions. He refers on several occasions to the assumptions underlying Islamic educational theory. Speaking about the nature of man in Islam he writes:

> ... The general Islamic assumption about the nature of children is that they are liable to turn good or bad.[23]

To start with, man is considered to have a good nature *(fiṭrah)*. This fact is emphasized in the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*,* but is referred to as an assumption. The Qur'anic facts and principles cannot be treated by a committed Muslim as assumptions or hypotheses which are potentially provable or disprovable through observation or any other means. They are rather a set of interrelated principles which form the foundations of the educational theory. Just as the roof of the building should fit the foundation, the very same thing applies to our theory. Its elements which come from other fields of knowledge should fit in the general structure. The dominant role which is given to the Qur'anic principles in the Islamic educational theory is clearly stated by Tibawi who says:

> The single fundamental fact that determines the concept, dictates the content, and governs the evolution of the philosophy of Muslim education is the belief that God's final message to mankind was revealed in its entirety through Muhammad and is enshrined in the Qur'ān.[24]

So far, we have been concerned with elucidating the general frame of the Islamic educational theory. We have emphasized that

* The concept of *fiṭrah* will be discussed in the next chapter.

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such a theory can incorporate elements of other fields of knowledge and make use of them. The Qur'anic emphasis on brotherhood, for example, can incorporate the insights of sociologists when they give helpful suggestions about the means by which this goal may be reached. The Qur'ān provides educators with broad and general educational aims. Classifications of these aims and deciding which aims are to be achieved at each level and which content is more suitable cannot take place without making use of the findings in psychology or other fields of knowledge.

In the remaining part of this chapter, we will consider the relationship between philosophy and Islamic educational theory because any discussion in education of the nature of educational theory involves this issue. In other words, our main concern will be to examine philosophy of education and attempt to find out what role it may play in building the Islamic theory of education.

We should make clear at this point the sense in which we are using the term "philosophy". In one sense it might be argued that any set of principles must *ipso facto* reflect a philosophy if they are to be coherent. What we are concerned with here, however, is the role of philosophy in forming and organizing concepts on a purely intellectual basis. In Islamic system, intellectual speculation can never serve as a basis for concepts which derive their authority from the Qur'ān.

In its traditional meaning, philosophy is viewed as a body of knowledge as well as a method of acquiring knowledge. Greek philosophy, which is considered as a paradigm for all traditional philosophers, was concerned with all the problems which concern man. It tries to answer questions which relate to man's existence: his nature in the universe and his relations with the supernatural powers. The traditional philosopher felt free to select for discussion any problem from any field of knowledge he liked. A. Taylor describes this position by saying:

> In short, it was the job of philosophy to deal with everything. And philosophy promised to do this, not contingently, but certainly.[25]

The traditional philosopher who feels free to discuss any issue

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assumes that his intellectual powers are appropriate tools for such an enterprise. They try to build up by reasoning an outlook towards man and society.

Applied to the field of education, traditional philosophy tries to answer the crucial issues which relate to the nature of the individual and the aims to be achieved. The traditional philosopher of education tries to derive the solution to the educational issues from philosophy. This comes from the belief that philosophy decides what type of individual is appropriate for a certain society. The methods of teaching as well as the content of the curriculum are subject to the philosophical outlook. The teacher might not be able to recognize the nature of his subject matter; hence he can seek the help of the philosopher who can give a judgement regarding, say, history. The philosopher decides whether history is the record of what has already happened or an interpretation of what has happened.[26]

The response of educators to traditional philosophy and the differences which exist among philosophers vary. Some believe that these differences are natural and it is up to the educator to evaluate the different philosophies and make use of what seems relevant. Others believe that these differences perplex educators and they take them as "good warrant for abandoning the whole enterprise of philosophy."[27]

Our response to this type of philosophy may be in line with the attitude which casts doubts on the role of traditional philosophy in education, though for different reasons. From an Islamic viewpoint, the Qur'ān provides us with a definite outlook towards man and his relations with Allāh as well as with other creatures and even with his physical environment. Man is considered as Allāh's vicegerent to whom everything in universe is subjected. The Qur'anic facts are not justified on a philosophical basis, and any speculations or assumptions which contradict such facts cannot be accepted from an Islamic point of view. The main cause for our rejection of philosophy is that while reason is governed by revelation in the Qur'ān, it is given full authority in philosophy. As we will see in Chapter Three reason is given a prominent role in Islam, but it is not allowed to decide every issue. Revealed knowledge is considered more authentic than Greek

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philosophy which was referred to earlier. However, our rejection of traditional philosophy should not make us forget to mention that philosophy and the Qur'ān deal with almost the same problems.[28] But this is not a justification for equating them with each other.

The present writer is not unaware of the efforts of some Muslim philosophers who tried to find a place for Greek philosophy in the Islamic perspective. It is not our aim to analyze such efforts in detail. But it suffices to assert that their view of reason *('aql)* and the role it plays does not differ sharply from the view held by Greek philosophers. They maintain that philosophy and the Qur'ān have the same aim. According to Ibn Rushd, both aim at discovering truth. Truth does not in any way contradict truth but rather confirms its truthfulness. When *'aql* leads to a truth which contradicts the Qur'ān the text of the latter should be interpreted in such a way that eliminates the apparent contradiction.[29] In his book *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān*, Ibn Ṭufayl puts reason on a par with revelation in terms of its ability to allow man to reach truth. Thus it is no wonder that some Muslim philosophers expressed ideas which contradict Islamic principles. In one of his *risālahs*, Ibn Sīnā denies bodily resurrection[30] which is accepted as a fact in Islām.[31] For this basic reason philosophy was — as Tibawi puts it — "unable to establish itself as an integral part of Muslim thought."[32]

In modern times philosophy began to flourish in the Muslim world under the impact of Western influence. It is no wonder that one finds some modernist Muslim scholars who speak about the philosophy of the Qur'ān* or about the harmony between them. Muhammad Mūsā maintains that the style of the Qur'ān is similar to that of philosophy. Clarity in exposition is considered to be something common to the two. Not only that, but the Qur'ān opens the door for philosophy. This may be attributed to the fact that the Qur'ān, which uses many terms, gives little detail of such terms. The Qur'ān mentions, for example, the creation of the earth, the sky and man. Giving the details of these concepts is left for the philosopher. The Qur'ān, which lays down the foundations of a theory of knowledge, leaves the door open for philosophy to build up these bases.[33] But here again reconciliation between the Qur'ān and

* As is the case with al-'Aqqad.

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philosophy is doomed to failure for the very same reasons which led to the rejection of Greek philosophy. It is not the task of the philosopher to build on the Qur'anic concepts; in Islam this task belongs to the *fuqahā'* who are firmly grounded in the revealed knowledge.

Turning to contemporary literature on the philosophy of education, one finds that Muslim writers may be classified into two main groups. The first group leaves the door open for non-Islamic outlooks on life. They borrow non-Islamic concepts and incorporate them in their educational thought. In his critical book, Hageltom illustrates how a promint Egyptian writer on curriculum adopts non-Islamic concepts which cannot be reconciled with Islam. In his book *al-Manāhij*, A.L. Fu'ād asserts that there exists a strong relationship between the school curriculum and democracy, and that hence it is the responsibility of the school to give the pupils an insight into democracy because it tends to make the individual as well as the society happy. In another Book, *Murshid Tamrīn al-Mudarris,* the same educator urges the teacher to propagate socialism with the aim of removing class differences.[34]

It should be emphasized that neither of these ideas correspond exactly to the Islamic way of life. There exists in Islam a mechanism for consulting the believers, the *Shūrā*, which is an integral part of Islam. However, the system in Western democracy whereby the majority decides what is lawful and what is not, can never be acceptable in Islam, where the laws and framework of society are revealed by Allāh and are unchangeable. Where the removing of class differences is concerned, there exists a means of redistributing wealth to some extent (the *zakāh*). However, private property is a fundamental principle in Islam, and any political belief which involves the expropriation of private property cannot be accepted. If such ideas are unacceptable in Islam generally, they cannot find a place in Islamic education.

The second category of what may be described as traditional philosophers of education adopt the Qur'anic outlook in their writings. The content of their philosophy is derived from the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*. Fāḍil Jamāli — a Professor of education at the Tunisian University — may be mentioned as an example. He begins

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his discussion of the Qur'anic philosophy of education by saying: "Some may find it strange when they hear me saying that the Glorious Qur'ān is considered for the Muslim the greatest book in the philosophy of education... . If philosophy is concerned with the study of how things begin and end, and with the study of man and his relations with his fellow man, the universe and Allāh, the philosophy of the Qur'ān includes all this... . The Qur'ān deals with the creation of man and his nature. The philosophy of the Qur'ān which is characterized by being comprehensive allows for development and change."[35]

Philosophy viewed from this angle is nothing more than the Qur'anic principles that guide education. As a matter of fact, one does not find in Jamālī's philosophy of education any element of philosophy except the term itself. This does indeed represent the correct approach to building up an Islamic theory of education; however, the present writer feels that it is more relevant to replace the term "philosophy of education" although most, if not all, Islamic educators nowadays have no objection to using it.

The first reason for our call to replace this term is that "philosophy" is a rather ambiguous term which means that "philosophy of education" is also ambiguous. Perhaps that is why Brickman calls for the abandoning of the term "philosophy of" and its substitution by the term "theory of."[36] In support of this view, one may point out that one writer who rejected philosophy in principle and accepted it only as a term has classified the founder of the Wahhābī movement together with other philosophers who are not associated with the principles of Islam.[37] We have already mentioned how Modawi, who uses the term "philosophy" in referring to the Qur'anic principles, misplaces their role.

The second reason for abandoning the terms "philosophy" and "philosophy of education" is more related to the Qur'ān. In (2:104) the Qur'ān asks the believers to say *unẓurnā* and not *rā'inā* although both of them suggest the same meaning, i.e. please look at us. The ambiguity which arises from using the term *"ra'ina"* is the justification for not using it, and in the same way we may, however unintentionnally, be misleading. As Sayyid Quṭb says, the usage of

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alien terms is in sharp contradiction with the Islamic conception which has its own characteristics.[38]

The Qur'anic term which we recommend to replace philosophy is "*ḥikmah*';* in this case the educational *ḥikmah* in the Islamic theory of education would mean the foundations of this theory which are derived from the Qur'ān. However its introduction may raise some objection. It might be argued that the new term which supplants philosophy is also ambiguous since it could be interpreted to give one or more of the following meanings: "admonition, understanding, *'ilm*, prophecy, *sunnah* and the Qur'ān. Some even maintain that the term " ḥikmah" "has practically come to be synonymous with *falsafa.*"[39]Nasr says that while many Muslim theologians had understood *ḥikmah* to mean *kalām* (scholastic theology), the term was identified throughout Islamic history with traditional philosophy.[40] One more criticism may be sensed from Rosenthal who argues that the outstanding rank of *'ilm* in the Qur'ān made *ḥikmah* come after it in ranking.[41] This implies that the term is not of very high prestige.

According to Arab lexicographers, *ḥikmah* means knowledge of the best thing in the best sciences.[42] One main characteristic of *ḥikmah* which is emphasized by interpreters is that it consists of two basic elements: *'ilm* and *'amal.*[43] Goichon mentions that *'ilm* which characterizes *ḥikmah* is of "high spiritual truth".[44] In addition to this, the persons who were given *ḥikmah* were either prophets — such as Muhammad and Abraham — or of high prestige as is the case with Luqmān, who is understood to have been one of the judges of Banū Isrā'īl.[45] In (2:269) it is stated that the person to whom *ḥikmah* is granted receives an overflowing benefit. If *ḥikmah* is to be evaluated by its constituents or the persons who possessed it, then it should rank high. It seems that the high prestige of this term may be one of the reasons why Muslim philosophers —like Ibn Rushd** — borrowed this term to describe their own philosophy. The case may be that they did so in order to popularize their ideas which were not welcomed in Islamic thought.

As for the giving of several meanings to *ḥikmah*, it is admitted by

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* *Ḥikmah* occurs in the Qur'ān in nineteen *āyahs*; in additon *ḥukm* occurs in several *āyahs* with the meaning of *ḥikmah*. See Zamakshari, vol. 1, p. 378; vol 2, p. 7; vo. 3, p. 289.

** This is quite evident in his book *Kitāb Faṣl al-Maqal wa-Taqrīr mā Bayn al-Shari'ah wa-al-Ḥikmah min al-Ittiṣal.*

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interpreters as a fact. Ṭabarī gives more than five meanings to *ḥikmah* which occurs in (2:269). But it should be noted that these different interpretations are not considered by interpreters to be competitive or a source of ambiguity. Prophecy, *'ilm*, understanding, etc. — though different — may be viewed as aspects of the same thing. This may be understood from Ibn Kathīr who considers prophecy as the highest form of *ḥikmah*.[46] Qurṭubī holds a similar view when he says that since the essence of *ḥikmah* is to help the individual to behave in a good manner, the different meanings given to it are complementary; they are related to the same aim.[47] If this comprehensive meaning is accepted little can be said regarding its clarity in meaning.

Having discussed traditional philosophy and its relation with the Islamic theory of education, we now turn to discuss the contributions of analytical philosophy. This type of philosophy is not viewed as a body of knowledge but as an activity which aims at clarifying the terms used. In spite of the differences which exist among analytic philosophers, they have one main common goal: a clear usage of language.

Education is one of favourite fields of the analytic philosophers. This may be attributed to the adoption by educators of numerous concepts and terms which come from other fields of knowledge. Psychology and sociology use several vague terms such as "growth", "conformity", etc. Since these terms find their way into education it becomes the responsibility of the philosopher to clarify the usage of these terms. The analytic philosopher is no longer interested in building up educational theories. Education — and not philosophy — is his starting point. This view is expressed clearly by Moore who illustrates the relationship between philosophy of education and educational theory and practice by saying:

> Let us think of education as involving an interrelated set of activities going on at different levels, something like a building with more than one floor occupied. On the ground floor there go on various educational activities... At the next higher level, say at the first-floor level, there is educational theory, which may be understood as

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> a body of connected **principles**... aimed at influencing what goes on at the **ground-floor** level. At a higher level still there is philosophy of education, which has for its main tasks the clarification of the concepts used at lower levels, concepts like 'education' and 'teaching', for example, and an examination of theories which operate there, testing them for consistency and **validity.**[48]

Since analytical philosophy is not viewed as a body of knowledge, the main obstacle which led to the rejection of traditional philosophy of education from the Islamic theory of education is removed. Analytical philosophy of education seems more acceptable as long as it does not concern itself with the prescription of values alien to Islamic education.

A positive attitude towards analytical philosophy is explicitly expressed by some Islamic educators. Hageltom maintains that its contribution lies in its attempt to **clarify** the language used in education. It helps educators to have a better understanding of the subject matters of the curriculum. He says:

> In teaching history, for example, it is important to ask this question: What do we mean when we say that pupils have learnt history? The answer to this question cannot be given only in terms of empirical evidence, but also, and before that, by a logical analysis of what characterizes history as a **subject.**[49]

Modawi believes that Islamic educational writings reflect confusion and ambiguity. He attributes this to the **undue** stress put on the style with little regard to the **content.**[50] Although the help which the Islamic educators get from linguistic analysis does not form an essential element in Islamic theory of education, it cannot be neglected. The speculative aspect of this theory which dominates the scene leaves the door open to linguistic analysis which is considered of secondary **importance.**[51]

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In order to evaluate the role of analytical philosophy of education in the Islamic theory of education, it is desirable to differentiate between the Qur'anic *ḥikmah* and other fields of knowledge which contribute to the building of the theory.

There are some terms or concepts which are used to give the same meaning regardless of the cultural differences. The concept of "solid" which was referred to earlier belongs to this category. The way a scientist understands it does not differ from the way it is understood by an Islamic or a Marxist scientist. This means that analysis of such terms and concepts will be helpful to the Islamic educator. But this help is of limited nature since neutral concepts do not form an essential part of the Islamic educational theory.

In addition, other fields of knowledge provide education with concepts which are not neutral because they are linked to social and cultural values. Concepts such as "conformity" and "growth" differ from one culture to another. An analytic philosopher who concerns himself with illustrating the concept of "conformity" must tell educators about its nature by giving illustrations or examples which help them to judge whether they are taking the right path to its achievement or not. Is the "shy student" conformist or noconformist? An answer to this question and several others which may be raised regarding this issue is not possible unless the analytic philosopher starts from certain values. But if he insists that he takes a completely neutral position in these situations, no one expects him to be constructive in his analysis.

It appears that concepts which are not neutral cannot be properly analyzed in isolation from their cultural background. Analysis of such concepts without a frame of reference would be perplexing if not misleading. We will discuss in Chapter Five the nature of the content of the curriculum. It will be argued that teaching history, for example, from an Islamic outlook has its justification. Materialistic factors which are given the prime role in history from a Marxist viewpoint are regarded differently from the Islamic outlook which gives them less importance. All knowledge in this world has importance in Islam. It contributes to the confirmation of the reality of Islamic belief. Thus if our previous analysis is accepted one could conclude that analytical philosophy of education which starts from a

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non-Islamic standpoint cannot be accepted in the Islamic theory of education. The main reason for this is that the frame of reference — without which there can be no constructive analysis — is not the same. They rather contradict each other.

— If an analytical philosophy of education which is not itself based on Islamic premises cannot make a substantial contribution to Islamic theory of education in the domain of acquired knowledge, it is even less likely to be of help in the domain of revealed knowledge which forms the foundations of the theory. It is true that analysis of concepts will be of great help in building the theory, but this activity is not a proper field for the philosopher, since anyone who concerns himself with this enterprise should possess certain qualifications which are not related to philosophy.

The educator who engages himself in building up an Islamic educational theory must have a good command of Arabic. The Qur'ān is viewed as an inimitable *(mu'jiz)* Book. In (2:23) we read:

> And if ye are in doubt
> As to what We have revealed
> From time to time to Our servant
> Then produce a *Sūra*
> Like thereunto.

In (17:88) it is emphasized that the whole of mankind would not be able to produce the like of the Qur'ān . The *i'jāz* of the Qur'ān has several aspects and its style is undoubtedly one of them.[52] Since human beings cannot imitate the style of the Qur'ān, the exact translation of the Qur'anic text is considered to be out of the question. One can translate the meanings of the Qur'ān, but not the Qur'ān itself. The organic relationship between Arabic and revelation in Islam explains why non-Arabs who have embraced Islam found it necessary to learn Arabic.[53] Dodge describes the importance of Arabic in Islamic society by saying:

> The original purpose of Muslim education was to explain the divine revelation and, because the Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic, the first step was to understand the Arabic language. No man could be a successful government official, a

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> lawyer, mosque leader or teacher, unless he was familiar with Arabic.[54]

Two examples will be cited here in support of the importance of Arabic, both of which are linked with the Caliph 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. As for the first example, it is narrated that the Caliph 'Umar stood one day on the *minbar* (pulpit) and after he had recited (16:47) he asked the audience about the meaning of *"takhawwuf"* which occurs in the *āyah*. A bedouin gave the correct meaning supporting his view with a verse of poetry. On that 'Umar urged the audience to heed the Jahili poetry.[55]

The second example is cited to show that lack of command of Arabic may result in incorrect conclusions. Zamakhsharī relates the following anecdote:

> A bedouin heard a man reciting the third *āyah* of Sūrat al-Tawbah as follows: *'Inna Allāh barī' mina al-mūshrikīna wa-rasūlih'* (instead of *wa-rasūluh*). Upon this the bedouin said: 'In that case I am free from the Prophet.' The man took the bedouin to 'Umar Ibn al-Khattāb to complain of him, and the bedouin told him of the man's recitation. Therupon 'Umar ordered that Arabic should be studied.[56]

Even if the authenticity of this story may be questioned, it reflects the importance attached by early Muslims to linguistic competence in Arabic. Without deep command of Arabic, analysis of the Qur'anic terms and concepts is likely to be misleading.

In addition, knowledge of what Islamic scholars call *"ulūm al-Qur'ān"* (Qur'anic sciences) is quite helpful to the educator. The Islamic educator must familiarize himself with the books of interpretation *(Kutub al-Tafsīr)*, otherwise he may be advancing purely personal views. It suffices for our present purpose to illustrate this with the following example. It is narrated that during the siege of Constantinople by the Muslims, one of the Muslim fighters was advancing towards the enemy without paying attention to the dangers which threatened his life. Seeing this situation, some of his fellows shouted loudly: "He made his hands contribute to his

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destruction" *(alqā bi-nafsihi ila al-tahlūkah)*. At that moment Abū Ayyūb al-Ansārī made it clear that the term "*tahlukah*" which occurs in (2:195) and to which they were referring, does not refer to fighting the enemy. On the contrary, it refers to backsliding in such matters.[57] Although this is not the only meaning given by interpreters, it is considered the most likely one. In any case, one has to consult books of interpretation.

Moreover, to understand the Qur'ān requires understanding of the *Ḥadīth*. This fact is expressed in (16:44) which reads:

> And We have sent down
> Unto thee (also) the Message
> That thou mayest explain clearly
> To men what is sent
> For them, and that they
> May give thought.

This shows that the Prophet was sent not only to communicate to people the revealed knowledge but also to show its application. The *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet is an indispensable aid to the understanding of the Qur'ān.

To sum up: The Islamic theory of education is fundamentally based upon the Qur'anic concepts. In this theory the door is left open for concepts which come from different fields of knowledge provided that they fit the Qur'anic perspective. All elements which cannot be reconciled with Islamic principles should be excluded. It has been pointed out that traditional philosophy which gives excessive weight to reason cannot offer any help to our theory. Hence, traditional philosophy of education which tries to resolve educational issues by reliance upon philosophical assumptions is not applicable. Furthermore, analytical philosophy which takes non-Islamic concepts as a frame of reference yields a very poor harvest. It is therefore recommended that the term "philosophy" be replaced with the term *ḥikmah*. Our analysis allows us to conclude that in Islamic theory of education there is no place at all for traditional philosophy of education. In the following chapters we will be concerned with the analysis of the Qur'anic *ḥikmah* in order to establish a clear idea of the nature of man, of educational aims and methods and of the content of the curriculum.

Notes

1. Rāzī, vol. 1, pp. 40-41.
2. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 2, p. 582.
3. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 1, p. 386.
4. *Al-Muṣṭalaḥat al-Arba'h*, pp. 34-42.
5. Vol. 1, p. 137.
6. Vol. 1, pp. 118-19.
7. Qurṭubī, vol. 2, p. 278.
8. Vol. 1, p. 67.
9. *The Muslim World*, vol. 56, p. 192.
10. *An Introductin to the Philosophy of Education, p. 110.*
11. *Muqaddimah fī Falsafat al-Tarbiyah*, p. 38.
12. Hirst, "Educational Theory" in Tibble (ed.), *The Study of Education, p. 40.*
13. Bukhārī, vol. 1, p. 25.
14. *God and Man in the Koran*, p. 133.
15. "Towards a New Methodology for Qur'anic Exegesis" in *Islamic Studies*, vol. 1, p. 40.
16. Vol. 8, p. 107. As for the term *Ḥikmah* it will be explored later in this chapter.
17. See *sūrah* 26:224-226.
18. *A Theoretical Basis for Islamic Education*, p. 274.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 263.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 268.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 265.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 293.
24. "Philosophy of Muslim Education" in *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 4, p. 78.
25. "What is Philosophy of Education" in *Educational Theory*, vol. 13, part 2, p. 96.
26. Reid, *Philosophy of Education*, p. 32.
27. Phenix, *Philosophy of Education*, p. 447.
28. Sīd, *The Hermeneutical Problem of the Qur'ān in Islamic History*, p. 290.
29. Kitāb Faṣl al-Maqāl, p. 35.
30. See Dunya's introduction to *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, pp. 19-21.
31. Bukhārī narrates a *Ḥadīth* wich states clearly this fact. See vol. 6, p. 117.
32. "Philosophy of Muslim Education" in *Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 4, p. 85.
33. *Al-Qur'ān wa-al-Falsafah*, p. 52-55.
34. *Ta'ṣīl Tarbiyat al-Mu'allim*, pp. 5-8.
35. *Al-Falsafah al-Tarbawiyyah fī al-Qur'ān*, pp. 9-10.
36. "The Meaning of Philosophy of Education" in *Journal of General Education*, vol. 15, part 3, p.215.
37. Badrān, *al-Falsafah al-Ḥadīthat fī al-Mīzān*, p. 95.
38. Khaṣa'is al-Taṣawwur al-Islami, p. 115.
39. Huart, "*Ḥikma*" in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (old ed.) vol. 2, p. 305.
40. "The Meaning and Role of Philosophy in Islam" in *Studia Islamica*, vol. 37, p. 64.
41. *Knowledge Triumphant*, pp. 35-37.
42. *Al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ* , p. 188.
43. Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 484, also vol. 2, p. 342
44. "*Ḥikma*" in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (new ed.) vol. 2, p. 377.
45. Zamakhsharī, vol. 3, p. 493.
46. Vol. 1, p. 322.
47. Vol. 3, p 330.

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48. *Educational Theory*, p. 8.
49. *A Critical Examination of Statements by Philosophers*, p. 62.
50. *A Theoretical Basis for Islamic Education*, p. 257.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
52. See for example Qurṭubī, vol. 1, pp. 73-75; Zamakhsharī, vol. 2. p. 692.
53. Ḥammād, *The Impact of Europe on Islam*, p. 41.
54. *Mulsim Education in Medieval Times*, p. 31.
55. Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, pp. 608-609.
56. Vol. 2, p. 245.
57. Zamakhsharī, vol. 1, p. 237. Bayḍāwī, vol. 1, p. 223.

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CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF HUMAN NATURE

Man is the core of the educational process. This can be easily realized when one remembers that education is mainly concerned with directing human behaviour towards certain objectives. Just as the blacksmith or the carpenter needs to know the characteristics of the materials with which he deals, the educator is helped in his profession if he has a clear idea about the nature of man. Educational practices are doomed to failure unless they are built on a clear conception of man's nature. This may shed some light on why advances in the fields of science and technology have not necessarily been accompanied by advances in man's happiness.

Given that the educational outcomes are affected by the conception held by educators regarding the nature of man, we will concentrate in this chapter on the analysis of this issue. Our discussion starts by clarifying the concept of *khilāfah*. Man, who is considered Allāh's *khalīfah*, is viewed as being innately good. The Qur'anic concept of the good *fiṭrah* will be illustrated and contrasted with some different conceptions. The harmony between the *fiṭrah* and the bodily needs will be emphasized with reference to the influence of the *rūḥ* (spirit). Lastly we will deal with man's free will which makes it possible for him to be educated. In brief, we will attempt to answer the following questions:

What is the role of man in this life?
What are the inborn powers man has?

To what extent does environment shape man's behaviour?
Is man free to learn and acquire new experiences?

In the Qur'ān man occupies a special position in the universe. He

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is vicegerent on the earth. In the Qur'ān we read:

> Behold, the Lord said to the Angels:
> I will create a vicegerent on earth.[1]

The word *khalīfah* (vicegerent) is derived from the verb *khalafa* which means "succeeded" or "followed". In this respect, the *khalīfah* is the person who succeeds another. This explains why the head of the Islamic State was given this title. Abū Bakr succeeded the Prophet after his death; he was called *Khalīfat Rasūl Allāh;* then the second part of the title was dropped out and the term *khalīfah* stood alone to give the same meaning.

The philological meaning of the term *khalīfah* raises no differences of opinion; but one finds such differences when trying to define who followed whom. As regarding who succeeded or followed, we are faced with three different views. The first view maintains that human beings as a species succeeded other beings who had already lived on this earth. It is believed that the *Jinn* preceded man's existence. Thus, human beings succeeded the *Jinn.*[2]

The second interpretation does not presume or look for any predecessors to man. According to this point of view, the word *khalīfah* refers simply to any group of people that succeeds another. Among the several *āyahs* that are quoted to support this view is

> ... He makes you
> Inheritors of the earth.[3]

In another *Sūrah* Moses tells his people that the earth is Allāh's and that He may destroy their enemy and make them inheritors on the earth.[4] The Prophet Hūd warns his people stressing that if they turn away from Allāh's message, then Allāh will make another people succeed them.[5] In *Sūrat al-Nūr*, Allāh promises the believers that He will grant them the inheritance *(yastakhlifuhum)* as he did to others before them.[6] Thus the present tense *yastakhlif* is used in the Qur'ān to denote the process of one group of people being succeeded by another.

The third interpretation gives the process of *istikhlāf* more importance. The *khalīfah* is not simply one who follows others; he is

in fact Allāh's *khalīfah*. Allāh comes first; the *khalīfah* behaves and acts according to Allāh's teachings. Rāzī, Ṭabarī, Ṭabṭabā'ī and Qurṭubī are in favour of this interpretation.[7]

Examination of the three interpretations reveals that they have something in common in spite of the differences that are being expressed explicitly. The philological meaning of the word "*khalīfah*" is maintained in the three interpretations. The *khalīfah* is so called because he succeeds others, be it Allāh or a group of people or non-human beings like the *Jinn*. But it should be noted that the first two interpretations give little more beyond this level. Nothing is said regarding the role of the *khalīfah*. By stressing that the *khalīfah* is in fact Allāh's *khalīfah* the third interpretation gives deeper meaning to this term. Here, relationship is established between man and Allāh and not simply between man and man or man and the *Jinn*. Hence the *khalīfah* is privileged as being Allāh's *khalīfah*.

It would clearly be unfair to interpret the meaning of *khalīfah* in terms of mere succession. The time dimension alone cannot be invoked for its explanation. The function of the *khalīfah* plays an important role in its interpretation. This view is supported by the fact that Allāh announced the appointment of the *khalīfah* to the assembled angels who were ordered by Allāh to prostrate themselves as a sign of respect to the *khalīfah*. In *Sūrat al-Baqarah* we read:

> And behold, We said to the angels:
> 'Bow down to Adam:' and they
> Bowed down; not so Iblis.[8]

This command to bow down is repeated in six other *sūrahs*: *A'rāf*, *Ḥijr*, *Kahf*, *Ṭā-hā*, *Isrā'* and *Ṣād*. Iblis who refused to perform this *sujūd* to the *khalīfah* was denounced and dismissed from Paradise. Disrespect to the *khalīfah* is considered from the Qur'anic point of view as a revolt against Allāh's orders, since respect for the *khalīfah* is associated with obedience to Allāh. Thus the *khalīfah* has an important position and is much more than a person or a group of persons that succeeds other groups.

More evidence in support of this view comes from the other *āyahs* that are related to this issue. The word "*khalīfah*" is located in its

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singular form in two *āyahs*.[9] The plural form *khala'if* is located in four *āyahs*[10] while the other plural form *khulafā'* is located in three *āyahs*.[11] One of the *āyahs* that uses the word in its singular form is that which announces Allāh's intention to create a *khalīfah*. Lambton mentions that in (2:30) Adam was asked to "judge between men with justice and not to follow his desires."[12] In fact there is no reference at all in this *āyah* to Adam's judgement 'with the truth' as Lambton states. But this order occurs in (38:26) where Allāh addresses His Prophet David saying:

> Oh David! We did indeed
> Make thee a vicegerent *(khalīfah)* on earth
> So, judge thou between men in truth.

Here, the *khalīfah* is enjoined to be just and not to be prejudiced. This term as applied to David indicates the exercise of authority.[13]

The role to be played by the vicegerent is not less evident in the *āyahs* that use the term in its plural form. In *Sūrat al-A'rāf* the *khulafā'* are described as people who interact with the physical environment; they build for themselves places and castles in the mountains and the plains.[14] *Sūrat al-An'ām* stresses that the *khalā'if* are given this status in order to test them[15] while another *āyah* of *Sūrat Fāṭir* makes them responsible for their misbehaviour.[16] The same meaning is echoed in the following *āyah*:

> Then we made you heirs *(khalā'if)*
> In the land after them,
> To see how ye would behave.[17]

It is evident from these *āyahs* that people are appointed as *khalā'if* or *khulafā'* under certain conditions. The holder of this office does not practice his functions in isolation from Allāh's supervision.

We have already quoted the *āyah* which relates Allāh's order to the angels to prostrate themselves to Adam and also referred to several *āyahs* which tell us about the *khulafā'* and the *khalā'if*. The question that arises at this point is: who the *khalīfah* is or indeed whether there can be more than one khalīfah on the earth.

Books of interpretation give two different views regarding this issue. The first view limits the title to Adam. The upholders of this

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view believe that the Qur'ān made it quite clear that the angels prostrated themselves to Adam, and not to any other person. There is no justification in giving this title except to Adam.

The proponents of the second view do not deny that Adam was Allah's vicegerent,but they go further beyond this point.They believe that it was man as a human being represented in Adam who was honoured by Allāh before the angels. It follows that the title cannot be reserved only to Adam. Others can be eligible to have that honour or privilege.

The second interpretation does not necessarily contradict the first one; but it is more comprehensive. It paves the way for clear and straightforward understanding of the *āyahs* that speak of the *khulafā'* or *khalā'if* or of David as being a *khalīfah*. It gives prestige to man without any diminution of Adam's privilige. But do we find evidence in the Qur'ān that justifies our preference of this interpretation?

Let us first examine the *āyahs* that explain the event of man's creation and his existence on this earth. Several *āyahs* that relate to creation show that the Qur'ān uses the singular pronoun in the third person as an object to the verb *khalaqa*. The plural pronoun in the second person is used as an object to the same verb in one *āyah*. It might be interesting to note that the two forms of the pronoun are used in two successive *āyahs* in *Sūrat al-A'rāf*. Whereas one *āyah* tells us that "Allāh created you and gave you shape," the following *āyah* shows that Allāh created him.[18] Thus if the pronoun "you" stands for human beings and not only for Adam,then it becomes justifiable to accept the view that considers Adam as being a representative of man as a species in the ceremony which was attended by the angels.

But one finds differences of opinion regarding this pronoun "you". Several veiws are held concerning the two words *khalaqnākum* (created you) and *sawwarnākum* (gave you shape). According to one of these interpretations the pronoun in the two words refers to Adam. Two pieces of evidence are cited here in support of this view. The first evidence is that the Qur'ān sometimes uses the second person pronoun in cases where those who are being concerned are not present and the third person might be expected. In *Surat*

al-Baqarah Allāh tells the Jews that He made a covenant with their predecessors by saying:

> And remember We took
> Your covenant.[19]

The second evidence is philological. The co-ordinating conjunction *thumma* which is positioned between *taṣwīr* and Allāh's orders to the angels to bow indicates that the bowing follows the creation. Since the angels prostrated themselves to Adam, so it was Adam who was created and given shape.[20] Qurṭubī is in favour of this interpretation.[21]

A second interpretation refers the pronoun in *khalaqnākum* to Adam and the pronoun in *ṣawwarnākum* to Adam's progeny,[22] while a third interpretation refers the pronoun in the two words to Adam and Eve. The fourth interpretation refers the pronoun in the two words to Adam's progeny. Rāzī — who gives preference to this view — holds that the verb *khalaqa* is related to Allāh's knowledge. In this sense, the word *khalaqnākum* means that Allāh had already the knowledge of all who will be created and how they will behave. To give shape means to fix the shape of all created things in the Preserved Tablet. Accordingly, the two events of *khalq* and *taṣwir* preceded the celebration in honour of the *khalīfah*.[23]

It appears that more than one of these interpretations support the issue we are trying to defend. Yet, it is not possible to disregard the other point of view. But fortunately stronger Qur'anic evidence might be derived from the *āyahs* that relate to the appointment of the *khalīfah* and the departure of Adam from Paradise. The angels who prostrated themselves to Adam said to Allāh:

> Will you place therein
> One who will make
> Mischief therein and shed blood.[24]

The word "one" which is used in this *āyah* refers to the *khalīfah*. This appears explicitly from the first part of the same *āyah* which was quoted already. In fact, the angel's question came as a response to the announcement of appointing the *khalīfah*. If it is proved that the

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word "one" refers to others than Adam, then enough light would be shed on this issue.

The Qur'ān makes it quite clear that 'Adam committed no mischief on this earth. It is true that he disobeyed Allāh by approaching the tree which he was asked to keep away from. But it is true also that Allāh relented towards him. And even if one accepts for the sake of argument the hypothesis that equates disobedience with mischief, still no mischief could be attributed to Adam on this earth. This is due to the fact that Paradise — where Adam disobeyed his Allāh — does not exist in this world. Qurṭubī mentions that this fact represents the Sunnite point of view regarding this issue.* The evidence he mentions in support of this view is that the Qur'ān used the word *jannah* with the definite article *al*. This means that Adam was in the eternal Paradise and not in the paradise of 'Adan.[25]

Since Adam was not involved in doing any mischief or bloodshed, then it becomes helpful and necessary to identify whoever might be involved in it. According to one interpretation, the angels who made that comment or question had already known that the *Jinn* who preceded man on this earth committed such acts. When they made their comment they were wondering whether the new *khalīfah* would follow his predecessors; they were not making a statement but merely asking about what might happen or merely expecting it. The other interpretation relates mischief to Adam's progeny. According to this view, the angels had known that some of Adam's progeny would follow the path of mischief and so they were surprised when they heard of the appointment of a new *khalīfah*.[26]

The relationship between man and Iblīs is marked with hatred from the start. According to the Qur'ān, Iblīs is able to mislead many of Adam's progeny. His followers are committed to any misbehaviour; bloodshed and making mischief is attributed to them. This means that some of Adam's progeny are really involved in this misbehaviour; the history of humanity confirms the angels' expectations. Thus the word "who" does not refer to Adam, but to some of

* This view which differs from the Biblical concept regarding "the garden of Eden" is held also by the Mu'tazilites like Jubba'i (see Razi, vol. 1, p. 299) and Zamakhshari (see vol. 1, p. 130).

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his progeny, which leads to the conclusion that it was man represented in Adam for whom the celebration was held.

This conclusion could be reinforced by another *āyah* that speaks of man as the only responsible creature. Allāh says:

> We did indeed offer
> The trust to the Heavens
> And the Earth and the Mountains
> But they refused
> To undertake it:
> Being afraid thereof;
> But man undertook it
> He was indeed unjust and foolish.[27]

The "trust" mentioned in this *āyah* means religion and duties or commandments of Allah. The role to be played by man according to this *āyah* is not different from the role of the *khalīfah*. He who fulfills Allāh's trust is indeed Allāh's *khalīfah*. Man in fact has a unique position in this world. His role is not similar to other creatures. It follows that man's behaviour is purposive. He is being asked to work hard so as to overcome the obstacles that might appear. Being Allāh's vicegerent does not mean that he leads an easy life. He is in fact being put under probatory condition. Man who is indeed privileged by Allāh faces difficult situations. Of the several *āyahs* that asset this principle is Allāh's saying:

> Do men think that
> They will be left alone
> On saying 'We believe'
> And that they will not be tested.[28]

This *āyah* and other similar ones show that through probation man is able to translate into observable behaviour what he believes in. It is not sufficient for a believer in Allāh to remain inactive on the pretext that he keeps his belief deep in his heart.

One more important fact should be stressed here. Being Allāh's *khalīfah*, man has no right to claim absolute sovereignty over this world. He has to obey Allāh's orders, and he has no right to substitute for them others that contradict them. If he does do so, then he could

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be described as *ẓalūm* and *jahūl*[29] (unjust and foolish) and it would follow that he should be deprived of the title *khalīfah*. Rebellion against Allāh's teachings in the field of education or economics or any other field is in sharp contradiction with vicegerency. The unjust and foolish people like 'Ād, Thamūd and Noah's people were destroyed and succeeded by other *khulafā'* because they failed to carry the burdens of the vicegerency.

But man who is considered as Allāh's vicegerent cannot uphold the responsibilities of the vicegerency unless he is equipped with potentialities that ei able him to do so. The Qur'ān asserts that he has several unique characteristics; the first important attribute is that man is good by *fiṭrah* from the start. He has not inherited any sin due to Adam's departure from Paradise.

The Qur'ān uses the word *fāṭir* in several *āyahs* to mean the Creator. In all these *āyahs* this word is associated with the heavens and the earth. The verb *faṭara* is also located in several *āyahs*. In some of these *āyahs* the heavens and the earth are used as the object of the verb while man is used as an object in others. Nothing could be derived concerning the nature of the *fiṭrah* from these *āyahs* because the word "*faṭara*" is simply used here to mean "create". But in one of these *āyahs* the word *fiṭrah* is mentioned in connection with religion *(dīn)*. In *Sūrat al-Rūm* we read:

> Set thou thy face
> Steadily and truly to the Faith *(dīn)*
> Establish Allāh's handiwork *(fiṭrah)* according
> To the pattern on which He has made
> mankind.[30]

This *āyah* connects man's *fiṭrah* and Allāh's religion. There can be no contradiction between the two; but the relationship between them is not explained in this *āyah*.

More details concerning the nature of the *fiṭrah* come from another *āyah* which indicates that Allāh made a contract with each individual to be **righteous** and good. In *Sūrat al-A'rāf* we read:

> When thy Lord drew forth
> From the Children of Adam

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From their loins
Their descendants, and made them
Testify concerning themselves, saying:
'Am I not Your Lord
Who cherishes and sustains you?'
They said: 'Yea!
We do testify' (This), lest
Ye should say on the Day
Of Judgement: 'Of this we
Were never mindful.'[31]

This *āyah* makes it evident that Allāh made man confess that He is his Lord. But when and how did this take place?

One interpretation says that Allāh drew forth the decendants of Adam from the loins of their fathers while another interpretation mentions that the descendants were taken from the loins of Adam himself. The first interpretation cites the same *āyah* to support its view. The *āyah* says: "from their loins" and not "from his loin". This implies that others than Adam were meant. The second interpretation relies on several *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet which mention Adam himself as being the only one from whom the descendants were drawn forth. The *Ḥadīths* that touch upon this issue could be categorized into two groups. The first group shows that after Allāh had drawn forth, people were classified as people of the left or people of the right. The second group asserts that Allāh did make a contract with all human beings. Ibn Kathīr mentions that the two *Ḥadīths* that belong to this category are not traceable to the Prophet *(mawqūfāni* lā marfū'āni)*.[32]

Rāzī believes that these two interpretations are not necessarily contradictory and hence it is possible to combine them together. He maintains that the *āyah* shows that Allāh drew forth the descendants from the fathers; this could be understood as that this specific man would have certain specific descendants and that each of these would have his own decendants and so on. The sequence of peoples coming to this world is well known to Allāh. "The drawn forth" took place

* The *Ḥadith* is described as *mawqūf* if the narrator attributes it to one of the Prophet's Companions without mentioning the Companion's reference to the Prophet (S. Al-Ṣaliḥ, *'Ulūm al-Ḥadith*, Beirut, 1977, p. 208).

in accordance with this arrangement. To say that Allāh drew forth the descendants fom Adam himself cannot be derived from the *Āyah*, but there is nothing in the *āyah* that could be raised against it. As long as the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet did mention it, then the best thing to be done is to combine the two interpretations together.[33] The proponents of these two interpretations give also two slightly different views regarding the content of the contract. Some believe that the descendants had accepted Islam after they had been drawn forth. According to them, *fiṭrah* means Islam. They refer to one of the *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet narrated by Abū Hurayrah:

> Five practices are characteristic of the '*fiṭrah*': circumcision, shaving the pubic region, clipping the nails, cutting the moustaches short and pulling out the hair under the arms.[34]

The other interpretation limits the meaning of *fiṭrah* to *tauḥīd*. It is based on a narration attributed to 'Abd Allāh Ibn 'Abbās in which he mentioned that he had been unable to understand the real meaning of *fāṭir* until two Bedouins — who were disputing regarding the possession of a well — came to him to settle their dispute. One of them told Ibn 'Abbās that it was he who *fatara* that well and by this he meant that he was the first one who started digging it.[35] Keeping this meaning for *fāṭir* and *faṭara* in mind and that *taūḥīd* is the first major step in religion, then *fiṭrah* and *taūḥīd* mean the same thing; they are synonymous.

So far, two interpretations regarding *fiṭrah* have been mentioned, but there is still a third interpretation that holds a rather different view. The adherents of this interpretation rely on reason as well as on the Qur'ān to support their view. They believe that *fiṭrah* means the form bestowed on man when he was created. Whatever man has leads him to the belief in Allah. To put it in Ibn al-Qayyim's words, "Man accepts Islam in the same way a child accepts his mother's breast."[36]According to this view, man is not a Muslim by birth; a new-born child does not know the principles of Islam; but he has the potentialities that enable him to become a Muslim. The evidence that is being cited in support of this interpretation is that the *āyah* which refers to the contract shows the wisdom that lies behind the contract. The latter part of it reads:

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Lest ye should say on the Day
Of Judgement: 'Of this we
Were never mindful.'

This part of the *āyah* links the *mīthāq* (contract) with Allāh's wish to make grounds for judgements. Since the Qur'ān asserts that Allāh does not punish those who are unaware or to whom no apostles were sent, it follows that the forming of the grounds for judgement takes place only after birth and not before.

Moreover, anyone who makes testimony should be able to remember the event for which he was a witness. But man does not remember whatever relates to that contract. This indicates that making the testimony did not involve verbal or physical behaviour. The individual who simply attends any meeting or participates in its discussions should be able to remember at least some of what had taken place. But this is not the case with the present issue. This means that Allāh did not ask the descendants verbally about their Creator and that none of them gave a verbal answer. Making testimony which is mentioned in the *āyah* means that Allāh created man in a perfect manner, which leads him to believe in Allāh provided that nothing rises as an obstacle. This perfection is a witness of Allāh's existence.

In addition to this, it is obvious that Allāh exempts children from duties simply because they have not the ability to perceive or realize what goes on. The Qur'ān mentions that the child knows nothing when he comes to this world. He who knows nothing cannot be a Muslim or a non-Muslim, a believer or non-believer.

The three interpretations of the *fiṭrah* disagree on how Allāh made man favourably disposed to His recognition; yet, the behavioural resultant is not different. The common denominator in the three interpretations is that man is inclined to be religious. He is strongly linked to *tawḥīd*. The causes that lead to disbelief lie outside human nature; they do not stem from inside.

This optimistic outlook on man is in sharp contradiction to the pessimistic outlook held by some psychologists and biologists who insist on the existence of some inherited elements of evil in man. It is obvious that aggression is a strong drive in the beasts. Man, when

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considered as an evolved form of other animals, should have the aggressive drive. Lorenz — the Austrian ethologist — devoted his book *On Aggression* to proving that fighting is an instinct which exists in man as well as beast and that this drive is directed against members of the same species. The beast of Lorenz and the *khalīfah* of Allāh possess completely different innate faculties. The concept of *fiṭrah* differs also from the Christian concept of original sin. Thompson makes an unjustifiable conclusion when saying, "The point of view of the Qur'ān seems to be that all who are not believers are *ipso facto, ḍāllūn*; which we suggest is another way of saying that in the natural course of things man is born in a state of *dalāl*, he is born *a ḍāll.*"[37] A man who misbehaves is not by necessity born in sin. Man who has good *fiṭrah* is liable to err or misbehave.

The concept of *fiṭrah* in the Qur'ān diverges also from another theory that considers human nature as neutral. The behaviourist school of psychology maintains that man is neither good nor bad at birth. He is a *Tabula Rasa.* The environment plays the crucial role in shaping his personality. According to Skinner, "The environment determines the individual even when he alters the environment."[38] Thus man inherits nothing more than a few reflexes. Religion as well as other aspects of behaviour could be explained in terms of the environmental factors.[39] The fact that Muslim children in general become Muslims while Christian children become Christians is cited by Skinner as an example to illustrate his theory.

No doubt the long period of dependency on others during childhood allows the parents to exercise great influence on their children. This fact which attracted the attention of Skinner is well stated in one of the *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet that shows how the *fiṭrah* is influenced by the environment. Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said:

> No child is born but has the Islamic *fiṭrah,* but his parents turn it into a Jew or a Christian.[40]

This *Ḥadīth* stresses that the *fiṭrah* which is innate in the child could be greatly influenced by the environment. The *fiṭrah* does not bloom regardless of the surrounding conditions; it may be modified

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or even drastically changed if the environment is unfavourable. The external factors interact with the *fiṭrah;* its nature depends in the long run upon such interaction. But to say this does not necessitate man's being the slave of his environment as the behaviourist school suggests. Two individuals who live under the same conditions might respond to the very same stimulus in different ways. The wife of the Pharaoh of Egypt was a true believer in Allāh although the surrounding environment was saturated with corruption. Instead of obeying her husband she prayed to Allāh:

> Build for me, in nearness
> To Thee, a mansion in the Gardens
> And save me from Pharaoh
> And his doings.[41]

Environment is an influential factor that shapes man's behaviour, but the Qur'ān does not regard it as the only factor.

Educators agree that educational theory and practice are deeply affected by the way man's nature is viewed. If man is considered as having innate evil, then education is mainly concerned with suppressing or supplanting these elements. According to Lorenz's theory which is built upon the innate aggression in man, educators are mainly concerned with looking for substitute objects and sublimation procedures that help in discharging the aggressive drive.[42] The theory that considers man's nature as neutral gives great importance to teaching. Since the child has neither good nor bad elements, then effective teaching can produce the desired personality. Through the process of learning one might become a lawyer or a thief regardless of one's tendencies.[43] little attention needs to be paid to the child because he has nothing inside him to be cared for. It is the teacher — and not the student — who is the master of the teaching situation. On the other hand, when man is viewed as possessing good innate elements, then education becomes interested in developing such elements. The personality of the learner is accepted because he has such goodness; the educator is not busy with suppressing or supplanting innate evil, but tries his best to avoid exposing the students to unfavourable circumstances. The concept of *fiṭrah* does not exempt theMuslim educator from putting forth his utmost effort. Since the *fiṭrah* does not bloom by itself,

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relaxation on the part of the educators cannot be justified.

The concept of *fiṭrah* necessitates also that Islamic education should aim at strengthening the link that ties man with Allāh. Whatever the student learns at school should not contradict this principle. Believing that man recognizes Allāh by *fiṭrah* cannot be reconciled with the theory that considers monotheism as an advanced stage of religious belief. *Tawḥīd* was the essence of all religions revealed to man by Allāh and the plurality of gods has come to dominate only when *tawḥid* was forgotten. It should be emphasized that the concept of *tawḥīd* is not a matter of number, but of authority.[44] It is this concept of *tawḥīd* that stresses Allāh's Sovereignty that should be respected in the Islamic curriculum.

But besides the *fiṭrah* there exist several biological needs such as the need for water, food and sex. These needs are part of man's body which is made of clay.[45] They are the very same needs that also exist in animals; this fact makes it relevant to ask whether it is possible for these animal needs to function in harmony with the *fiṭrah*; and if that is possible it becomes necessary to explain why and how that happens.

It is undoubted that such needs look for satisfaction. Observation of animal behaviour shows that these needs follow the principle of pleasure and do not abide by any ethical code. If man behaves similarly to animals while he is satisfying them, then one cannot exclude the possibility of damaging the *fiṭrah*. Allāh's *khalīfah* is distinguished from other creatures and his behaviour should not be similar to that of lower beings. Being heedless about these needs is really out of the question from the Qur'anic point of view. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah holds such individuals to be analogous to the inhabitants of a village who decide not to do anything in spite of the fact that they are threatened by the flood of a neighouring river.[46]

A second alternative to dealing with the biological needs lies in their suppression. This solution appears to be in accord with man's *fiṭrah* because it aims at blocking such elements that man shares with animals. But, it is very clear that certain biological needs must be satisfied; man's being deprived of food and water leads to his death. Even if we take into consideration the sexual need which might be

suppressed, we find that suppression leads to harmful results. The psycho-analytic school showed clearly that strong suppressed drives do not fade forever; they may appear later openly or in disguised forms as dreams. In addition, the individual who is exposed to suppression suffers from psychological disorders.[47]

The Qur'ān makes it clear that such suppression is not favoured at all; this could be derived from the *āyahs* that emphasize the fact that nothing was created vainly. In *Sūrat al-Rūm* the last part of the *āyah* that refers to *fiṭrah* reads:

> No change (let there be)
> In the work (wrought).[48]

This is a clear evidence that what exists should not be changed, which implies that it cannot contradict the *fiṭrah.* He who tries to make changes in man's nature, be it the suppression of the sexual need or anything else, is not following the teachings of Islam. In *Sūrat al-Nisā'* it is emphasized that it is Satan who orders men

> ... to deface
> The (fair) nature created
> By Allāh[49]

According to some interpretations the fair nature which is mentioned in this āyah is related to the sexual need and hence the *āyah* orders man not to practise emasculation, while others interpret it to mean *fiṭrah.*[50] The fact that the first part of the *āyah* refers to slitting the ears of the cattle as a devilish act makes the first interpretation more likely.

It appears that Islam not only disapproves of the suppression of innate needs, but is also against any act that leads to changing the appearance of man. This could be supported also by the several *Ḥadiths* that prohibit the tatoo mark *(washm)* and lenghening the hair artificially *(waṣl)*[51] The innate drives that exist must be satisfied. The Qur'ān orders man to eat and drink. The imperative verb *ishrabū* is located in several *āyahs* while the imperative verb *kulū* is also located in more than twenty *āyahs.* The *āyahs* that relate to *nikāh* are no less numerous. Islam not only calls for the satisfaction of these biological needs, but considers man's refusal to do so willingly as something

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undesirable. This is evident from the following *Ḥadīth* which came in response to some of the Companions who denounced marriage as well as other acts connected with the biological needs.

> What has happened to these people that they say so and so, whereas I observe prayer and sleep too. I observe fast and suspend observing it. I marry women also. And who turns away from my *Sunnah*, he has no relation with me.[52]

The underlying cause for emphasis on the satisfaction of the innate drives is that this satisfaction is strongly connected with the role to be played by the *khalīfah*. The Qur'ān explains that the task assigned to the *khalīfah* is not easy. He cannot in fact play his role if he is put under stress or if he is faced with dangers that threaten him. Food and water are essential for his existence as an individual while the sexual drive is important for the survival of human beings as a species.

Having clarified that the Qur'ān recognizes the existence of the biological needs and urges their satisfaction, it becomes necessary to shed light on the conditions that make it possible for these needs to exist with the *fiṭrah* side by side without making much trouble. It is necessary to stress that the body to which these needs are attached does not make the whole of man. Body is one element to which was added something different. The interaction of the *rūḥ* with the body produced the new *khalīfah*. This constitutes the second important attribute which distinguished the *khalīfah*.

The word *rūḥ* is used in the Qur'ān to mean mercy or the Qur'ān or an angel or Gabriel in particular or Jesus or that spiritual being which unites with the body.[53] In the following *āyah*

> Wa-yas' alūnaka 'an *al-rūḥ*
> Qul: *al-rūḥ* min amr Rabbī[54]

The word *rūḥ* is understood by most interpreters to give the last meaning.[55] Such interpretation appears to contradict the conclusion that the Qur'ān does not use the term *rūḥ* to mean spirit or soul.[56]

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The word *nafs* which is used in the Qur'ān to give different meanings is also used in some *āyahs* to mean the soul. In the following *āyah*.

> .... the angels
> stretch forth their hands
> Saying: 'Yield up *(anfusakum)*'[57]

the word *anfusakum* is interpreted to mean your souls.[58] Thus man's soul is referred to in the Qur'ān either as *nafs* or *rūḥ*.

The Qur'ān makes it quite explicit that man's life is dependent upon the existence of the soul in his body. Its departure from the body means man's death. The addition of the word *rūḥ* to Allāh to form the phrase *min Rūḥī* does not mean at all that man's spirit is part of Allāh. Its attribution to Allāh is a sign of glorification, but not a state of possession. The *rūḥ* is one of Allāh's creations which has superior quality; but nothing more. Books of interpretation agree entirely on this point. But if it is not part of Allāh, and if it is not similar to the body, then what is its nature? What are its main characteristics? Such questions cannot be answered by referring to the Qur'ān; the *āyah* that restricts the knowledge of the *rūḥ* to Allāh has been quoted.

If the nature of the soul is not known to man and there is no possible way of getting such knowledge, then it might be helpful to examine — if possible — the way the soul unites with the body. Of the several *āyahs* that refer to this issue we may quote the following:

> When I have fashioned him
> In due proportion and breathed *(nafakhtu)*
> Into him of My spirit
> Fall ye down in obeisance
> Unto him.[59]

The term *nafakhtu* is used to express the process of the **unification** of the soul with the body. Through **Allāh's** breathing into man, his life starts. In interpreting the verb ***nafakha,*** Zamakhsharī mentions that the verb is used simply for the purpose of illustration; he stresses that there was neither *nafkh* nor *manfūkh*.[60] But in interpreting the very same verb which was mentioned in another *sūrah* he mentions

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that Allāh breathed *(nafakha)* into man; the analogical meaning of *nafakha* is not mentioned here.[61] Qurṭubī who is more consistent interprets the process of breathing to mean creating the soul and adding it to the body. This is also the interpretation given by Ibn Kathīr. It might be relevant to note that the *nafkh* as explained by Zamakhsharī whether it is considered as an analogical or factual process helps very little in understanding how the unification of the soul with the body takes place. The interpretation of Qurṭubī and Ibn Kathīr refers also to the result of the process rather than to its description.

So far, little has been revealed concerning the soul. But there is strong evidence in the Qur'ān for the fact that the addition of the soul to the body results in deep changes; the body does not retain its characteristics as it is, but becomes something different.

> .... then We developed
> Out of it another creature
> So blessed by Allāh
> The best to create.[62]

This indicates that man cannot be viewed as a creature who possesses flesh, bones and innate needs only. Those characteristics that he shares with animals have been modified. His behaviour which is connected with the biological needs is by the same token dissimilar to that of animals. To clarify this further unification of the soul with the body could be held in analogy to the chemical reaction of two different elements that produces a new product that differs from the two constituent elements. Man's behaviour is the resultant of the interaction of the soul and the body. Although man has soul and body, yet he is viewed as an integral personality. Behaviour cannot be described as purely pertaining to the soul or to the body. Praying or going on pilgrimage which are considered as something spiritual cannot be fulfilled without the participation of the body in a certain form. On the other hand satisfaction of the biological needs does not take place in isolation from the soul. Man satisfies his needs in a human way. The satisfaction of the biological needs is connected with higher aims. Man who is being asked by Allāh to eat and drink is being asked to remember others while he is satisfying these needs;

he is warned of being a spendthrift or consuming unlawful food or drink. One of the *āyahs* reads as follows:

> Eat and drink
> But waste not by excess
> For Allah loveth not the wasters.[63]

As for the sexual drive, the pleasure which follows its satisfaction is not condemned but rather regulated. What is more important is that sexual intercourse is linked with productivity which is related to the concept of man as being Allāh's vicegerent. The Qur'āndescribes the wives in one of the *āyahs* as a tilth.[64] In one of the *Ḥadīths* having sexual relations with the wife is put on parallel lines with the glorification of Allāh and hence it deserves Allāh's reward.[65] The *khalīfah* who has good *fiṭrah* is not condemned when he satisfies his needs; in fact he should do so if he is to succeed in his office. Satisfaction of these needs — in a human way — does not contradict his *fiṭrah;* both characteristics go hand in hand. This fact could be evidenced by a *Ḥadīth* that relates to *Isrā'*and *Mi'rāj*. The Prophet's preferring milk to wine was considered by Gabriel as being guided to the *fiṭrah.*[66]

The previous discussion reveals that the biological needs are part of the *khalīfah's* equipment to cope with his environment. Education cannot escape the impact of the implication of this fact. Psychologists emphasize that all acquired motives can be seriously handicapped whenever the basic needs are threatened. The motivation for independence or curiosity do not exist in individuals who feel unsafe; this explains why during years of wars or famine the individual's pursuit of knowledge is weakened. Thus to care for the basic needs means caring for the personality of the individual as a whole. Giving relevant information, helping the students avoid the exciting or thwarting situations and building a positive attitude towards these needs are only examples of what the school can and has to do.

But it has been already shown that the basic needs in man do not remain unchanged as is the case with animals. It follows that the school curriculum has to care also for the soul. Biological needs and the bodily activities do not constitute the main core of the curriculum as is the case with the educational theory that considers

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man as an animal who differs from them in complexity rather than in kind. Such aspects of man which made him superior to animals should receive more importance. Comparison between man's behaviour and animal behaviour does not lie within the circle of Islamic conception.

So far, two characteristics of the *khalīfah* have been discussed, namely: he has good *fiṭrah* and he has a *rūḥ* that unites with his body. But he still has a third important attribute: he is free to choose his own behaviour. The *khalīfah* had accepted willingly the trust which other beings were unable to carry. It suffices to quote among the numerous *āyahs* that assert this principle the following *āyah*:

> Say, 'The Truth is
> From your Lord
> Let him who will,
> Believe, and let him
> Who will, reject it.'[67]

It is evident from this *āyah* that man accepts or rejects Allāh's faith. He has free will. It is this will which makes him select this or that element which would interact with his *fiṭrah*. The way the *fiṭrah* functions is influenced by the free will that man possesses.

But the fact that man has free will is challenged by some who believe that there are several *āyahs* in the Qur'ān which assert predestination. The *āyahs* that refer to *khatm* and *ṭab'* are quoted to support this view. In the Qur'ān we read:

> Thus doth God seal up *(yaṭba')*
> The hearts of those
> Who reject faith.[68]

The second type of *āyah* which is cited to justify the predestinarian view is that which ascribes *hidāyah* or *ḍalālah* to Allāh. In *Sūrat al-An'ām* Allāh says:

> Those whom Allāh (in His plan)
> Willeth to guide — He openeth
> Their breast to Islam.[69]

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Here *hidāyah* is interpreted in such a way that man is guided regardless of his will; he has no choice at all. Some go a step further and believe that it makes no difference whether man tries to put forth his effort or not. The following verse illustrates explicitly such an outlook

> *Jarā qalam al qaḍā' bi-mā yakūn*
> *Fasiyyāni al-taḥarruk wa-al-sukūn.*[70]

The Jabrites who hold such predeterministic views feel free to interpret the *āyahs* that assert man's free will the way they like. They believe that the Qur'ān is one unity, but some *āyahs* that might contradict others in appearance need interpretation. But there are others who believe that the existence of the *āyahs* that refer to man's will together with others that refer to predestination is an evident proof of the contradiction of the Qur'ān. Goldziher concludes after discussing man's freedom in Islam that the Qur'anic *āyahs* that deal with this important ethical issue are contradictory.[71]

There are several reasons for this misunderstanding of the *āyahs* of the Qur'ān. Apart from the personal prejudices that lead to such attitudes there also exists a state of confusion regarding certain related ideas. Allāh's Will and Allāh's Approval are viewed as if they were the same thing. The Qur'ān made it clear that Allāh is the Creator of all beings; His Will determines the existence of whatever occurs in the universe. All things are from Allāh; they are His Creation. But to say that does not imply that Allāh loves or accepts devilish behaviour

> .... but He liketh not
> Ingratitude from His servants.[72]

In another *āyah* the Qur'ān ridicules the non-believers who thought that worshipping several gods is not bad because Allāh willed their existence.[73] It follows that Allāh's Approval and His Will are not the very same thing.[74] Failing to distinguish between the two concepts led the Qadarites to refuse the fact that Allāh is the creator of sins, while it led the Jabrites to love whatever happens because it is simply linked with Allāh.

Allāh's Will is also confused with Allāh's Knowledge. The Qur'ān

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emphasizes that Allāh knows whatever man conceals or reveals. The events of this world are well known to Allāh before they happen. This fact is well illustrated in the following *āyah*:

> No misfortune can happen
> On earth or in your souls
> But is recorded in
> A decree
> before We bring
> It into existence.[75]

But to say this does not mean that Allāh predetermines man's behaviour. Allāh's Knowledge might be held in analogy to the knowledge of an alert teacher has pertaining to his students. If the teacher knows that a certain student is more likely to fail his examinations because he lacks the ability or the interest, then this knowledge cannot be cited as the cause of failure. To know and to will are two different acts.

Allāh's Knowledge and Allāh's Approval should be distinguished from Allāh's Will. It is important to note also that Allāh willed that man should have a will. The Qur'ān which refers to Allāh's Will in several *āyahs* refers to man's will in no less *āyahs*.* Thus the Qur'ān views man's will as derived from Allāh's Will, but it is not part of it. It cannot be put on parallel lines with it as the Mu'tazilites did.[76] It follows that man chooses his behaviour; he is responsible for this choice; but whatever he chooses does not lie outside the domain of Allāh's Will.[77] This means that man has to take the initiative because Allāh willed him to do so. This conclusion could be evidenced by the following *ayāh:*

> Because Allāh will never change
> The Grace which He hath bestowed
> On a people until they change
> What is in their (own) souls.[78]

Another reason for misunderstanding man's free will as viewed in the Qur'ān lies in failing to recognize that the same term might be used to give more than one meaning. Examination of the usage of

* See for examples *surāhs* 17:19; 74:55; 81:28.

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the following three verbs: *qaḍā, qadara* and *hadā* or their derivatives will, it is hoped, illustrate this issue.

As for the verb *qadā*, it is used in the Qur'ān to mean "completed" or told, or "created".[79] The noun *qadar* is used to mean greatness of definite time of knowledge. The Night of Qadr is described as the night of power of honour. It might be interesting to note that the usage of the two terms together, *qaḍā' wa-qadar*, which is used to express the predestination view is not used in the Qur'ān at all. Not only that, but none of the two terms is used to designate predestination. Hence it is unjustifiable to conclude that belief in *qaḍā'* and *qadar* implies holding a deterministic view towards man.

The verb *hadā* is also used to give different meanings. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah distinguishes between three levels of *hidāyah*.[80] The first level of *hidāyah* refers to it as being part of man's nature. When the verb *hadā* or its derivatives is used in this meaning, then the *hidāyah* could not be attributed but to Allāh. Human beings including the Prophets do not possess the ability to guide. In *Sūrat al-A'lā* Allāh asks man to glorify Him:

> Who hath ordained laws
> And granted guidance *(hidāyah)*.[81]

Hidāyah as used in this sense is part of man; it is something innate in him that leads him to truth. Thus the concept of *hidāyah* coincides with that of *fiṭrah* which was discussed earlier in this chapter.

The second level of *hidāyah* refers to environmental factors that make guidance possible. The probatory life which man leads means that he has more than one alternative. It would be to his advantage if others help him make the right decision. The prophets are viewed as men who can give this help: the well-grounded in *'ilm* could do the same job. In the following *āyah* Allāh addresses His Prophet:

> Thou dost guide (men)
> To the Straight Way.[82]

It might be relevant to note that while the *hidāyah* is ascribed to Prophets the *ḍalālah* is ascribed to the chiefs of unbelief. The Pharaoh[83] of Egypt and the Sāmirī[84] are only two examples of those who had led their people astray.

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The third level of *hidāyah* refers to man's role in following the Straight Way. It is true that the Prophets guide their people, but they cannot oblige them to follow their path. Man himself determines whether to follow or reject the *hidayah* explained by others. This is quite explicit in the *āyahs* that mention that Allāh does not guide those who reject faith. Allāh who granted His guidance to man left him free to accept or reject it. Thus *hidāyah* that belongs to this level is ascribed to man only. The following *āyah* is one of the several *āyahs* that emphasize this fact:

> As to Thamud
> We gave them guidance
> But they preferred blindness
> (Of heart) to Guidance
> So the Stunning Punishment
> Of humiliation seized them
> Because of what they had earned.[85]

It is clear that man chooses his behaviour and those who make the wrong choice pay for their misbehaviour. The *khatm* and the *ṭab'* on the hearts of unbelievers come as a penalty for their misbehaviour and not before that.[86] It is quite evident that Allāh seals the hearts of the unbelievers, but not the hearts of all men. The *iḍlāl* or *izāghah* on the part of Allāh comes only after man chooses the wrong alternative. In *Sūrat al-Ṣaff* we read:

> Then when they went wrong
> Allāh let their hearts go wrong
>
> For God guides not those
> Who are rebellious and transgressors.[87]

This discussion reveals that understanding the Qur'anic concepts is dependent upon understanding its terms. The Qur'ān is an integral book and not merely segments of unrelated *āyahs*. Ideas which are discussed briefly in one location may be discussed in more detail in another location.[88] This means that understanding a word which is mentioned in one *āyah* requires examination of other *āyahs* that use the same term. For example in (2:37) it is mentioned that Allāh turned towards Adam after he had learned "words of inspiration".

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The meaning of these words which cannot be deduced from this context is stated in (7:23). Thus while one finds that one *sūrah* deals with several subjects, each of these subjects might be dealt with in other *sūrahs*. This means that the concepts of the Qur'ān form one integral entity. The existence of evil or man's free will are better understood if they are related to the concept of the *khalīfah*. Such an attitude is essential for an adequate understanding of man's freedom in the Qur'ān. The spirit of the Qur'ān — as a whole — reveals that man is free to choose his behaviour. W.M. Watt emphasizes this fact by saying: "Strictly speaking, determinism, or the belief that man's life is determined for him from without, is not part of the gospel of Muḥammad."[89]

But, however, the freedom man enjoys is not absolute. The fact that he is Allāh's *khalīfah* negates the existence of absolute freedom. Man who has free will cannot determine for himself whatever innate powers of needs he has. These are determined for him when the *nuṭfah* is formed. Every man has a limited *ajal;* he cannot shorten or lengthen it. But on the other hand being Allāh's *khalīfah* means that man emancipates himself from all types of slavery except that to Allāh. Man in the Qur'ān does not yield to or follow the means of production. He does not yield himself to "the *dahr* which bites with its teeth." Slavery to Allāh gives man's freedom its distinctive characteristic.

Having shown that man has free will it becomes necessary to see how this characteristic is related to the two characteristics which were discussed earlier. The fact that defiance of Allāh exists means that free will may be a destructive force that spoils the *fiṭrah*. It cannot be denied that biological needs may be given such freedom that the *rūḥ* may be prevented from functioning . But to say that the existence of free will leads always to such results cannot be defended. Man's belief in One Allāh has existed on earth since the departure of Adam from Paradise. Free will was held in check by responsibility. The Qur'ān makes it clear that every individual is personally responsible for his behaviour; this individuality is reflected in the following *āyah:*

> And everyone of them
> Will come to Him singly
> On the Day of Judgement.[90]

The reward or punishment the individual receives on the Day of Judgement depends upon how he behaves in this life; his relatives or friends are of no help to him if he goes astray; he does not share with them any rewards they have nor do they share with him the punishment that befalls him. This fact is self evident in the following *āyah:*

> Namely, that no bearer
> Of burdens can bear
> The burden of another
> That mar can have nothing
> But what he strives for
> That the fruit of his striving
> Will soon come in sight
> Then will he be rewarded
> With a reward complete.[91]

It is essential to note that man's responsibility is not restricted to his overt behaviour, but it includes also the psychological attitudes which usually precede the overt behaviour. The intention to perform or not to perform a certain practice is considered part and parcel of his behaviour and hence deserves its reward or punishment. In (2:284) we read:

> Whether ye show what is in
> Your minds or conceal it, Allāh calleth
> You to account for it.

Responsibility then consists of overt behaviour and the intention to perform it. The individual may have the intention to commit a certain action, yet such an action might not come into existence due to external factors that are unfavourable to it. Such an individual is called to account for his intention be it positive or negative. The Prophet tells us in one *Ḥadīth* that a man who fails to materialize good intentions due to illness or travel will be rewarded as if he had done so.[92] In another *Ḥadīth* we are told that a Muslim who has the intention to kill another Muslim will go to Hell.[93]

But to say that man's responsibility is individualistic does not mean that one's responsibility could be fully understood in isolation

from others. Man who lives in a society interacts with other members of his society. It is his duty to direct this interaction; this can be achieved if he limits his participation to positive contributions and if he strives to avoid responding in kind to the negative elements which others might introduce. One *Ḥadīth* tells that anyone who introduces a good practice will have added to his reward the reward of those who follow his example without diminishing any of their share; the same result applies to anyone who introduces unacceptable practices.[94] On the other hand it is the duty of the individual to try to stop the misbehaviour of others; if he cannot, then he is being asked at least to adopt a negative attitude towards it.

When responsibility is viewed in its social context, it becomes clearer why some *āyahs* tell us about the extra burdens that will be added to the burdens of the non-believers. In *Sūrat al-'Ankabūt* we read:

> They will bear their own
> Burdens, and other burdens
> Along with their own.[95]

This *āyah* reveals that the non-believers share with others their burdens which implies their responsibility for leading them astray. Responsibility for other's behaviour is not determined by kinship but by the extent that one has the power to influence the behaviour of others. This explains why in (33:68) the non-believers ask Allāh on the Day of Judgement to multiply the punishment of their leaders.

The educational implications of the concept of free will are quite evident. When the student believes that his behaviour is predetermined for him he is likely to develop passive attitudes. He might try not to put forth any reasonable effort. Failure or success are attributed to external factors. On the other hand, belief in man's responsibility gives deeper meaning to the process of education. Education becomes concerned with helping the students to evaluate the several alternatives and to select the right one. Education cannot be viewed as a compelling process through which the teacher determines every step to be taken by the individual student. Guidance rather than compulsion is the main characteristic of

education that cares for freedom. *Hidāyah* that belongs to the second level is expected from the teacher while that which belongs to the third level is expected from the student.

Discussion of the nature of man has revealed that in the Qur'anic view evil is not part of it; but comes from outside. This statement leaves the door open to conclude that the universe *(kawn)* which constitutes the natural environment of man may be viewed as something dangerous that threatens him and hence education should be concerned with developing the techniques that subdue it. If that is so, then the *khalīfah* is threatened with dangers or at least difficulties that might undermine his role.

Going back to the *āyahs* that refer to the creation of the new *khalīfah* and his descent to the earth one finds that the earth is not considered as a prison or even an unpleasant place. It is considered as a dwelling place where means of livelihood are available. The association of the word *matā'* with life on this earth[96] indicates that enjoyment rather than evil exists in the *khalīfah's* natural environment. Still more details concerning man's relation with the universe come from the *āyahs* that refer to *taskhīr*. In *Sūrat al-Jāthiyah* one of the *āyahs* reads as follows:

> And He has subjected *(sakhkhara)*
> To you, as from Him
> All that is in the heavens
> And on earth.[97]

Other *āyahs* go on to mention the objects which were subjected: The night, the day, the sun, the moon, the sea, the rivers and the clouds are only examples of such objects. Still more information is given regarding the use man gets from such objects. The sea provides man with fresh meat besides its usage for navigation; the sun is a shining glory while the stars guide man in his travels.

Philologically, the verb *sakhkhara* means to "conquer" or to "defeat".[98] In the Qur'ān it is used to mean that Allāh made things useful to man. Usefulness and feasibility rather than difficulty or enmity is expressed in the Qur'ān. The *āyahs* that refer to *tadhlīl* give support to this view. The earth is described in *Sūrat al-Mulk*[99] as *(dhalūl)* manageable. In the same *āyah* Allāh urges men to traverse

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through its mountainous roads which are referred to by the term *manākib*. The fact that the word *manākib* means shoulder and that the *manakib* of the camel are the most difficult to handle made Zamakhshari conclude that the use of this term is a clear indication of how manageable the objects are to man.[100]

So far, man's good *fiṭrah* and a useful universe have been emphasized. But this does not shed any light on the source of evil or even help in explaining misbehaving. This necessitates looking for another source of evil or misbehaviour. This source could not be but the way man reacts to the objects that were put under his disposal because there can be no other alternative. In *Sūrat al-Jinn*[101] it is mentioned that bestowing rain in abundance is a means through which Allāh tries man. This sense of testing is echoed in *Sūrat al-Kahf*[102] where glittering things that appear on the earth are used as a means for such testing. The objects which are mentioned as being created for man's use are considered at the same time a means for testing how man behaves. This makes it quite explicit that the *taskhīr* cannot be comprehended in isolation of the probatory life the *khalīfah* leads. Things are put at his disposal, and the way he reacts to such things determines whether he is successful or not. Misuse of such things is considered an evil act. The fire which was created for man's use may be misused if one uses it to burn innocent people.

The link that ties *taskhīr* to the probationary life makes it possible to have a deeper understanding of the fact that whatever exists is subjected to man. There are certain objects that exist which man is asked not to approach, and there are creatures that threaten man's life. Such objects might be pointed to as being contradictory to the concept of *taskhīr*. But it must be kept in mind that the Qur'ān does not consider this life as the final stage. Whatever leads to man's advantage in this life or in the Hereafter is subjected to his use. Man who abstains from eating certain foods is rewarded by Allāh. Even things that appear to be harmful are not devoid of use. In one of the *Ḥadīths* the Prophet mentions that man will be rewarded even for the prick he receives from a thorn.[103] The concept of *taskhīr* cannot be defended if it is restricted to this life.

The Qur'anic outlook towards the universe is optimistic; it differs from that which considers it an enemy to man. Hence the

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educational practices of the two outlooks cannot be the same. It is true that both of them look for intelligence as a means to achieve their ends, yet the attitude is not the same. Stress on intelligence to conquer a huge enemy is more likely to be accompanied by feelings of fear or anxiety. But when man believes that the universe yields to him and is created for his use, it is to be expected that he will feel more safe and secure. But it should be understood that this psychological attitude is not a substitute for intelligence, but is rather a reinforcing factor. The optimistic outlook on the universe which is revealed in the Qur'ān differs also from the theory that considers nature as something wise and possibly to be considered as an educator to man. It is true that a child who is hurt once by putting his finger on the fire-place is more likely not to repeat that behaviour; when this happens, it should not be attributed to the fire, but rather to the child who was able to establish a relationship between his behaviour and the outcomes of it. It is the child who learns rather than nature that teaches. Nature is devoid of understanding, but it gives its graces to those who possess such ability.

In this chapter the uniqueness of man who was appointed by Allāh as a vicegerent on this earth has been examined. This appointment bestowed on man honour and privilege. The privilege of man is quite evident in the *āyahs* that asked the angels to fall prostrate to the first *khalīfah* and those that refer to man's *tafḍīl* or man's *takrīm*. The discussion of the *fuqahā'* as to whether man is superior to the angels or not shows the prestige of man. But man who is given this privilege is asked to perform a role that other creatures cannot do. The *khalīfah* is a responsible agent who is accountable to Allāh for his behaviour. Three of the characteristics of man have also been examined, namely the good *fiṭrah*, the unification of the *rūḥ* with the body and free will. The educational implications for these attributes were referred to. As long as man is Allāh's *khalīfah* then education is concerned with developing the well-balanced personality that is capable of coping with its environment.

It remains to say that man who was honoured by Allah was given

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a fourth characteristic which is the *'aql* that helps in choosing the right alternative. The role of *'aql* in acquiring knowledge will be dealt with in the following chapter.

Notes

1. *Sūrah* 2:30.
2. Ṭabarī, vol. 1, p. 450.
3. *Sūrah* 27:62.
4. *Sūrah* 7:128-9.
5. *Sūrah* 11:57.
6. *Sūrah* 24:55.
7. Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 252. Ṭabarī, vol. 1, p. 452. Ṭabṭabā'ī, vol. 1, p. 116. Qurṭubī, vol. 1, p. 263.
8. *Sūrah* 2:34.
9. See 2:30 and 38:26.
10. See 6:165, 10:(14, 73) and 35:39.
11. See 7:(69, 74) and 27:62.
12. "Khalīfa" in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new edition) vol. 4, p. 947.
13. Watt, " God's Caliph: Qur'anic Interpretations and Umayyad Claims" in Bosworth, *Iran and Islam*, p. 568.
14. *Sūrah* 7:74.
15. *Sūrah* 6:165.
16. *Sūrah* 35:39.
17. *Sūrah* 10:14.
18. *Sūrah* 7:11-12.
19. *Sūrah* 2:84.
20. Ṭabarī, vol. 12, pp. 320-21.
21. Qurṭubī, vol. 7, p. 169.
22. Ṭabarī, vol. 12, pp. 318-19.
23. Rāzī, vol. 4, p. 185.
24. *Sūrah* 2:30.
25. Qurṭubī, vol. 1, pp. 302-303.
26. Ṭabarī, vol. 1, pp. 459-63.
27. *Sūrah* 33:72.
28. *Sūrah* 29:2.
29. Cragg, *The Privilege of Man*, p. 39.
30. *Sūrah* 30:30.
31. *Sūrah* 7:172.
32. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 2, p. 264.
33. Rāzī, vol. 4, p. 315.
34. Bukhārī, vol. 7, p. 515. The translator has omitted the last practice which is pulling out the hair under the arms.
35. Qurṭubī, vol. 14, p. 25.
36. *Shifā' al-'Alīl*, p. 381.
37. *The Doctrine of Man in the Qur'ān*, chap. 4, p. 4.

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38. *Science and Human Behaviour*, p. 448.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
40. Bukhārī, vol. 8, pp. 389-90.
41. *Sūrah* 66:11.
42. Lorenz, *On Aggression*, pp. 238-40.
43. Watson, *Behaviourism*, p. 104.
44. Cragg, "Discussions of Tauḥīd" in *Studies in Education*, vol. 16, no. 2, p. 123.
45. *Sūrah* 32:7.
46. *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, vol. 2, pp. 310-12.
47. Freud, *New Introductory Lectures in Psycho-Analysis*, p. 120.
48. *Sūrah* 30:30.
49. *Sūrah* 4:119.
50. Ṭabarī, vol. 9, pp. 215-20.
51. Bukhārī, vol. 7, p. 539.
52. Muslim, vol. 2, p. 703.
53. Qurṭubī, vol. 10, p. 323.
54. *Sūrah* 17:85.
55. Qurṭubī, vol. 10, p. 324; Rāzī, vol. 5, p. 435.
56. Calverley, "Nafs" in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (old edition), vol. 3, p. 827.
57. *Sūrah* 6:93
58. Ṭabarī, vol. 11, pp. 539-40.
59. *Sūrah* 15:29.
60. Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, p. 577.
61. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 509.
62. *Sūrah* 23:14.
63. *Sūrah* 7:31.
64. *Sūrah* 2:223.
65. Muslim, vol. 2, p. 482.
66. Bukhārī, vol. 6, p. 196.
67. *Sūrah* 18:29.
68. *Sūrah* 7:101.
69. *Sūrah* 6:125.
70. Quoted in Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol. 4, p. 235.
71. Goldziher, ***Vorlesungen Über den Islam, Heidelberg***, 1925, pp. 87-88. The Arabic translation, p. 93.
72. *Sūrah* 39:7.
73. *Sūrah* 43:20.
    Qurṭubī, vol. 15, p. 236.
74. *Sūrah* 57:22.
75. See for examples *sūrahs* 17:19; 74:55; 81:28.
76. Rāzī, vol. 8, p. 342.
77. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 4, p. 458.
78. *Sūrah* 8:53.
79. Ṭabarī, vol. 2, p. 542. Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 459.
80. *Shifā' al 'Alīl*, pp. 98-120.
81. *Sūrah* 87:3.
82. *Sūrah* 42:52.
83. *Sūrah* 20:79.
84. *Sūrah* 20:85.
85. *Sūrah* 41:17.
86. Rāzī, vol. 8, p. 139.

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87. *Sūrah* 61:5.
88. Sid, *The Hermeneutical Problem of the Qur'ān in Islamic History*, p. 168. See also Bell and Watt, *Introduction to the Qur'ān*. p 74.
89. *Free Will and Predestination*, p. 172.
90. *Sūrah* 19:95.
91. *Sūrah* 53:38-41.
92. Bukhārī, vol. 4. p. 150.
93. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 30.
94. Nawawī, *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*, pp. 97-98.
95. *Sūrah* 29:13.
96. *Sūrah* 2:36.
97. *Sūrah* 45:13.
98. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 6, p. 17.
99. *Sūrah* 67:15.
100. Zamakhsharī, vol. 4, p. 580.
101. *Sūrah* 72:16-17.
102. *Sūrah* 18:7.
103. Bukhārī, vol. 7, p. 371

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CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE ROLE OF *'AQL* IN ITS ACQUISITION

Several characteristics of Allāh's *khalīfah* were examined in Chapter Two. This chapter is devoted to the discussion of the nature and function of *'aql* which forms an essential constituent of man. Without *'aql* learning and acquiring new experiences cannot take place. The meaning of "knowledge" *('ilm* and *ma'rifah)* is first explored; this is followed by a survey of the terms that refer to the faculty of reasoning in man. To be aware of something through the senses forms the first step in the process of perception; and for this reason the role of the senses in perception is particularly emphasized. Besides the senses, man is endowed with the ability to refer to things by using symbols. The *ayah* that relates to this issue *Wa 'allāma Adam al-asmā' kullahā,*[1] is explored in detail in the light of psychological findings. The last part of the chapter deals with the role of *'aql*, its limitations and the educational implications that can be drawn from this.

Knowledge is one of the basic equipments of man in this life. His personality is deeply affected by the quality and the quantity of the knowledge he acquires. One of the *āyahs* shows that when an individual comes into this life he knows nothing; *Lā ta'lamūna shay'ā.*[2] Although this phrase has different interpretations,* the *āyah* nevertheless shows that the newly born infant lacks knowledge. The importance of knowledge is recognized in all the psychological definitions of intelligence, even those that stress dealing with novel situations. The definition of intelligence as "the ability to overcome

* Several interpretations are given; lack of knowledge is interpreted to mean that nothing is known concerning:
  A. The contract that Allāh had with Adam's progeny,
  B. The future of the individual in the Hereafter, or
  C. The events that wait the individual in this life. See Qurṭubī, vol. 10, p. 151.

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difficulties in new situations"[3] presupposes the existence of relevant knowledge.

One of the terms that refer to knowledge in the Qur'ān is *'ilm*. The derivatives of *'ilm* constitute about one percent of the vocabulary of the Qur'ān. Rosenthal notes that "the frequency with which the root *'alima* occurs in the Qur'ān is not a matter of chance. It is mentioned with such persistence that nobody could fail to notice it."[4] The importance of *'ilm* is also felt in the numerous *āyahs* which attach importance and prestige to those who possess knowledge and the *āyahs* which reprimand individauls who lack it. In (58:11) those who are given *'ilm* and *īmān* are raised in rank. Commenting on this *āyah* Ibn Mas'ūd states that individuals who are endowed with *'ilm* are higher in rank than those who have *īmān* and have not been given *'ilm*.[5] In (3:18) those who possess *'ilm* are mentioned in association with the angels and Allāh. In (20:114) the Prophet is ordered by Allāh to pray to Him that he might be advanced in *'ilm*. The importance of knowledge is also emphasized in several *Ḥadīths*. The Prophet mentions in one *Ḥadīth* that the knowledgeable person *('ālim)* excels the worshipper *('abid)* just as the full moon excels other stars.[6]

The term *'ālim* is found in its singular form in thirteen *āyahs*. It is mentioned in all these *āyahs* in connection with the unseen which shows that its usage is limited to Allāh alone. The same thing applies to the term *'allām* which is followed by the term *al-ghuyūb* in the four *ayāhs* where it occurs. Thus these two terms, *'alīm* and *'allām*, are used in connection with Allāh alone. But the term *'alīm* which is located in 163 *āyahs* is used as an Attribute of Allāh in 155 *āyahs*. In the other eight *āyahs* it is used to describe human beings; in some of these *'alīm* is used in connection with a magician; in (12:55) Joseph describes himself as *ḥafīẓ* and *'alīm* while the term is used in (15:53) and (51:28) as an attribute of Isaac of whose birth the angels brought glad tidings to Abraham. Thus the term *'alīm* is used in reference to either Allāh or man.

On the other hand, there are some terms whose usage is limited to man. Obviously, the two plural forms of *'ālim*, namely *'ālimūn* and *'ulama*, and the terms that refer to a group of individuals such as *ulū al-'ilm* and *al-rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm* occur in several *āyahs*. This allows

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one to conclude that although the term *'ālim* is not used in its singular form to refer to man, yet he could be described as *'ālim*. But who is the person who is eligible for this title?

Close examination of the *āyahs* that praise *'ilm* and *'ulamā'* reveals that it is revealed knowledge which is given high esteem. Interpreting (29:43) Qurṭubī mentions that al *'ālimūn* means those who have knowledge of Allāh.[7] Zamakhsharī interprets *ulū al-'ilm* to mean the Prophets and the knowledgeable individuals who believe in Allāh.[8] Ibn Kathīr interprets the phrase " *'ulamā' banī Isrā'īl* " to mean those who had already known from their Scripture that a messenger called Muḥammad would be sent later[9] while one of the narrations attributed to Mujāhid limits it to the Jews who had converted to Islam like 'Abd Allāh b. Sallām.[10] The well grounded in knowledge i.e. *al-rāsikhūna fī al-'ilm* are those whose faith is so deep that there remains no doubt in their hearts.[11] The superiority of revealed knowledge is due to the fact that it is derived from *Ḥaqq* while some other types of knowledge are based on *ẓann* or *hawā*.[12] The contrast between *'ilm* and *hawā* is well established in the following *āyah*:

> Wert thou to follow their desires *(ahwā'ahum)*
> After the knowledge *('ilm)*
> Which hath reached thee
> Then wouldst thou find
> Neither Protector nor Helper.[13]

But the usage of the derivatives of *'ilm* is not restricted to revealed knowledge. *'Ilm* when it occurs in (31:20) means evidence.[14] In (27:16) it is mentioned that Solomon was taught *('ullima)* the voices of the birds while (21:80) tells that David was taught the making of coats of mail for protection in war. These and other *āyahs* show that revealed knowledge does not constitute the whole area of man's knowledge. Man can learn; he is able to acquire new forms of knowledge that help him to adjust to his environment. Such knowledge is not condemned. What is repudiated in the Qur'ān is limited to knowledge that contradicts revelation because such knowledge is built on falsehood *(bāṭil)*.

If the term *'ilm* is not restricted to revealed knowledge it cannot also be restricted to situations where one has already established

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procedures or traditional practices. Bravmann — who holds such a view — cites several historical narrations in support of this conclusion. One of these narrations is related to the conquest of Palestine by the Muslims. When 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ told the khalīfah 'Umar that he was dealing with a difficult situation, 'Umar said that 'Amr acted in accordance with *'ilm: "inna 'Amrān lam yaqul illā bi-'ilm"*[15] The *'ilm* of 'Amr concerning the situation in Palestine was acquired through his direct involvement in that situation and nothing more.

Besides *'ilm*, there is another term which denotes knowledge; this is the term *"ma'rifah"* which is derived from the root *'arafa*. In fact neither *ma'rifah* nor *'ārif* occurs in the Qur'ān; but the present and the past tenses of the verb occur in several *āyahs*. There are differences between scholars regarding the relation between *'ilm* and *ma'rifah*. Some believe that the two terms are synonymous while others oppose this view. The distinction which they draw lies in the fact that *ma'rifah* refers to knowledge acquired through contact with the traces of the object while *'ilm* refers to knowledge acquired through direct contact with the object. Following such reasoning, mans's knowledge of Allāh is called *ma'rifah*, and not *'ilm*. On the other hand, Allāh could be described as *'ālim* and not as *'ārif* since His Knowledge does not stem from recognition of the traces of the things. Commenting on al-Raghib al-Iṣfāhanī who holds this view, Rosenthal says: "This kind of reasoning is hardly applicable to the language and the intellectual climate of the Qur'ān... *'Ilm* and *ma'rifah* came to be employed with little tangible distinction in this respect, although *ma'rifah* may appear to have been the term more commonly used."[16] According to another point of view *" 'ilm"* is considered more comprehensive than *"ma'rifah"* which denotes one aspect of knowledge. Thus *'ilm* is higher in rank than *ma'rifah* since it is not restricted to one aspect as is the case with *ma'rifah*.

But it is noteworthy that the derivatives of *'alima* occur with much higher frequency than the derivatives of *'arafa*; the first occur in about 750 locations while the latter occur in 27 locations. Thus it is the derivatives of *'alima* which appear with higher frequency in the Qur'ān. Besides, none of the derivatives of *'arafa* is used in connection with Allāh. They only occur in the *āyahs* where man or

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the angels serve as the subject of the verb. Allāh Who is described as *'ālim* in numerous *āyahs* is not described as *'arif* in one single *āyah*. This fact supports the view that defines *ma'rifah* as knowledge acquired through contacts with the traces of the objects. But this view becomes invalid when one moves to the area of man's knowledge. In the Qur'ān, man is being asked to know Allāh through the examination of His **Signs**. Such knowledge is called *'ilm* and *ma'rifah*. One *āyah* reads "*Sayurīkum āyātihī fat'rifūnahā*"[17] while another *āyah* reads: "*Wa-idhā 'alima min āyātinā*"[18] This shows that man's knowledge of Allah's Signs could be described by either of the two terms; no distinction is made between them in this respect. This makes it possible to conclude that there exists no difference between *'ilm* and *ma'rifah* in their applicability to man's knowledge; but the two terms do not coincide in their applicability to Allah's Knowledge.

The antithesis of knowledge is ignorance: *jahl* is the contrast of *'ilm*.[19] The derivatives of *jahila* occur in twenty four locations. Several *āyahs* describe the individual who lacks knowledge as *jāhil*: three *āyahs* mention that Allāh accepts the repentence of those who do evil in ignorance.[20] In (12:89) Joseph's brothers who did not know the consequences of what they were doing are described as *jāhilūn*. Used in this sense, the term *jāhil* does not apply to the individual who conceals knowledge and prefers deliberately to act contrary to it. One *āyah* describes the worshipper of the idol who knows what he is doing as "*Wa-adallahū Allāh 'alā 'ilm*".[21] In (2:42) concealing truth is mentioned alongside the verb *ta'lamūn*.

On the second level, *jahl* means shallow reasoning. The ignorant person does not give sound judgements; he acts before weighing the consequences of his behaviour. The knowledge that he might possess is neither deep nor comprehensive; this fact is illustrated in the following *āyah*:

> The ignorant man thinks
> Because of their modesty
> That they are free from want.[22]

Poor reasoning which causes wrong judgements cannot be equated with lack of knowledge; yet the two concepts are somehow related to each other. Lack of relevant knowledge leads to erroneous decisions;

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but possession of such knowledge does not produce necessarily the correct judgement since it might be subjected to one's passions.

On the third level, *jahl* describes the patterns of behaviour that deviate from Allāh's teachings. Several *āyahs* pertain to this level especially those that use the term *jāhiliyyah*. Here it is supposed that any sound knowledge should be in harmony with Allāh's teachings. The term "*jāhiliyyah*" is defined by Ibn Manẓūr as the pre-Islamic period where idolatry prevailed.[23] Rosenthal holds a rather different view by maintaining that "*jāhiliyyah* here might be considered a collective plural of *jāhil*... In support of the interpretation of *jāhiliyyah* as a collective plural, it should be noted that in all its occurrences in the Qur'ān, *jāhiliyyah* is used next to plural forms referring to people. There is nothing to indicate in the Qur'anic passages that *jāhiliyyah* signifies such concepts as a definite 'period of ignorance' or a well-defined 'paganism'."[24]

In order to clarify this issue, it will be helpful to examine the four *āyahs* where the term "*jāhiliyyah*" is used. In (3:154) it is used to describe the attitudes of a group of the Hypocrites who were motivated at the battle of Uḥud by their wrong suspicions. In (5:53) the judgement of *jāhiliyyah* is opposed to Allāh's Judgement. In (33.33) the wives of the Prophet are warned not to follow the path of the women who lived in the first *jāhiliyyah*. Although books of interpretation do not agree on one definite period which is described in the *āyah* as the first *(al-ūlā)*, yet one finds that certain patterns of behaviour that prevailed in it are described.[25] In the fourth location,[26] the term "*jāhiliyyah*" is used in connection with the non-believers who had refused to introduce the phrase 'In the name of Allāh in the text of the treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah. This shows that "*jāhiliyyah*" is used to describe patterns of behaviour that deviate from Allāh's teachings. This fact could be backed by a *Ḥadīth* which was quoted by Rosenthal himself. Abū Dharr narrates that he had a quarrel with another man whose mother was a non-Arab; Abū Dharr called her bad names. When the Prophet learned of this incident he told Abū Dharr: "You still have the traits of ignorance."[27] *(innaka immru'un fīka jāhiliyyah)*

Examination of the Qur'anic outlook on knowledge and ignorance shows that the first is elevated while the latter is depreciated. Man is

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being urged to move away from patterns of behaviour that could be described as ignorant. The free will which man possesses allows him to make the choice; but to make the right choice requires the existence of intelligence. Thus the question arises: Does man possess intelligence? If so, is he unique in this respect?

The term *dhakā'* which stands for intelligence does not occur in the Qur'ān. But it is important to note that the mental processes which are the products or components of intelligence occur in numerous *āyahs*; examples of such processes are: *tadhakkur*, *tadabbur*, *tafakkur* and *tafaqquh*. Cragg notes that the several names of the Qur'ān such as: "Book", "Guidance", "Criterion" and "Reminder" suppose the existence of intelligence.[28] Moreover, several terms are used in the Qur'ān in reference to the faculty that enables the individual to reason and acquire knowledge; these terms are: "*'aql*", "*lubb*", "*qalb*", "*fu'ād*", "*ḥilm*", "*ḥijr*" and "*nuhyah*".

According to lexicographers the term "*aql*" means ascertainment or verification of evidence; in this sense it is the opposite of stupidity. It also means the ability to control one's self. A third meaning of *'aql* is detention *(ḥabs)*; an individual whose tongue fails to function is described as "*u'tuqila lisānuh*".[29] This term does not occur in the Qur'ān as a noun or verbal noun *(maṣdar)* or as an imperative verb. Its derivatives occur only as a verb in the present and the past tenses. Individuals who are described as "*la ya'qilūn*" are destined for Hell; they are deaf and blind in spite of the fact that they have no physical defects.

The second term used to denote the faculty of reasoning is "*lubb*". The *lubb* of anything is its essence; it is the best part of that thing.[30] The Qur'ān uses the plural form "*albāb*" in sixteen *āyahs*. Qurṭubī mentions that *ulū al-albāb* are those who contemplate the available evidence.[31] Ṭabarī considers them as capable of distinguishing between truth and falsehood.[32]

The third term, "*qalb*", has a similar connotation to *lubb*; the *qalb* of a thing is its essence or centre. The Qur'ān uses this term in its singular and plural forms. Dāmghānī differentiates between three usages of this term; it is used to mean either mind or opinion or that organ which exists in the chest.[33] The first usage is evident in the

āyahs that refer to its function. In (7:179) the non-believers are described as having *qulūb* which are not used for understanding. In its third usage, it is important to note that it is not the physiological aspect of the *qalb* which is meant as Damghani might be understood to be implying. In fact, the *āyahs* which fall in this category refer to the psychological attitudes of the individual. In (3:159) the phrase "*ghalīẓ al-qalb*" is understood to refer to lack of mercy.

The fourth term is "*fu'ad*"; Ibn Manẓur says that it is called so because of its lightning or kindling; he gives no further information concerning its *tawaqqud* (kindling).[34] In several *āyahs*, "*fu'ād*" is mentioned in association with sight and hearing. Thompson, noting this fact, concludes that "Here one moves away from the emotional to re-establish contact with the perceptive... In the Qur'ān, *fu'ad* is often mentioned in conjunction with hearing and sight."[35] But it might be added that the movement away from the emotional field is not too far. Out of the sixteen *ayahs* that use this term, seven mention it in conjunction with sight and hearing; one more *ayah* uses it in conjunction with sight. Thus half the *ayahs* still refer to the psychological attitude. As a matter of fact in (28:10) the psychological condition of Moses' mother is described by using the two terms: "*qalb*" and *fu'ād*".

The fifth term is "*ḥilm*" whose plural form *aḥlām* occurs in one *āyah* in reference to minds. Izutsu believes that *ḥilm* is not a perfect synonym of *'aql*; the first is more comprehensive than the latter. He writes: "*Ḥilm* is the very basis of 'reason' and 'intellect'. To be very exact, however, it is not a perfect synonym of *'aql*. The later is a narrower concept than *ḥilm*... But practically, of course, the two come to be the same thing."[36] In order to support his view, Izutsu refers to the usage of *ḥilm* by Ḥassān b. Thābit as well as to (52:32). It might be interesting to note that Qurṭubī interprets *ḥilm* in this *āyah* in a different way. He holds the view that *'aql* is more comprehensive than *ḥilm* which can be equated with *dhihn*. *Ḥilm* or *dhihn* is capable of acquiring knowledge while *'aql* is capable of differentiating between the different categories of knowledge.[37]

The last two terms "*ḥijr*" and "*nuḥyah*" refer to the deterrent power of mind. Thus an individual who is described as *dhū ḥijr* or *dhu nuḥyah* is one who controls himself and has the power to refrain from

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committing certain acts. The term *ḥijr* occurs in its singular form in one *āyah* while the second term occurs in two *āyahs* in its plural form i.e. *nuhā*. In (20:128) the Qur'ān describes those who recall to their minds the destiny of the preceding nations as *ulū al-nuhā* since they understand that their misbehaviour led them to the punishment which surrounded them.

Discussion of the several terms that refer to the intellectual power in man suggests that the Qur'ān invites man to think. This is supported by the numerous *āyahs* that praise those who think and possess knowledge. Thinking is initiated in the Qur'ān by reflecting on what one finds in one's surroundings. The objects towards which *'aql* is oriented do not exist in the unseen world; they belong to this world. *'Aql* starts by dealing with tangible objects. The Qur'ān uses the term *āyāt* i.e. signs to denote the objects of reasoning. Starting from the tangible world constitutes an essential feature of thinking from the Qur'anic point of view.

The term *āyah* is used in the Qur'ān to give several meanings. One meaning of the *āyah* is the smallest independent unit of the Qur'ān which could be translated as 'verse'; it is called so because it indicates its independence of what precedes or follows. In his Ph.D. thesis, Ibrāhīm notes that this usage is clear where the *āyah* is used in connection with abrogation or recitation.[38] In its second usage, *āyah* refers to tokens or signs such as the stars, the rain, the self etc. which are considered as evidence of the Creator. The third usage refers to miraculous events which were signs of the prophecy of Allāh's messengers. It is interesting to note that such signs are not used to testify the prophecy of Muḥammad. The non-believers were demanding for such miracles. One *āyah* shows that they had announced that they would not believe in Muḥammad's message unless he caused a spring to gush forth.[39] In response to such a call the Qur'ān shows that the springs that already exist are caused by Allāh's will.[40] Everything in the universe is considered as a sign of Allāh and hence deserves careful study. In the Qur'ān, the universe is divested of any divinity which was attached to it by the other cultures. The sun, the moon and the clouds are not gods that must be worshipped; they are rather objects to be studied and examined. It is notable that the sky is mentioned in connection with an

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invitation to think or with an oath that shows how important it is. The earth with its planets and mountains is a sign for those who possess assured knowledge. In (56:74) Allāh asks men after mentioning plants, water and fire to praise Him. The signs of the universe *(āfāq)* are not the only signs; there are also signs in man himself *(fī al-anfus)*. In (30:20) we read:

> Among His Signs is this
> That He created you
> From dust, and then
> Behold, Ye are men.

Thus, the birth of the individual, his development after birth from infancy to senility and the way each organ functions deserve to attract our attention. Not only that, but the history of humanity is considered one of Allāh's signs that deserves reflection and analysis.

It appears that the Qur'ān considers the univers, history and the self as an open book that must be read, which necessitates that man is provided with the tools that enable him to do so. Thompson holds an opposite view when he says that "the men to whom it (the Qur'ān) addressed itself were apparently incapable of understanding its reading of the wonders of the natural order or the events in history. What was written in such large letters so far as the Qur'ān was concerned was for them a closed book; and the only reasonable explanation of such a mystery was that Allāh had thrown a veil over their minds thus making it impossible for them to read His signs in the world around."[41]

It might be relevant to recall here the meaning of throwing a veil which was discussed in Chapter Two.[42] Such a process applies only to individuals who close their eyes to Allāh's signs. Besides, the signs are mentioned in several *āyahs* in conjunction with the word *"la'alla"*. *"La'alla"* is usually followed — in the Qur'ān — by a verb that refers to intelligence such as: *"tadhakkarūn"*, *"ta'qilūn"* and *"ta'lamūn"*; it is never followed by a verb that refers to ambiguity or *khatm* or *tab'* (sealing of the heart). It is the responsibility of man to respond in a positive way to Allāh's signs; this requires the proper use of his senses. The occurrence of sight and hearing in conjunction with the faculty of thinking in several *āyahs* indicates that thinking begins

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at the concrete level. *Ḥiss* is not considered as the antithesis of *'aql*; it is rather the first step towards sound reasoning. This fact shows how thinking in the Qur'ān diverges sharply from speculation in Greek philosophy.

But to say that the senses of man are capable of recognizing Allāh's signs does not mean that they are capable of grasping Allāh directly under any circumstances. Such recognition is not credited even to the prophets who represent the highest degree of human perfection. There are, however, some scholars who hold a rather different view saying that the Prophet had seen Allāh — or claimed that he had seen Him — at the beginning of his prophecy. Bell says that Muhammad assumed that he saw Allāh in person on two occasions.[43] Commenting on the same issue Thompson notes that "possibly the Prophet had had a vision of Allāh... or he might have seen something that for him represented the glory of Allāh."[44]

Examination of the primary sources reveals that this view cannot be regarded as a universally-accepted belief. To start with, it might be worth emphasizing that the standard books of interpretation mention Gabriel as the object of vision.[45] Bukharī narrates that Isḥāq al-Shaybānī asked Zirr b. Ḥubaysh regarding the first *āyah* of *Surat al-Najm*. On that Zirr said: "Ibn Mas'ud informed us that the Prophet had seen Gabriel."[46] The narration of Zuhrī in Tabarī which mentions that the Prophet saw *al-ḥaqq* (truth) emphasizes that the object of vision said to the Prophet: "I am Gabriel."[47] Thus even if it were to be assumed — and there is very little evidence for the assumption — that the Prophet believed at first that he had seen Allāh, there is absolutely no evidence to confirm that he continued in this assumption. This conclusion is unanimously agreed upon.

The implications of this discussion are evident. Man's senses are not fit to grasp in a direct way the Creator of this world; they are only capable of grasping His signs. The best thing to do is to utilize them in discovering the secets of the universe. Even in this context they might have their shortcomings. But to say this does not mean that their value is negligible. On the contrary, the Qur'ān attaches great importance to the role played by the senses. This is evident from the *āyahs* which reprimand those who deliberately stop their senses from functioning properly.

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The previous discussion of the senses shows that they are a main instrument of perception; their role in acquiring knowledge is indispensable. But senses alone cannot explain man's intelligence; this is due to the fact that these senses are common to animals as well as human beings. Animals which are equipped with senses are capable of learning. The classical and operant conditioning* experimentations showed that Pavlov's dogs and Skinner's pigeons were able to acquire a learned response. Kohler's experiments showed that the monkey was able to solve the problem with which he was faced and to reach the banana. Viaud** notes that animals are equipped with movements and actions that help them in dealing with external objects.[48] Some psychologists were so fascinated with the performance of the animals in their laboratories that they went to the extent of attributing 'intelligence' to them. The literature of Animal Psychology is rich with such concepts which indicates that the term 'intelligence' is used loosely. Bellard asserts that psychologists lacked a clear definition of it. He maintains that "while the teacher tried to measure intelligence, nobody seemed to know precisely what intelligence is."[49]

The ability of animals and birds to learn is not denied from the Qur'anic point of view. On the contrary, the Qur'an mentions that man is capable of training some animals to perform certain acts. In *Surat al-Mā'idah* we read:

> Say: Lawful unto you
> Are all things good and pure
> And what ye have taught
> Your trained hunting animals.[50]

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* The term "classical conditioning" is used to describe Pavlovian conditioning. Here two stimuli are paired; a neutral stimulus is followed by a conditioned stimulus. At the end, the reflex which is usually evoked by the conditioned stimulus is evoked by the neutral stimulus. The sound of the bell — for example — caused the salivation of the dog. In operant conditioning voluntary actions rather than reflexes are studied. The animal is trained to press a bar — for example — which delivers food. This means that the animal must perform an action before getting the reward. See Wolman, B. (editor) *Dictionary of Behavioural Science*, 1973, p. 73.

** Professor of Psychology and Director of the Laboratory of Animal Psychology at Strasbourg.

This shows that animals are trained to chase the quarry and are capable of acquiring such skills.

But the Qur'ān which is addressed to man, supposes the existence of intelligence. This implies that man posseses certain attributes that distinguish him from animals. His intelligence cannot be compared with the intelligence of pigeons or dogs or monkeys. One of the *āyahs* that relate to the creation of the new *khalīfah* reads as follows:

Wa 'allama Adam al-asmā' kullāhā
Thumma 'araḍahum 'alā al-Malā' ikah
Faqāla anbi'ūnī bi-'asmā' hā'ulā'
In kuntum ṣādiqīn.[51]

This *āyah* shows clearly that after the new *khalīfah* had been created, he was taught the names of all things *(al-asmā' kullahā)*. The angels and Adam were asked by Allāh to tell the names; the angels were unable to do so while Adam succeeded and demonstrated his superiority over them. In his Ph.D. thesis, Welch holds a different view by saying: "Possibly the most striking characteristic of 2:30/28 — 33/1 is that throughout the story it is Allāh's knowledge which is emphasized rather than Adam's... Instead of demonstrating the superiority of man's knowledge over that of the *malā'ika*, the dominant theme of 2:33/28 — 33/1 is the superiority of Allāh's knowledge."[52]

There is no doubt that Allāh's superiority in knowledge is stressed here as well as in numerous other *āyahs* of the Qur'ān. But Adam's superiority in knowledge is also emphasized; it is in fact explicit rather than implicit. Hence it would be difficult to accept Welch's view especially in the absence of any convincing evidence. In fact some scholars go to the other extreme by emphasizing that Adam's knowledge and his office as *khalīfah* are identical. Grunebaum says that the knowledge wich Allāh taught to Adam qualified him for the deputyship.[53] Bakker goes on parallel lines when saying: "It would be possible to define Adam's caliphate as his knowledge."[54] It might be helpful to recall that the discussion in the previous chapter showed that there are several attributes which make man eligible for being Allāh's *khalīfah*. Knowledge is an attribute that could be added

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to them, but it is not the only attribute. Its relation to intelligence cannot be clarified unless the meaning of the *āyah* which has been quoted is fully examined.

It is quite clear that Adam learned *al-asmā'*; but what does this term mean? What are the things whose names Adam had learned? The books of interpretation give several meanings for the things implied. According to some it means the names of the angels. A second interpretation equates it with the names of Adam's progeny while a third interpretation combines the first two interpretations. Thus *al-asmā'* means the names of the angels as well as the names of Adam's progeny.[55] A fourth interpretation maintains that there is no justification for this restriction. The proponents of this view believe that Adam was taught the names of all things. Zamakhsharī who is in favour of this view mentions that the second noun of the genitive construction *(muḍāf ilayh)* was omitted because it is quite evident; any name must denote something.[56] It follows that Allāh taught Adam the names of all things that were created. Mujāhid is also in favour of this view.[57]

A fifth interpretation gives a rather different concept by holding that "*al-asmā'*" refers to the attributes or nature of all things. 'Abdullāh Y. 'Alī chose this interpretation without giving convincing justifications; he translated the first part of the *āyahs* as follows:

"And he taught Adam the nature of all things."[58] He claims that "commentators take "it" to mean the inner nature and qualities of things."[59] But the discussion so far reveals that there is no such agreement on this interpretation. Besides the five interpretations which have been mentioned, a sixth interpretation emerges from joining the fourth and the fifth interpretations. Ibn Kathīr mentions that Allāh taught Adam the names of all things as well as their attributes.[60] This interpretation supposes that knowledge of the names includes also a real understanding of the nature of the things.

Ṭabarī who is in favour of the third interpretation depends upon a philological argument. The *āyah* mentions that Allāh placed them *('araḍahum)*; the pronoun "*hum*" is usually used to denote intelligent creatures. Since this pronoun stands for the things it follows that the names which Adam had learned refer to the angels as well as

Adam's progeny. According to Ṭabarī whenever non-human beings are identified or described, then the "*hā*" and the "*alif*" i.e. the "*hā*" is used. But if non-human as well as human beings are described, then the pronoun '*hunna*" or "*hā*" are more likely to occur, although the possibility of using the pronoun "*hum*" is not completely excluded.[61]

To the extent that Ṭabarī relies upon philological evidence, it is relevant to examine this issue from the philological point of view. Suyūṭī quotes Ibn Fāris — a well known philologist who lived in the fourth century A.H. — who says that it is the custom of Arabs to address non-human beings in certain cases as if they were human beings.[62] This being so, then there is all the more reason to use the pronoun "*hum*" in cases where human as well as non-human beings are described. As a matter of fact, this is the evidence that makes Zamakhsharī prefer the fourth interpretation.[63] The fact that the Qur'ān uses the pronoun "*hum*" in reference to non-human beings gives strong support to this view. In *Sūrat al-Nūr* we read:

> And God has created
> Every animal from water
> Of whom *(minhum)* there are some
> That creep on their bellies.[64]

Here the pronoun "*hum*" refers to animals and not to human beings.

More support to the interpretation that makes "things" refer to human as well as non-human beings comes from a *Ḥadīth* that discusses intercession on the Day of Judgment. On that day the believers assemble and go to Adam and say:

> You are the father of all the people, and Allāh created you with His own hands and taught you the names of all things.[65]

Here again, the *Ḥadīth* makes it clear that Adam was taught the names of all things and not merely the names of this species or that. Thus it becomes evident that the things mentioned in the *āyah* do not refer to a particular thing or kind.

Having defined the things which Adam had learned, it remains to

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understand the type of learning that took place. Did Adam learn giving symbols to things? Or did he learn something more than that? The answer to these questions necessitates examining the meaning of *tasmiyah*.

According to Ibn Jinnī* the names mentioned in the *ayah* refer to language. It might be argued that the language has nouns, verbs and particles and hence it is unlikely for the names to stand for language. Here it should be remembered that the term *asma'* is used in Arabic grammar to mean nouns. According to Ibn Jinni's view the nouns *(asmā')* are the most important part and there can be no objection in using the most important part of the language to denote the whole.[66] It seems that Qurṭubī had a similar notion when he said that the names referred to in the *āyah* mean modes of expression.[67] This view could be also backed by a *Ḥadīth* which shows that a certain type of verbal communication took place between Adam and the angels. After Allāh had created Adam He said to him:

> Go and greet that group of angels and listen to their reply, for it will be your greeting and the greeting of your offspring.[68]

The verbal communication in which Adam was involved is quite clear but here again, one is faced with a complicated problem: which language or languages were used as a means of communication?

In their interpretation of the *āyah* that mentions the names, Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr do not touch upon this problem. Rāzī mentions that the proponents of the third interpretation believe that Adam and his sons as well were able to speak all the languages. After the death of Adam, his sons scattered to different parts of the world, each of them having chosen one language while still retaining other languages in memory. Later on, the other languages were forgotten and only the spoken one remained.[69] Ibn Manẓūr relates the same account without further comments.[70] Qurṭubī asserts that Adam spoke all languages; but one finds no mention of the languages spoken by his sons.[71] But in interpreting another *āyah*[72] that refers to the variations in languages, he attributes this to Allāh without explaining the

* A philologist born in Mosul in 322 A.H. He wrote more than fifty books of which *al-Khaṣā'iṣ* is probably the most important.

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manner in which Allāh made such a variation. Baydāwī was more clear when he mentioned that Allāh had either taught each nation its language by inspiration or made it capable of learning it.[73] Ibn Jinnī who discussed this issue was not able to give any preference to either of these two alternatives.[74]

If one accepts for the sake of argument that Adam was taught all the languages, it remains very difficult to prove that his children did the same thing. There is no doubt that Allāh could teach Adam all languages, but it would seem impossible for Adam to teach these languages to his children. It is rather difficult also to defend the idea that every son chose a language that was not chosen by another. Thus the theory which maintains that Adam's sons spoke all languages cannot be defended. Not only that, but the theory that claims Adam's ability to speak all languages is lacking in evidence from the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*. Qurṭubī who defends this view cites two points of evidence. The first evidence is that the *āyah* mentions that Adam was taught the names; it follows that he was taught the languages. The second is the *Ḥadīth* which shows that Adam was taught the names of all things. But it might be argued that knowledge of the names in one language does not necessarily mean its knowledge in other languages. The *Ḥadīth* which he referred to has no indication as to any language at all.

So far, it appears that Adam had the ability to communicate verbally. But what about his knowledge of the things which was referred to in the fifth interpretation? Razi — although he is not in favour of this view — mentions the evidence upon which its adherents rely. They believe that the word "name" *(ism)* is either derived from "*simah*" or "*sumuww*". The first refers to the characteristic or rank that distinguishes a thing while the latter refers to its highness. The attributes of anything characterize it; they are higher in rank than the thing itself. In addition to this philological evidence a rather philosophical one is mentioned. It is believed that wisdom lies in knowing the nature or the essence of a thing and not merely in knowing its name.[75]

But here, it might be noted that the derivation of a group of words from the same root does not mean that they are all the same. The words "*junnah*", "*jannah*" and "*ajinnah*" are derived from a common

root, yet the first word means something that protects, the second means paradise while the third means embryos. It is clear that these three words have completely different meanings. This allows one to conclude that two or more words that have the same root do not necessarily have the same meaning.

As for the philosophical evidence, it distinguishes between two things: knowledge of the names and knowledge of the characteristics. Since knowledge of the nature of things is superior and since the evidence from the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* refer only to giving names to things it would be rather difficult to understand that giving names means knowing its their attributes.

The previous discussion of the "names" that Adam had learned shows that differences exist regarding the meaning of "*al-asmā'* ". Yet one could definitely conclude that man represented in Adam was privilieged by being given the ability to communicate with others. In *Sūrat al-Rāḥmān* it is mentioned that Allāh taught man *al-bayān*.[76] Man is efficient in conveying his ideas to other individuals through verbal expression. Ibn Manẓūr says that it is this attribute which distinguishes man from animals.[77] Watt notes that "recent linguistic philosophy is prepared to speak of man as the being whose essence is... his linguisticality since there is a deep affinity here between man and language."[78]

Man is then provided with a faculty that enables him to name things. He is able to form concepts. Concept formation has two main advantages. The first advantage is that it facilitates thinking since it allows man to analyze and synthesize what he thinks of. Unlike animals, man has the ability to resort to his conceptual knowledge whenever he is faced with a problem. But it might be argued that animals are also capable of solving problems. In one of his experimentations on the chimpanzees, Kohler attached a banana to a string in the ceiling. The animal cannot reach the banana unless he puts two boxes — which are within his reach in the room — one above the other and stands upon them. The success of the animal was hailed by the Gestalt Theory proponents and they described what happened as intelligent or insight learning. But these results are regarded as dubious by some psychologists. Commenting on Kohler's experiment Chance says: "Clearly, many think that he has demonstrated in chimpanzees intelligent behaviour of the kind

familiar in humans. Frankly, this is not proven."[79] Viaud asserts that man responds in a different manner if he is faced with the very same situation. Man analyzes the situation by using the concepts he already has. He makes use of such concepts as "height", "objective" and "drive" instead of dealing with the objects which exist in his field. He might think of certain elements that help even if they were not available at that moment.[80] Hall — who discusses in one of his articles the ability of imitation in monkeys — believes that comparison between a man and a monkey is possible only in areas where verbal expression is not involved.[81] Thus being so then it would be impossible to compare between man and the monkeys if we move in our comparison from imitation to situations where creative thinking is required.

The second advantage of conceptual knowledge is that it makes it possible for man to remember past events. Man records his history; his ability to read the history of humanity made it possible for him to make huge advances in certain aspects. Animals are deprived of such advantages; they do not remember past events. Viaud writes: "The memory of animals consists of habits which help the animal to act, but not to remember the past. While animals can recognize objects, people and places, this recognition must not be thought to be memory in the human sense of the word."[82] It is no wonder that the Qur'ān considers the history of past generations as one of Allāh's signs that stimulate thinking. Historical facts are not mentioned for memorization, but for contemplation.

It appears that the uniqueness of man's knowledge is strongly supported by psychological findings. Man's ability to acquire new forms of knowledge and to solve novel situations or problems ranks above that of animals. The difference between man's leaning and animal's learning is qualitative rather than being quantitative. The great network of acquired ideas by man can only be explained in the light of his ability to give names which was bestowed upon Adam. It is also quite apparent that such acquired ideas and concepts are inseparable from the role to be played by the *khalīfah*.

The previous discussion of man's knowledge and intelligence revealed that man who is invited to think of Allāh's signs in *al-anfus* and *al-āfāq* is provided with two powers that enable him to do so. He

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has the power to grasp the signs by his senses as well as having the power to refer to them by using symbols. The function of the senses and the ability to symbolize are the two main constituents of man's intelligence. His intelligence is unique due to the fact that the second constituent of his intelligence is peculiar to him; even the angels were not able to compete with Adam in this respect. But does this mean that man — by relying on his *'aql* — is capable of building his own universe of knowledge? Can he capture the real nature of Allāh? Would it be possible for him to discover the laws of ethics that regulate his behaviour? If not, what is the other source — or sources — of his knowledge? How are these sources related to each other?

The Qur'āns call to examine the signs of Allāh Who created everything with perfection indicates that the ultimate aim of *'aql* is to recognize His existence. In (30:7) the unbelievers — who fail to reach that goal — are described as lacking profound knowledge; the *āyah* reads:

> They know but the outer
> Things in the life of this world.

But there is another *āyah* which indicates that such knowledge cannot be complete. The *āyah* reads as follows:

> *Ya'lam mā bayna aydīhim wamā kahlfahum*
> *Walā yuḥīṭūna bihī 'ilmā.*[83]

Most interpreters believe that the pronoun in "*bihī*" refers either to the Knowledge of Allāh or to His Essence* *(dhātihī)*. The first interpretation is more likely because another *āyah* states this fact clearly. In (2:255) it is stated that:

> *Wala yuḥītunā bishay' in min 'ilmihī*
> *Illā bimā shā'.*

But it should be noted that if man's knowledge concerning one of Allāh's attributes is incomplete or has its shortcomings, it follows that he cannot possess a comprehensive knowledge of Allāh. In fact,

* Rāzī takes a rather different view by saying that the pronoun in "*bihī*" refers to the preceding relative clause "*mā bayna aydīhim wamā khalfahum*". Thus the *ayāh* means that Allāh knows whatever they do even though they themselves might not know it. See vol. 6, p. 74.

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man who is encouraged in one *Ḥādīth* to think of Allāh's creation is discouraged in the same *Ḥadīth* from thinking of His Essence.[84]

Still more evidence on the issue of the limitation of *'aql* comes from the several *āyahs* that admonish the Prophet for giving certain opinions regarding definite situations. It might be enough to refer to two incidents where the Prophet was blamed. The first one is for taking ransom for the prisoners of the battle of Badr and the second one is for giving permission to the Hypocrites to stay at Madīnah during the Tabūk campaign.

As for the first incident, it is narrated on the authority of 'Umar that at Badr, the Muslims killed seventy and captured seventy. The Prophet asked the advice of his Companions about the fate of the prisoners. The response of Abū Bakr was:

> They are our kith and kin. I think you should release them after getting from them a ransom. This will be a source of strength to us against the infidels. It is quite possible that Allāh may guide them to Islam.

'Umar took a stronger position by asserting that it was for the benefit of Islam to kill them. He addressed the Prophet saying:

> I am of the opinion that you should hand them over to us so that we may cut off their heads. Hand over 'Aqīl-'Alī's brother — to 'Alī that he may cut off his head... They are leaders of disbelievers and veterans among them.

The Prophet approved the opinion of Abū Bakr and acted in accordance with it.[85] But the Qur'ān did not approve this act and Allāh revealed to the Prophet the following *āyah*:

> It is not fitting
> For an Apostle
> That he should have
> Prisoners of war until
> He hath thoroughly subdued
> The land...[86]

The Prophet was deeply affected by this admonition to the extent that he wept. He was admonished for taking prisoners before killing a greater number *(ithkhān)*; this might be attributed to the fact that up till that time the unbelievers were stronger and greater in number. The Prophet had already known from (47:4) that taking prisoners is allowed after *ithkhān* takes place. In Badr he thought that by killing seventy of the unbelievers he had fulfilled that condition;[87] but the *āyah* shows that this was not the case.

The other occasion on which the Prophet was admonished is connected with the Tabūk campaign which took place during the summer of 9 A.H. (631) when the heat is usually unbearable and the fruits are ripened. Tabūk lies about 400 miles to the north of Madinah. Usually it was part of the strategy of the Prophet during the preparation for his campaigns not to inform the Muslims about his destination. But during this campaign, he informed the Muslims that he intended to go to Tabūk to launch and attack against the Byzantine Empire. This change in strategy was due to the fact that this campaign required more preparation. The wealthy Muslims provided mounts for those who had not such facilities; but still some poor Muslims could not get any means of transportation and the Prophet gave them permission to stay at Madinah. They came to be known as the weepers *(bakkā'ūn)*.

Another group which was given permission to stay had no genuine reason for lagging behind the Prophet. They were a group of the Hypocrites who were not interested in fighting for the sake of Islam. An example of this group was al-Jadd b. 'Abd al-Qays who tried to justify his lack of interest in joining the Prophet in this campaign by saying:

> I am afraid that if I see the Byzantine women
> I shall not be able to control myself.[88]

Here again, the Qur'ān does not agree with the Prophet on this issue; the *ayah* that relates to it reads as follows:

> Allāh give thee grace! Why
> Didst thou grant them exemption
> Until those who told the truth

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Were seen by thee in a clear light
And thou hadst proved the liars.[89]

The Prophet was not admonished for giving **permission** as such because in (24:62) which was revealed earlier he was given that. He was admonished for giving permission before knowing their real intentions. This shows that the Prophet's permission to the Hypocrites — as well as his decision to take ransom for the prisoners of Badr — was not confirmed by the Qur'ān. It appears then that *'aql* has its limitations when it deals with facts that belong to this world *('ālam al-shahādah)*. It follows then, that *'aql* has also its limitations when it copes with facts or ideas that belong to the unseen world *('ālam al-ghayb)*. **Ibn** Khaldūn grasps this fact when he says that a scale which is designed to measure the weight of gold cannot be used to measure the weight of the mountains.[90] Such an outlook does not coincide with that held by philosophers who put their trust in *'aql*. If we take as an example Ibn Ṭufayl's view as it is expressed in *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān* we find that his hero had discovered the whole truth by relying on his mental power. He was able to acquire knowledge through self-education. From the Qur'anic point of view, *'aql* cannot be the only source of knowledge. One *āyah* reads:

... nor would We
Visit with Our Wrath
Until We had sent
An apostle to give warning.[91]

'Aql cannot be a guaranteed source of truth. Revelation is another source which helps: the words of Allāh as revealed to the Prophet reinforce His signs in *al-anfus* and *al-āfāq*.

These two sources of knowledge are strongly related to each other; this is evident from the fact that the term *ayah* is used in connection with both of them. Revelation and *'aql* go hand in hand; each of them completes the role layed by the other This fact is realized even by the Mu'tazilites who hailed the importance of *'aql*. Zamakhsharī notes that sending apostles is one of the factors that awakens the individual from heedlessness.[92] Elsewhere, he states his belief that both of these sources lead to faith.[93] In his Ph.D. thesis entitled *The Philosophical Problem of the Relation Between Reason and Revelation in the*

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Thought of Qādī 'Abd al-Jabbār, Mūsawī concludes that "The main function of prophecy, he ('Abd al-Jabbār) asserted, is that it contains the kind of information about man's benefits which cannot be known by means of reason."[94]

'Aql and revelation are then viewed as two complementary sources of knowledge; neither of them is viewed as the antithesis of the other. Several Muslim scholars like Ghazālī and al-Rāghib āl-Isfahānī hold their relationship in similitude to the relationship between the eye and the rays of the sun. The eye cannot grasp things in dark places while the rays of the sun are incapable of producing sight in isolation from an observing eye.[95] Ibn Taymiyyah believes that these two sources do not contradict each other. What appears to be a contradiction between them is nothing more than contradiction between *hawā* and revelation.[96] Revelation does not supplant or repress *'aql* since the content of the revealed knowledge cannot be grasped except with *'aql*. This is assured in (4:82) which asks the individuals to read the Qur'ān with *tadabbur*.

> Do not they consider
> The Qur'ān with care.

Thus individuals who lack intelligence are exempted from carrying on any responsibility. *'Aql* is also essential for revelation since the latter does not contain detailed knowledge concerning every aspect of man's behaviour. The door is left open for *'aql* to understand the general principles and to know their applications to new situations. Moreover, *'aql* is considered as a primary source in all aspects of life which are not touched upon by revealed knowledge.[97] But it should be emphasized that *'aql* has no right to question the validity of or overrule any revealed principle or fact. This means that revealed knowledge is superior to knowledge acquired by *'aql*.

It is hoped that the previous discussion will not be taken to imply that *'aql* might exist as an independent entity. In fact, such a concept is propagated by some scholars who quote a *Ḥadīth* which mentions that the first thing Allāh created ws *'aql*. F. Rahman who refers to this *Ḥadīth* states that "The neoplatonic idea of *'akl* as first creatin also appears in the Ḥadīth."[98] Haythamī* mentions that

* 'Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, d. Cairo 807/1405. An ahthor of several works on *Ḥadīth* including *Majma' al-Zawā'id*. See Kaḥḥālah, *Mu'jam al-Mu'allifīn*, vol. 7, p. 45.

scholars of the *Ḥadīth agree that this Ḥadīth* is weak *(ḍa'īf)*.[99] Albānī adds that all the *Ḥadiths* that elevate *'aql* are either weak *(ḍa'īf)* or fabricated *(mawḍū')*.[100] Thus *'aql* is not an independent power; it is one of the constituents of man. Its function is to testify to Allāh's wisdom and to comprehend it. Grunebaum[101] differentiates this *'aql* from that of the Enlightenment where "the glory is man's".

But *'aql* does not function properly unless the obstacles that handicap it are removed. The Qur'ān tries to make man avoid the situations that exert undue limitations on his *'aql*; hence one finds that enemies of thinking such as *hawā*, *taqlīd* and *taṭayyur* are criticized in the Qur'ān.

Hawā is one of the main causes of *ḍalāl* because it makes the individual follow his personal attitudes regardless of their validity. The people of Noah, for example, declined to believe in his message because his followers came from the lower class. The self-esteem which they had formed concerning themselves made it difficult for them to examine Noah's message. One *āyah* of *Sūrat al-A'rāf* describes the individual who gives the lead to his passion in a repulsive picture.

> His similitude is that
> Of a dog: if you attack
> Him, he lolls out his tongue
> Or if you leave him alone
> He still lolls out his tongue.[102]

On the other hand, he who refrains from living by his passions is promised Paradise.

Imitation of the fathers is another obstacle to sound thinking. Here certain patterns of behaviour are accepted only because they were accepted by the fathers and the forefathers. Habits are taken for granted as true. True knowledge is what was inherited from the past generations regardless of its intrinsic value. The prestige which is attached to this social and cultural heritage makes it difficult to change or even modify it. The response "But we found our fathers doing this" was the answer of the people of Abraham, Hūd, Ṣālih and other messengers. The very same response was repeated by the people of Makkah.

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When it is said to them:
'Follow what Allāh hath revealed'
The say 'Nay! we shall follow
The ways of our fathers
What! Even though their fathers
Were void of wisdom and guidance.[103]

Such an intellectual attitude is not favourable to learning since the learner cannot differentiate between the different stimuli with which he is confronted; it follows that his response becomes fixed and stereotyped. Whatever is said to him is nothing more than 'cries and calls'.

But one might point to the fact that the Qur'ān urges the Muslims to obey the Prophet and imitate him in his acts. How could this be reconciled with the call of the Qur'ān for individuals to stop imitating their ancestors? Why is imitation hailed at one time while repudiated at another?

The Qur'ān is not against imitation *(taqlīd)* as such. It differentiates between two types of *taqlīd*. The first type is blind and hence it suppresses *'aql:* misbehaviour is justified in terms of the forefathers' habits.

When they do aught
That is shameful, they say:
'We found our fathers doing so.'[104]

This type of *taqlīd* is condemned. The second type which is praised involves imitating higher standards of conduct; the prophets' behaviour represents the highest standards that should be copied by human beings. Abraham and his followers are set as an example to be imitated by the Muslims.

There is for you
An excellent example to follow
In Abraham and those with him,
When they said to their people:
'We are clear of you
And of whatever ye worship
Besides Allāh.[105]

The problem is not then whether to imitate or not, but it is rather to distinguish between the different patterns of behaviour which one imitates.

Taṭayyur is a third source of poor thinking which the Qur'ān does not approve. In the *Jahiliyyah* the people of Arabia had formed superstitious thinking; before starting a journey the traveller would observe the birds *(ṭayr)* and see whether they flew from his left or right side. If the bird flew from the right side he considered this as a sign of good omen and started his journey. But if the bird flew from the left side, the journey was postponed. This superstitious thinking is called *taṭayyur* because the bird governs man's behaviour. The term *taṭayyur* persists even in cases where the bird is substituted by an object or a person. The Qur'ān tells us that one community of non-believers told Allāh's messengers that the mere sight of them caused depression because they were considered as an evil omen for that community. The *āyah* reads:

Qālū innā taṭayyarnā bikum.[106]

One notes that in *taṭayyur* there is an unjustifiable association between the flight of a bird or the vision of a person on one hand and the overt behaviour of the individual on the other hand.

Taṭayyur could be held in analogy to certain patterns of conditioned learning. In Pavlov's experiments, the dog originally salivates when it sees the food, later the saliva is produced when the dog hears the sound of a bell. This was achieved after introducing the food associated with the sound of the bell for several times under certain conditions. This association perplexed the dog and made him respond to the sound of the bell in a way similar to his response to the food. It failed to differentiate between the stimuli that have nothing in common except mere association. If we move from experimentation on dogs to the sphere of human behaviour we observe that children or even adults who are scared of a snake might give the very same response — or a similar one — to objects that look like that snake. Ghazāli had grasped the essence of this type of learning when he called it *sabq al-wahm ilā al-'aks*[107] because it causes the individual to see things in an unrealistic way. Association and causation are two different concepts.

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It is evident that in certain patterns of conditioned learning the learner is unable to establish a proper relationship between cause and effect. Factors which are not by their nature related to a certain conduct or response are viewed as if they were its real cause. This lack of ability to differentiate between genuine and ungenuine stimuli or causes makes *taṭayyur* have something in common with conditioned learning. The Qur'ān as well as the *Ḥadīth* urges the individual to distinguish between the different factors which confront him. It is narrated that on the same day as the death of the Prophet's son, Ibrāhīm, there was an eclipse of the sun. This mere association in time between these two unrelated events made some Muslims believe that the death of Ibrahim was the cause of the eclipse. Hearing this superstitious interpretation, the Prophet addressed the Muslims saying:

> The sun and the moon do not eclipse on the death of anyone or on his birth. But both of them are among the signs of Allāh.[108]

Hence it becomes the responsibility of the educator to help the students to differentiate between cause and effect on one hand and mere association in time or place on the other hand.

By way of summary and conclusion: knowledge is one of the basic equipments of man in this life. The Qur'ān integrates human knowledge with revelation and this suggests that knowledge is unified. *'Aql* is considered as the suitable tool for understanding revealed knowledge and acquiring new forms of it through reflection on Allah's signs in the self, the history of past generations and the universe. The occurrence of sight and hearing in conjunction with the faculty of thinking indicates their importance in perception. Besides the senses, man is privileged in possessing the ability to give names to things and this allows him to analyze and synthesize what he thinks of. It is important to remember that the elevation of *'aql* in the Qur'ān is largely attributed to this trait. However, one must not forget that *'aql* has its limitations; it cannot deal with issues that lie outside its field. Not only that, but it is also liable to commit errors even when it deals with problems which lie within its field. The *āyahs* which admonish the Prophet are but examples of such errors. The application of this fact to education indicates that educational aims

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which are derived from the Qur'an cannot be overruled by *'aql* whose role at this level is limited to deriving those aims from revealed knowledge, classifying them and deciding which aims can be achieved at every educational stage. But *'aql* has a greater role to play when it comes to deciding the selection of the content of the curriculum or its sequence. Hence the question is not whether *'aql* has a role to play in education or not but rather what contributions it can offer at each stage of building the educational curriculum. In order to minimize its errors, the Qur'an calls upon man to guard against all the factors which might handicap sound thinking.

Notes

1 *Sūrah* 2:31.
2 *Sūrah* 16:78.
3 Meili "Intelligence" in *The Encyclopedia of Psychology*, vol. 1, p. 541.
4 *Knowledge Triumphant*, p. 21.
5 Qurṭubī, vol. 17, p. 299.
6 Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 4, p. 86.
7 Qurṭubī, vol. 13, p. 346.
8 Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, p. 602.
9 Ibn Kathīr, vol. 3, p. 348.
10 Qurṭubī, vol. 13, p. 138.
11 Ṭabarī, vol. 6, p. 206.
12 Izutsu, *God and Man in the Koran*, p. 60
13 *Sūrah* 2:120.
14 Ibn Kathīr, vol. 3, p. 450.
15 Bravmann, *The Spiritual Background of Early Islam*, p. 178.
16 *Knowledge Triumphant*, p. 134.
17 *Sūrah* 27:93.
18 *Sūrah* 45:9.
19 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 15, p. 311.
20 *Sūrah* 4:17, *Sūrah* 6:54, *Sūrah* 16:119.
21 *Sūrah* 45:23.
22 *Sūrah* 2:273.
23 *Lisān al-'Arab* vol. 13, pp. 137-38.
24 *Knowledge Triumphant*, p. 33.
25 Qurṭubī, vol. 14, p. 180.
26 *Sūrah* 48:26.
27 Bukhārī, vol. 8, p. 47.
28 *The Mind of the Qur'ān*, p. 7.
29 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 13, p. 485.
30 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 225.
31 Qurṭubī, vol. 4, p. 310.

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32. Ṭabarī, vol. 3, p. 383.
33. *Qāmūs al-Qur'ān*, pp. 388-89.
34. *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 4, p. 325.
35. *The Doctrine of Man in the Qur'ān*, chapter 3b. p. 17.
36. *God and Man in the Koran*, p. 214.
37. Qurṭubī, vol. 17, p. 73.
38. *The Literary Structure of the Qur'anic Verse*, p. 19.
39. *Sūrah* 17:90.
40. *Sūrah* 39:21.
41. *The Doctrine of Man in the Qur'ān*, chapter 3a, p. 11.
42. pp. 68-72 .
43. *Introduction to the Qur'ān*, p. 31.
44. *The Doctrine of Man in the Qur'ān*, chapter 3b, p. 20.
45. Besides the books of interpretation see: Watt, *Muḥammad at Makkah*, p. 42.
46. Vol. 4, p. 301.
47. *Ṭarīkh al-Rusul wa-al-Mulūk*, vol. 2, p. 298.
48. *Intelligence*, p . 20.
49. Quoted in Spearman, *The Nature of Intelligence*, p. 15.
50. *Sūrah* 5:5.
51. *Sūrah* 2:31.
52. *The Pneumatology of the Qur'ān*, p. 38.
53. *Oriens*, vol. 15, pp. 2-3.
54. *Man in the Qur'ān*, p. 52.
55. Ṭabarī, vol. 1, p. 485.
56. Zamakhsharī, vol. 1, p. 126.
57. Vol. 1, p. 73.
58. *Sūrah* 2:31.
59. *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān*, p. 24, footnote number 48.
60. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 1, p. 73.
61. Ṭabarī, vol. 1, pp. 485-86.
62. *al-Muzhir*, vol. 1, pp. 338-39.
63. Zamakhsharī, vol. 1, p. 126.
64. *Sūrah* 24:45.
65. Bukhārī, vol. 6, p. 3.
66. *al-khaṣā'iṣ*, vol. 1, pp. 41-42.
67. Qurṭubī, vol. 1, p. 281.
68. Bukhārī, vol. 4, p. 342.
69. Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 258.
70. *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 19, p. 126.
71. Qurṭubī, vol. 1, pp. 283-84.
72. *Sūrah* 30:22.
73. Bayḍawī, vol. 4, p. 145.
74. *al-Khaṣā'iṣ*, vol. 1, p. 47.
75. Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 258
76. *Sūrah* 55:1-4.
77. *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 16, p. 217.
78. *Islamic Revelation*, p. 104.
79. "Kohler's Chimpanzees: How Did They Perform?" in Riopelle, *Animal Problem Solving*, p. 91.
80. *Intelligence*, pp. 74-75.
81. "Observational Learning in Monkeys and Apes" in Riopelle, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

82. Viaud, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
83. *Sūrah* 20:110.
84. Albānī, *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Jāmi' al-Saghīr*, vol. 3, p. 49.
85. Muslim, vol. 3, pp. 961-62.
86. *Sūrah* 8:67.
87. Nabhānī, *al-Shakhṣiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 130-34.
88. Guillaume, *The life of Muḥammad*, p. 602.
    See also Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat al-Nabiyy*, vol. 4, pp. 169-72.
89. *Sūrah* 9:43.
90. *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, vol. 1, p. 825.
91. *Sūrah* 17:15.
92. Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, p. 653.
93. *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 235.
94. P. 80.
95. Ghazālī, al-Iqtiṣād fī al-I'tiqād, p. 3. See also Abū Sulaymān, "Dawr al-'Aql fī al-Fiqh al-Islāmī" in *Majallat Kulliyyat al-Sharī'ah*, vol. 2, p. 159.
96. *Dar' Ta'āruḍ al-'Aql wa-al-Naql*, pp. 147-48.
97. Abū Sulaymān, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
98. "Akl" in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (new edition) vol. 1, p. 341.
99. Mū'jam al-Zawā'id, vol. 8, p. 28.
100. *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Da'īfah*, vol. 1, p. 13.
101. "Concept and Function of Reason in Islamic Ethics" in *Oriens*, vol. 15, p. 16.
102. *Sūrah* 7:176.
103. *Sūrah* 2:170.
104. *Sūrah* 7:28.
105. *Sūrah* 60:4.
106. *Sūrah* 36:18.
107. *al-Mustaṣfā*, vol. 1, p. 59.
108. Muslim, vol. 2, p. 428.

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CHAPTER IV

THE AIMS OF EDUCATION

The discussion in Chapter Two showed that man occupies a unique position in this world and that everything is subjected to him. This means that whatever exists serves a purpose. Bakker emphasizes this fact by saying: "Man is surrounded by countless natural phenomena which each appear to have their own purpose and message."[1] If the things that surround man have purpose — or more correctly serve a purpose, then man's existence cannot be dissociated from purposes. The Qur'ān makes it clear that whatever action man performs should be linked to Allāh. In (6:162) we read:

> Say: 'Truly, my prayer
> And my service of sacrifice,
> My life and my death,
> Are all for Allah
> The Cherisher of the Worlds.'

This link to Allāh cannot be restricted to a certain period of man's life or to some aspects of his behaviour. His whole life is strongly linked to his Creator[2] during the period spent at school, in the pre-school period or after it. It is true that the individual might not be aware of a given aim at a given time for one reason or the other; but this does not undermine our main principle. A young pupil who is six years old might not understand the reason why he is being taught reading; but his or her teacher knows or ought to know this. Thus to say that a person does not know his aim cannot be equated with saying that he has no aims at all. Man's ignorance of his aims is quite probable, but the complete absence of such aims is unlikely.

The school curriculum is usually based upon well-defined prin-

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ciples; its activities and content should be designed in such a way that students may attain desired outcomes. This fact is held by most if not all educators regardless of their ideologies. Taba emphasizes that any curriculum should contain general aims as well as specific objectives.[3] Smith, Stanley and Shores believe that the curriculum's purpose is "disciplining children".[4] Hirst and Peters declare that the absence of clear objectives makes any talk about curriculum planning a "logical nonsense".[5] It is observed that these educators — as well as others — use different terms — such as aims, goals, objectives and purposes — to designate the educational outcomes. The same applies to the Muslim educators who use Arabic terminology. An examination of the different terms used in this context helps in clarifying what is meant by the "educational outcomes" that underly the curriculum, and will show whether they are using different terms to designate the same thing or whether they are talking about different concepts.

Of the several terms that are used in English with reference to the educational outcomes are: "aims", "goals", "objectives" and "purposes". *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines an aim as "the action of making one's way towards a point."[6] Hirst and Peters say that the concept of aim is derived from shooting at a specific target which lies at a certain distance;[7] this implies that reaching the goal cannot be achieved unless effort is exerted. Having something towards which effort should be directed is also the main characteristic of "goal".[8] This indicates that "goals" and "aims" are synonymous.

According to lexicographers "objective" has a similar meaning to "aim" or "goal". But some educators differentiate between an "aim" and an "objective". They use the term "aims" in reference to the general educational outcomes while "objectives" refer to specific outcomes. According to this viewpoint the educational outcomes are not called objectives unless they are specified and stated in observable forms. Aims and objectives are then viewed — by some educators — as two levels of the educational outcomes, the first being general while the second is specific.

As for the term "purpose", *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as "that which one sets before oneself as a thing to be done or attained."[9] Here again one cannot escape the concept of a desired

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outcome which lies at a distance from the individual which makes it similar to aims or goals. To have a "goal" or an "aim" or a "purpose" implies futurity because they lie at a distance and cannot be achieved without effort. To say that the effect of the future on the present is what characterizes the "purpose" cannot be defended.* But what appears from the definition of "purpose" is that reference is made to one's role in setting his purpose which implies that purposes cannot be imposed on the individual. If this conclusion is accepted then the differentiation between "aims" and "purposes" exists only when the aims are prescribed for the individual without paying any consideration to his inner motives. But if educators who plan the curriculum take care of such motives then the difference between "aims" and "purposes" ceases to exist. In such cases purposes could be used as synonym for aims and goals.

Similarly, the several terms which are used in Arabic in reference to the educational outcomes indicate the existence of objects or things that initiate and direct the human actions. "*Ghāyāt*" are used to mean the terminated ends *(muntahā)* beyond which nothing more is desired.[10] "*Ahdāf*" was originally used to mean higher places from which one could have an over-view which implies that they are desirable; it also means getting within shorter distance of a thing.[11] The third term "*maqāṣid*" is derived from a root which denotes "straightness of path". The derivatives of the root *qaṣada* which occur in several *āyahs* give a similar meaning. In (9:42) the phrase "*safaran qāṣidā*" is interpreted to mean an easy journey which does not require the participant to walk a long distance.[12] In (16:9) we read:

Wa 'alā Allāh qaṣd al-sabīl
Wa-minhā jā'ir.

"*Qaṣd al-sabīl*" is interpreted to mean "straight path". The path which is described as *qāṣid* usually leads to desirable outcomes while the path which is described as *jā'ir* is misleading; it has deviated and hence cannot lead to fruitful outcomes.[13] In practical terms we can say that the above Arabic expressions are used interchangeably by modern Arab writers on education.

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* P. Phenix holds such a view. See *Philosophy of Education*, p. 478.

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The previous examination of the several terms that are used in reference to the educational outcomes reveals that such outcomes lie within an attainable distance from the individual. These outcomes govern the actions of whoever tries to accomplish them. Besides, the views of several educators which were expressed earlier emphasized the importance of the educational outcomes in the school curriculum. This fact receives acceptance from all educators. But disagreement between them emerges as soon as the issue of how far these aims should be from the present comes up for discussion. This leads us to put this question: Are there really general aims in education?

A general educational aim might be described as an aim which is remote from the present; as a result its attainment cannot be achieved at one stroke. It is the final end. Educators tend to break it up into more specific aims each of which can be attained individually in a certain sequence. Whatever is achieved at a certain stage is judged in the light of its appropriateness to the general aim which is viewed as the ultimate end. In Western education one finds several different concepts of the general aim of education. Education for life, for leisure, for social efficiency and for democratic citizenship are only examples of such general aims. In Islamic education the general aim is to build up the individual who will act as Allāh's *khalīfah* or at least to put him on the path that leads to such an end. The main concern of Allāh's *khalīfah* is to believe in Allāh and subject himself completely to Him. In the Qur'ān we read:

> I have only created
> Jinns and men, that
> They may serve Me *(ya'budūn)*.[14]

The concept of *'ibādah* which is referred to in this *āyah* is interpreted to mean obedience to Allāh and acting in accordance with His teachings.[15] Sayyid Quṭb observes that the concept of "*'ibādah*" is comprehensive in that it includes all the actions of the *khalīfah* since these are definitely considered as *'ibādāt*.[16] Man's completion which is the ultimate aim of Islamic education can be achieved through man's obedience to Allāh. The fact that the Qur'ān describes the prophets — who represent the highest human ideals — as Allāh's *'abīd* or *'ibād* implies that human completion cannot be divorced from subjecting oneself completely to Allāh.

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Education from the Qur'anic point of view leaves no place for any division of authority between Allāh and man.

This practice of putting forth a general aim for education is challenged by some educators for different reasons. Some believe that the remoteness of the general aim from the present makes it of little use. This attitude is well expressed in the following statement:

> It is well to rid oneself immediately of the aims of education. Discussions on this subject are among the dullest and most fruitless of human pursuits. Whatever the ideal general aims of education may be, they certainly cannot be accomplished in schools.[17]

If educators accept this view, then they must choose educational experiences either for their intrinsic value or for their relevance to the immediate future of the learner. Taking the first alternative one finds it difficult to establish a clear demarcation between the extrinsic and the intrinsic aspects of any experience. A student who enjoys reading — and this enjoyment could be considered as of intrinsic value — does so either to tell his friends about what he reads or to pass his time so that he does not feel bored or for other reasons. Reading for the sake of reading is something which is difficult to accept. From a Qur'anic outlook this is completely rejected because man is responsible for his actions which must be linked in one way or the other with his Creator.

Rejection of the general aims on the grounds that they are remote is also not without its drawbacks. Educators agree that the school's concern is not limited to the activities that take place inside its walls. The post-school period imposes upon the school what to teach and why to teach. The activities and the objectives of the school are tightly linked to the expectations of society. This suggests that the specific objectives of the school should lead to a more long-term aim. If this is not the case the school objectives may lead anywhere.

The other main reason for rejecting the idea of having general aims in education stems from the fear of rigidity. To have a fixed remote goal means that education cannot be dynamic. Education

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means growth, and growth has no limits at all. This outlook is explicitly evident in the following statement:

> Our net conclusion is that life is development, and that developing, growing is life. Translated into its educational equivalents, this means (i) that the educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end; and that (ii) the educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, transforming.[18]

Growth should lead to more growth and education is not subordinated except to more education. Setting a general aim is considered not only useless, but harmful. Aims which are acceptable to the adherents of this outlook are considered as mere directions for growth. Their value lies in helping educators decide what to do at present so as to meet the immediate future needs. The concept of education as preparation for life is totally rejected.

To say that education should lead to more growth cannot be challenged. But one should ask this question: What is the direction of growth? A student who tries his best to improve his reading grows in the skill of reading. A burglar can also improve his skill in his field. If growth is not judged by a final goal then there is no reason to reject skill in corruption as growth. Growth *per se* cannot direct education. This fact is evident from the writings of Dewey himself who is considered as the propagator of the concept of "growth". He says:

> The concept of education as a social process and function has no definite meaning until we define the kind of society we have in mind.[19]

The whole theory of education which is built on such a conception is of little help to the educator since it leaves him wandering. A philosopher of education criticizes having growth as the aim of education saying:

> But as a philosophy, it was far from complete, for it failed to establish a clear and consistent sense of direction, and this lack has led to

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> aimless wandering in search for a goal. Some progressives have talked as though growth were the goal of education, but growth itself is by no means a satisfactory goal.[20]

From the previous discussion it could be emphasized that it is of crucial importance for education to have a general aim that directs growth at all stages and helps them in assessing where they stand. The concept of growth might lead anywhere unless certain standards or ideals are impield in the concept itself or at least their existence is presupposed. But the general educational aims remain of little practical value unless they are stated in more specific forms. Analysis of the general aims is essential if they are meant to guide the educational practices. Such analysis will occupy our concern in the following pages.

Given that several components of man's nature are recognized, namely body, *rūḥ* and mind, the general educational aim may be divided into three main subdivisions. The educational aims in Islam should be designed in such a way that each of the three components is cared for. Failure to do so results in producing a person who is not qualified for the *khilāfah*. Just as the removal of one side of the triangle will result in the triangle ceasing to exist as a triangle, the very same thing happens when educational aims neglect any of man's constituents.[21] This means that we have physical aims *(ahdāf jismiyyah)*, spiritual aims *(ahdāf rūḥiyyah)* and mental aims *(ahdāf 'aqliyyah)*.

The *khalīfah* has been portrayed as a person who interacts with his environment, for example building castles as was mentioned in Chapter Two. This cannot be attained in the absence of physical strength. In an authentic *Ḥadīth* the Prophet says:

> A strong believer is better and is more lovable to Allāh than a weak believer.[22]

Physical strength is referred to even in Nawawī's interpretation of strength *(quwwah)* to mean strength of *īmān*.[23] The same principle is also emphasized in the Qur'ān. Superiority in bodily attributes was one of the qualifications of Ṭālūt to be a king. In (2:247) we read:

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Allāh hath chosen him above you
And hath gifted him
Abundantly with knowledge
And bodily prowess *(basṭah fi al-jism)*.

The last phrase is interpreted to mean either physical strength[24] or big size[25] or both of them.[26] In (28:26) we find that Shu'ayb's daughter advises him to engage Moses on wages because he is strong and honest. The *āyah* reads:

... inna khayra man ista' jarta al-qawiyy al-amīn.

As long as physical strength is one of the main aims, it follows that education should aim at developing the physical skills which are considered necessary for building up a strong and fit body. It should also aim at avoiding situations which might be injurious to the physical health of the students. Habits or practices which promote the individual's health should be encouraged while harmful habits have to be discouraged. Cleanliness of body and having a good appearance could be cited as examples of the desired habits. One cannot escape the implications as far as cleanliness is concerned of performing ablution before prayers or bathing the whole body in cases of ceremonial impurity[27] *(janābah)* and the order to wear beautiful apparel when going to the mosque for prayers.[28] The biological needs whose satisfaction is necessary for the existence of man as an individual — such as the need for food and water — or his existence as a human being — like the sexual need — should be cared for. To help the student meet his biological needs from the Qur'anic perspective as well as forming positive attitudes towards them are among the physical educational aims. And when we speak about forming an attitude or acquiring a skill it is implied that providing the relevant facts is essential. A student who lacks knowledge about marriage, productivity, unlawful sexual relations and the duties towards one's dependants cannot be expected to form the correct attitude towards the role of the sexual need. It is not being suggested here that informing the students about their bodies and how to be strong would necessarily result in their forming positive attitudes; what is being suggested is that such knowledge is necessary.

To sum up, Islamic education which cares for the human body

should aim at providing the student with the relevant facts about his body; it should aim at helping him acquire the skills that make him feel stronger and it should aim at implanting positive attitudes towards his body. When we say that the body and its needs form a corner stone of Islamic education we are not implying or suggesting that this forms its main concern. We are simply concerned to establish a view which is in sharp contradiction with such ideas as the following:

> When we consider the emphasis which the Qur'ān places on the material side of man's nature, and its evident lack or interest in the higher and more spiritual aspects of man's essential qualities it is not surprising to learn from our source that it conceived that there is an inherent weakness in man somewhere.[29]

If, however, we return back to the two *āyahs* which praise physical strength we find that one of them mentions physical strength associated with knowledge while the other *āyah* mentions it associated with honesty. Physical strength *per se* is not glorified in the Qur'ān. Besides, the ***Ḥadīth*** which was quoted earlier speaks about the strength of the believer *(al-mu'min)* and not about the strength in man regardless of his faith. Thus to say the idea that the Qur'ān sacrifices the higher values for the sake of the material side of man's nature should be totally rejected.

Having discussed the physical aims we will consider now the spiritual aims. It is believed that a person who truly accepts the message of Islam should accept all the ideals embodied in the Qur'ān. Promoting the spirit of loyalty to Allāh alone and implementing the Qur'ānic morality which was exemplified in the conduct of the Prophet constitutes the second main sub-division of the general aim. Objectives that belong to this category are usually described as spiritual *(rūḥiyyah)*. These ideals cover the different aspects of the person as an individual or as a member of the community. To care for the life of the individual and to call for brotherhood are simply examples of these ideals which influence the mental as well as the physical aspects of the individual. The importance of these ideals is evident in (68:4) which praises the

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Prophet because of his moral standard. It is these ideals which modern eductors have in mind when they speak of the religious aims *(al-ahdāf al-dīniyyah)*. This leads us to ask the following question: Are they justified in doing so?

To accept the idea of having religious aims means implicitly or explicitly that there are aims in education which will be described as "non-religious". M. Nakosteen — for example — classifies the Islamic educational aims into religious and secular. The religious aims are those which are built on the following bases: the Qur'ān as a source of knowledge, equality of men, dependence upon Allāh, the supremacy of the Prophet and the subordination of the secular subjects to the religious ones. The secular aims are rooted in the tradition which urges the Muslim not to neglect this world for the sake of the Hereafter.[30] Of the several points that might be raised against this classification is the point that religion is used in an ambiguous way while in Islam it is a comprehensive term which includes what he considers as secular. In (3:19) we read:

Inna al-dīn 'ind Allāh al-Islām.

This makes the two terms "Islām" and "*dīn*" synonymous. Since Islam deals with the different aspects that relate to this life and the aims which deal with it cannot be described as secular or non-religious.

But it should also be mentioned that to refer to the Qur'anic ideals by using the term "*al-ahdāf al-rūḥiyyah*" is not without its difficulties. As long as man knows very little — if anything — regarding the nature of the *rūḥ*, it follows that describing certain aims as "*rūḥiyyah*" adds to the perplexity of the educator. Yet, it is relevant to mention that the addition of the *rūḥ* to the body resulted in deep change. This change keeps the door open for the conclusion that the function of the *rūḥ* is not as ambiguous as its nature. Sa'īd Ḥawwā says that originally, the *rūḥ* acknowledges Allāh and accepts its slavery to Him. But environmental factors can change this pure state which means that it is quite possible for it to err. Our aim, he adds, should be to return it to its purity.[31] Muḥammad Quṭb takes the same line when he says that the *rūḥ* is the main chain that connects man to Allāh and that Islamic education must aim at

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guiding man so as to keep him in constant contact with Allāh.[32]

Here, the function given to *rūḥ* makes it synonymous to *fiṭrah*. But the way "*fiṭrah*" is interpreted leaves the door open for *'aql* to play an important role in the process of recognizing the existence of Allāh. "*Fiṭrah*" and "*rūḥ*" cannot be equated. The spiritual aims (*al*-ahdāf al-rūḥiyyah) as is understood by Quṭb and Ḥawwā are broad to the extent that they could include the other two subdivisions of the general educational aim. The lack of precision in the terminology comes from the greater role given or assigned to *rūḥ*. An examination of the *āyahs* that mention *rūḥ* shows that its existence in man elevates him. In our opinion the justification for using the term "*rūḥiyyah*" in reference to the Qur'anic ideals is that it implies idealistic or sublimated meaning. The ideals that are described as "*rūḥiyyah*" do not exist in sub-human beings. The highness of the *hadaf* is more relevant when it is spiritual.

Adoption of the Qur'anic ideals is praised while having doubt about them is repudiated. In (2:10) the hypocrites who do not believe in these ideals are described as having disease in their hearts. This means that setting these ideals as an educational aim necessitates the removal of any antagonistic attitudes towards them. The purification of the individual of such negative attitudes is of top priority. In (2:129) *tazkiyah*, which is interpreted to mean purifications,[33] is mentioned in connection with reciting Allāh's *ayāhs* and teaching *ḥikmah* as the major function of the Prophet. This suggests how high *tazkiyah* ranks in the Qur'ān.

Having discussed the nature of the physical and the spiritual aims we turn to discuss the third category which may be described as the *mental aims (al-ahdāf al-'aqliyyah)*. Here educators are preoccupied with developing intelligence which leads the individual to discover the ultimate truth. The study of Allāh's signs and the discovery of order in these signs should lead to the recognition of the Designer of all that exists. Failure to do so is viewed as the most serious type of mental deviation. The signs in themselves are not the final end and hence should not dominate our reasoning. The fascination of the modern man with science and technology is not different — in essence — from the fascination of the Queen of Sheba

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and her people with the sun;[34] in both cases, the link with Allāh is not established.

Education can help in achieving this mental aim by providing students with relevant and sufficient facts about what they learn. An increase in the facts one possesses regarding an object results usually in better understanding of it. This explains why the facts which testify to Allāh's existence cover a wide range of the Qur'anic *āyahs*. But since the Qur'anic text is superior — from an Islamic point of view — to other texts and since its facts are fixed, one might raise the point that the factual aims of Islamic education are no more than the imparting of "a fixed corpus of statements".[35] In reponse to this criticism it suffices to recall that the discussion of *'ilm* and *ma'rifah* in the previous chapter showed that the usage of their derivatives is not restricted to revealed knowledge. The whole universe is considered as a book from which the learner has to acquire the facts. The learner can have direct access to some of the facts. He can — for example — perceive the plants, the rain and the mountains and interact with them directly. Facts which are gained through direct interaction with the objects could be described as *ḥaqq al-yaqīn** since the learner validates truth or discovers it by himself. The empirical attitude towards Allāh's signs that exist in one's surroundings should be encouraged at all levels of the educational system.

But it is obvious that the learner is unable to have direct access to all the signs. He can observe the sun, for example, but he cannot reach it; facts concerning the sun come through its observation with the eye. Facts that come through observation could be described as *'ayn al-yaqīn* because the eye *('ayn)* plays an important role in the process of perception. These facts are no less important than the first type.

There still remain some signs that do not yield to the senses alone; the signs of Allāh in history and His revealed signs belong to this category. Here, the learner needs fluency in using symbolic expressions. We have already shown that man is privileged in possessing the ability to give names to things. If the learner acquires his knowledge from authentic sources, then his knowledge could be

* Ibn Jinnī mentions that *haqq al-yaqīn* means pure certainty *(Khālis al-Yaqīn wa-Wāḍiḥuhu)* See *al-Khaṣā'iṣ*, vol. 3, p. 334.

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described as knowledge of certainly *('ilm al-yaqīn)*. It is the responsibility of the school to develop in the learner the reading skills and habits so that he will be able to communicate easily with others through conversation and writing. The importance of reading could be derived from the fact that the first revealed *āyah* to the Prophet ordered him to read.[36] Here one might argue that advances in educational technology make education less reliant on the 'word'. This is quite true; but it is noteworthy that all teaching methods and materials rely on verbal symbolism. What a student gets from a recorder is a result of his ability to comprehend the recorded material. Reading and writing efficiently are two skills that should be cared for right from the beginning. In addition the school aims at providing the learner with the skill of using numbers in his daily life. In (10:5) the moon is mentioned in connection with *ḥisāb*, which is interpreted by Ṭabarī to mean calculating the number of the days of the year and the hours of the day.[37]

Besides helping the students acquire the facts and the mental skills, Islamic education aims at encouraging sound thinking. Deep understanding and not mere rote learning should be encouraged. Some believe that such an aim does not fit into the Islamic theory of education on the basis that Islamic education is mainly concerned with memorization and hence any process of thinking is ruled out.[38] E. Putney takes this stand when saying:

> Since the religion of Mohammad consists largely in an aggregation rules laid down in the past, the curriculum and method must be largely fixed. Memorization, not thinking, is the thing desirable.[39]

It is quite true that the facts of the Qur'ān are not liable to change and that the more the person memorizes parts of the Qur'ān the better. Memorization of parts of the Qur'ān is one of the aims to be achieved because every Muslim should be able to recite some *āyahs* in his prayers. Even here, the learner should know the meaning of what he reads. The Qur'ān was not revealed to be memorized by rote learning, but to be quite understood by the people. In (4:82) we read:

> Do they not consider

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The Qur'ān with care *(yatadabbarūna)*.

This association between the Qur'ān or its *āyahs* and the verb *yatadabbarūna* is also repeated in other *āyahs*.[40] Since interpreters understand *tadabbur* as knowledge of the evidences in the Qur'ān and the harmony that exists between its *āyahs*,[41] then there is no reason to accept the claim that memorization dominates or should dominate the Islamic curriculum. Understanding and not mere rote learning is what should be encouraged. In order to promote understanding the Qur'ān denounces superficial thinking and all types of learning that lead to it.[42] It also calls for having certain intellectual attitudes that are favourable to thinking. Disputing without knowledge and the call to ascertain the truth when receiving any news are only examples of such attitudes.[43] These cannot but be part of the mental educational aims.

This discussion of physical, mental and spiritual aims allows us to affirm that the basic needs which are rooted in human nature receive good care. In this educational system, none of the basic needs is suppressed or supplanted, but rather regulated: this makes the individual feel secure. The security of the *khalīfah* strengthened by his belief in Allāh and the positive attitude he has towards the universe. His destiny is not left to unexpected changes governed by the unknown. The importance of this primary psychological need is evident from (106:4) which considers security from fear as one of Allāh's bounties. In education, it is necessary to remember that the learning process is in danger whenever that security is threatened. The aim of education is to build a healthy personality whose security is guaranteed by the harmony of its components and the sense of optimism towards the universe.

So far, nothing has been mentioned regarding the social aims of education. As a matter of fact, the *khalīfah* who posesses a well-balanced personality does not live in isolation. This is implied in the *āyahs* that address man by using the plural form. Each of the two phrases "Oh ye children of Adam" *(yā banī Adam)* and "Oh ye people" *(yā ayyuhā al-nās)* occur more frequently than the term "Oh thou man" *(yā ayyuhā al-insān)*. In (8:65) the individual's endurance in fighting is mentioned as part of a collective effort. The *āyah* reads:

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If there are
Twenty among you, patient
And persevering, they will
Vanquish two hundred.
If a hundred, they will vanquish
A thousand of the unbelievers.

Arithmetically the ratio of twenty to two hundred or one hundred to one thousand is equal to one to ten. The fact that the Qur'ān avoids using the expression "one to ten" although it is shorter than the other form indicates that the *āyah* implies something more than the mere ratio. Commenting on this issue, Rāzī says that this may be connected with the number of fighters in the military campaigns of the Prophet *(sarāyā)* which were usually composed of twenty men as a minimum and one hundred as a maximum.[44] Zamakhsharī gives a more illuminating interpretation by saying that the repetition means that there may be a difference between the resistance of twenty opposed by two hundred and the resistance of one hundred confronted by one thousand[45] If this is true then it is quite possible to say that the effort put forth by one individual in either case is different from the effort of one individual who fights ten men. The difference of the effort referred to by Zamakhsharī could be attributed to the new spirit one acquires by being a member of a group. A reluctant man may become more courageous by joining a group whose members are known to be so. The interrelations between the group modify the individual personalities of its members. The quality that characterizes a certain group is more than the sum of the qualities of its members; it is something more than that. If this analysis is accepted it would be easier to understand the emphasis in Islam on the group *(jamā'ah)* concept. Thinking of other members of the *jamā'ah* is well established in the individual. In every prayer the Muslim calls upon Allāh saying: "Show us the Straight Way". It is "us" and not "me" which is repeated at least seventeen times a day.

It appears that the social aspect of the *khalīfah* should be cared for. Education which ignores the social needs of the individual is lacking something. The need for affiliation and belonging to a group cannot be denied. The needs for love, acceptance and excelling others are derived from being a member of a group. This shows that satisfying

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the psychological needs of the individual depend upon his status in the group. The most important group which has a major impact on the individual is the family. Education must aim at fostering desirable attitudes among the members of the family. Examples of such attitudes are love of children, kindness to parents, acceptance of the role of the wife and the husband in the family, acceptance of one's responsibility to support dependants and holding marriage in high esteem. The Islamic curriculum aims also at the acquisition of certain social skills related to family affaires such as asking permission before entering bedrooms.[46]

The individual who is a member of the family is at the same time a member of the society to which he belongs. The curriculum aims at developing all the ideals that are favourable to the integrity of the society. Examples of these ideals are: love for others, being good to kin, being just to others, hospitality and modesty. Social diseases such as boastfulness, circulation of false rumours and backbiting have to be watched out. Acquisition of the necessary social skills such as communicating with others is part of the social educational aims in Islam.

So far, the individualistic and the social aspects of the *khalīfah* have been discussed; but nothing has been mentioned regarding which of them comes first. Should education emphasize individuality or conformity? Is there any tension that exists between the individaul and his society? If there is, then how can education reduce or remove it? If not why is this so?

As indicated earlier, the individual is an integral part of a group be it the society or the family or both of them. Conformity to social ideals is expected from the individual. "Brotherhood" which is one of the key social concepts of Islam requires the individual to treat others in a certain way.* Arrogance or the assumption of superiority of the individual on the basis of wealth or tribal or national qualifications is rejected. Indeed, in Islam, the individual has no right to retain personal values that contradict the Qur'anic ideals.

* In his *Iḥyā'*, Ghazālī discusses in detail the duties of brotherhood such as material assistance, forgive-ness and loyalty. See Holland, *The Duties of Brotherhood in Islam*, pp. 21-88.

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He has the very same ideals as others. The common goals between all the members of society remove any tension that might emerge. Conformity and individuality are not contradictory to each other by nature. Contradiction emerges either when the individual Muslim lives in a society which does not adopt the Islamic ideals or when the individual tries to rebel against them. In the first case the Qur'ān does not ask the individual to conform to such social values. In (4:97) those who were persecuted by the people of Makkah are urged to leave that society and join the believers. As for the second case the individual is asked to leave aside his personal feelings *(ahwā')* because he cannot hold such views as an individual. Conformity and individualism cannot be understood in isolation from the Islamic ideals. It is these ideals which integrate the individual with his society. Tames expresses the relation between the individual and the society in a clear way by saying:

> ... Islam is just such a *Weltanschauung*. It strove to integrate the worshipper with his God, the individual with his fellows, the sum of human knowledge with the totality of divine revelation.[47]

The harmony between the individual and his society leaves no place for any contradiction between the social and the individualistic aims. The "I am we" does not mean the disappearance of the "I am". Education is concerned with developing the unique characteristics of the human being so that he will be able to adapt to the standards of the society that shares with him the very same ideals. Such harmony is the first characteristic of Islamic educational aims.

The second characteristic of these aims is that they are realistic and idealistic at the same time. The realistic aspect is reflected in several instances. The individual for whom education caters interacts with real objects and facts and not merely with the shadow of reality. The biological needs are accepted and not repudiated. Yielding sometimes to one's personal temptations is expected; but it is not accepted. In (70:19) man is described as very impatient; but three *āyahs* later, those who are devoted to prayers are exempted from such description. It is true that the educational aims are concerned with the existing physical, psychological and mental

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needs of the individual. But when these needs seek satisfaction that is harmful to the integral personality of the individual they are prevented. **Realism** does not mean satisfying these needs regardless of other factors; it is rather used to mean satisfying the needs that exist in a way that agrees with the status of the *khalīfah*. Curiosity — which is a mental need — is acknowledged since it is hoped to lead the individual to link the **signs** which he examines to their Creator. Sexual need is sought for because it is tightly linked with productivity **and man's** *khilāfah* on earth. Curiosity and sexual need are not recognized as important in themselves. Their importance lies in their link with the ideals of Islam. It is this link to the ideals that gives the existing needs of the individual a high esteem.

The ideals of the Qur'ān are considered perfect because they come from Allāh who perfected **religion.**[48] In *(Sūrat al-Nūr)* the light of Allāh is described as very **luminous.**[49] Commenting on this *āyah* Mawdūdī says that its main purpose is to show how perfect the light is.[50] To have perfect vision depends upon the extent one opens one's eyes to it. Those who choose to keep their eyes closed are described as surrounded with depths of darkness in a vast deep **ocean.**[51] It is interesting to mention that while the Platonic idealism restricts seeing the real light to the philosophers, the Qur'anic idealism gives this privilige to all those who desire that.*

The idealism just described may appear to be in conflict with the concept of "middle" *(wasaṭ)*. In (2:143) the Islamic *ummah* is described as *wasaṭ*. Does it mean that higher standards should be abandoned because of the importance of the concept of "average"? If so, then the whole image of idealism is seriously threatened.

If we turn to examine the Qur'anic meaning of *wasaṭ* we find that Ṭabarī interprets it to mean the best *(al-khiyār)*.[52] In *Sūrat al-Qalam* the best opinion given by the People of the Gardens is attributed to a person who is described as the middle *(awsaṭuhum)*.[53] In Arabic, although the term *wasaṭ* is used to mean middle or average, yet it is also used to refer to the best or the perfect.[54] This allows the conclusion that the concepts of *wasaṭ* and idealism are not two different things. There is no pretext for Muslim educators to accept

* For more details about Plato's simile of the cave see Plato, *The Republic*, pp. 316-17.

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low achievements on the pretext that to be an average person is the best thing. The ideals of the Qur'ān have to be fully realized.

The general educational aims are fixed and are not liable to change from time to time. The finality of the prophethood implies the finality of the ideals preached by Muḥammad. Besides, the good *fiṭrah* the *khalīfah* has coupled with his ability to choose his behaviour does not change from time to time of from one ethnic group to another. The concept of *khilāfah* differs from the concept of "democratic citizenship" which is considered as the ultimate aim which prevails nowadays even in the Islamic countries. This is because the *khalīfah* believes in unchangeable ideals whereas the ideals of the democratic citizenship change from time to time. In Democracy the majority of the society decides what is right or wrong. In Islam this is not the case. The Qur'anic principles are never put to the vote. As long as the Qur'anic principles are unchangeable and men are the same in so far as their basic nature is concerned, there is enough support to justify the finality and the universality of the Islamic educational aims, and this forms their third characteristic.

However, the universality of the Qur'ān is not overshadowed by its Arabness. The several *āyahs* which describe the Qur'ān as "Arabic" do not form a serious threat to its universality. They in fact refer to the language through which it was revealed. None of the interpreters understood it any other way. The Arabness of the Qur'ān refers to the instrument of revelation and not to its content. Cragg notes that " 'Arabness' of the Qur'ān is in no essential conflict with its universalism."[55] Its "Arabness" implies that Arabic occupies a unique place in the curriculum since understanding the Qur'ān in the best way requires knowledge of the language through which it was revealed. But this does not mean at all that the principles of the Qur'ān were addressed to certain people i.e. the Arabs of the Peninsula.

Besides, the universality of the aims is not an absolute notion since its achievement is subject to external factors. If we take "brotherhood" as an example, we find that it is restricted to the community of the believers. In (49:10) we read the following:

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The Believers are but
A single Brotherhood.

Brotherhood is not restricted to a limited number of people who are joined together by tribal, ethnic or national bonds. Nor is it understood to bring together all human beings regardless of their belief. But our discussion of the nature of man shows that such a possibility is very likely. Belief — which forms the grounds for brotherhood — is a part of man's nature. The door of *īmān* is opened to all those who deliberately change their *fiṭrah* . Brotherhood as a concept has the potentialities that qualify it for universality. Perhaps this lack of distinction between what exists and what can or ought to exist made al-Shamma conclude that although the Qur'ān does not believe in equating brotherhood with tribal links, yet it does not at the same time believe in its universality.[56]

Still one more clarification regarding the third characteristic needs to be made. Having fixed aims may be interpreted as meaning rigidity on the part of the individual and the society. If this is the case, education may be solely concerned with transmitting social values. Innovation must be suppressed or at least be regarded as undesirable. But the free will which characterizes man enables him to choose one of two alternatives *(al-najdayn)*. Change towards the better is something desired on the part of the individual or the group. Some verbs that imply mobility such as "*sāri'ū*" and "*sābiqū*" occur in the Qur'ān. Change for the worse is something which should be guarded against. In (13:11) we read:

Verily never
Will Allāh change the conditions
Of a people until they
Change it themselves.

Although this *āyah* is usually quoted in reference to change in general, yet interpreters limit it to the undesirable aspects of change,[57] it is usually followed by punishment. Education must be concerned with avoiding the individual changes and changes in society which are harmful, and try to mobilise energies so that the pursuit of ideals will go on. There are no maximum limits to which all the members of society should stick. Thus the belief in final fixed

aims is not equated with rigidity. The *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet gives credit to the person who initiates a desirable practice *(sunnah ḥasanah)* which is followed by others.

The fourth characteristic of the general Islamic aims is that they are concerned with preparation for this life and the Hereafter. Jamīl Ṣalībā states this clearly when he says:

> Many verses are to be found in the Qur'ān and in the *Sunna* which indicate that education aims at the realization of happiness in this and the next world.[58]

As was suggested earlier, the educational process at the school is influenced by the expectations of the post-school period. Teaching the students of the elementary school the three Rs implies at the same time that the school is preparing them to play a role after graduation. Having a remote aim — say preparation for a particular profession — does not necessarily mean that the present needs of the student are sacrificed. To equip the student for the future carries with it equipping him for the present. If the present desired needs are neglected, whatever results the educator reaches will be unsatisfactory. What is being suggested here is that the concept of "preparation" does not violate the existing needs of the learner. On the contrary, better care for these needs results in better preparation. In Islam preparation goes beyond this world; what one does during his life prepares him for the Hereafter. Just as "preparation" for the post-school period does not necessitate ignoring the existing needs, the very same thing applies to the preparation for the Hereafter and its relation with the individual's needs in this life. To prepare the individual to lead a successful life in accordance with Qur'anic principles is in itself preparation for the Hereafter. Preparation that does not lead to that final end could be described as *jā'ir*.

The last characteristic of the general aims is that they should be translated into observable behaviour. The individual believer who believes in Allāh should reflect such belief in his behaviour. It is no wonder that the believers are described in numerous *āyahs* with several observable attributes besides their belief in the unseen; they strive for the cause of Allāh, they join in the mutual teachings of

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patience and truth etc. Belief *(īmān)* cannot be understood fully in terms of mere intention *(niyyah)*. Intention is in fact the hidden aspect of the behaviour while action is its overt aspect. It is true that in certain cases the overt aspect of the behaviour does not appear, but this is not the rule. In usual circumstances action *('amal)* follows intention. The criticism of the poets in the Qur'ān is due to the fact that they say what they do not do.[59] If the school is to achieve its general aims the patterns of observable behaviour which reflect the Islamic ideals should be defined so that it would be able to evaluate its efforts.

To conclude, educational aims are the foundations of any school curriculum which give it its characteristics. In Islam, the educational aims which are derived from the Qur'ān take care of the basic components of human nature. The structure of the *khalīfah* leaves no place for contradiction between these components or for the domination of one of them on the expense on the others. The Islamic educator is not forced to choose between the individual or his society, the idealistic principles or the existing needs, the remote goals or the persistent desires, the Hereafter of this life. These goals are not considered as opposing or competing with each other. The Qur'ān bridges the gap between the two extremes and links them tightly to each other. Integrating the different elements which compete with each other in the other educational theories is a fundamental characteristic of the Qur'anic education.

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Notes

1. *Man in the Qur'ān*, p. 29.
2. Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, p. 84. See also Qurṭubī, vol. 7, p. 152.
3. *Curriculum Development*, p. 10.
4. *Fundamentals of Curriculum Development*, p. 3.
5. *The Logic of Education*, p. 60.
6. Vol. 1, p. 196.
7. *The Logic of Education*, p. 26.
8. Wolman (Editor), *Dictionary of Behavioural Science*, p. 161.
9. Vol. 8, p. 1627.
10. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 19, pp. 380-81.
11. *Ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 260-61.
12. Ṭabarī, vol. 14, p. 271. See also Ibn Kathīr, vol. 2, p. 360.
13. Qurṭubī, vol. 10, p. 81; Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, p. 596; Razī, vol. 5, p. 293.
14. *Sūrah* 51:56.
15. Rāzī, vol. 7, p. 660. See also Qurṭubī, vol. 17, p. 56.
16. *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān*, vol. 7, p. 590.
17. Quoted in Bandman, *The Place of Reason in Education*, p. 11. The quotation is taken from *The Schools*, Harper, 1961, p. 30.
18. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 59.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
20. Woodring, "The Decline of Educational Philosophy" in *Phi Delta Kappan*, vol. 40, p. 7.
21. Shaybānī, *Falsafat al-Tarbiyah al-Islāmiyyah*, pp. 92-93.
22. Muslim, vol. 4, p. 1401.
23. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (edition of B. Ḥalabī), vol. 4, p. 219.
24. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 1, p. 301.
25. Ṭabarī, vol. 5, p. 313.
26. Bayḍāwī, vol. 1, . 253.
27. *Sūrah* 5:7.
28. *Sūrah* 7:31.
29. Thompson, *The Doctrine of Man in the Qur'ān*, chapter 1, p. 19.
30. *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education*, p. 41.
31. *Tarbiyatunā al-Rūḥiyyah*, p. 51.
32. *Manhaj al-Tarbiyah al-Islāmiyyah*, pp. 43-50.
33. Ṭabarī, vol. 3, p. 88.
34. See *Sūrah* 27:24.
35. To quote the phrase of M. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2, p. 439
36. *Sūrah* 96:1.
37. Vol. 15, p. 24.
38. Eickelman, "The Art of Memory: Islamic Education and its Social Reproduction" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 20, p. 489.
39. "Moslem Philosophy of Education" in *The Muslim World*, vol. 6, p. 190.
40. *Sūrah* 23:68, *Sūrah* 38:29 and *Sūrah* 47:24.
41. Ṭabarī, vol. 8, p. 567.
42. Chapter Three, pp. 167-172.
43. *Sūrah* 3:66 and *Sūrah* 49:6 respectively.
44. Vol. 4, p. 384.
45. Vol. 2, p. 235.
46. *Sūrah* 24:58.

47. "Islam and Integrated Studies" in Jackson (Ed.), *Perspectives on World Religions*, p. 106.
48. *Sūrah* 5:4.
49. *Sūrah* 24:35.
50. *Tasfsīr Sūrat al-Nūr*, p. 198.
51. *Sūrah* 24:40.
52. Vol. 3, p. 141.
53. *Sūrah* 68:28.
54. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, vol. 9, p. 305.
55. *The Event of the Qur'ān*, p. 55.
56. *The Ethical System Underlying the Qur'ān*, p. 119.
57. Ṭabarī, vol. 16, p. 382. Qurṭubī, vol. 9, p. 294. Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, p. 517, Rāzī, vol. 5, p. 18. Bayḍāwī, vol. 3, p. 148.
58. "Islam" in the *Year Book of Education*, (1957), p. 69.
59. *Sūrah* 26:224.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTENT OF EDUCATION

The educational aims which were discussed in the previous chapter cannot be attained unless educators select and design an appropriate content for the school curriculum. The term 'content' is used to mean an organized field of knowledge which forms the basis of the school activities and which is usually classified in different subject matters. One should bear in mind that the content is a means to an end and not an end in itself. The importance of mathematics — for example — cannot be determined unless its expected effect on the student is stated clearly. The content which is designed with the aim of the student's acquiring simple mental skills fails to be useful when critical or imaginative thinking is desired. Thus to say that the content of a subject — like mathematics — is important *per se* is hard to accept. Any educator who takes the responsibility of selecting the content of the curriculum cannot escape the strong relationship between the aims and the content of education. The content should be designed in such a way that reaching the aims becomes more feasible.

As long as educational aims differ from one society to another, the content of the curriculum must vary accordingly. For example, an industrial society which disregards religious beliefs will emphasize scientific courses or subjects in the school curriculum. Thus there can be no universal well-defined content which is agreed upon by educators for any specific grade. Designing the appropriate content implies selection which in turn implies value judgement. It is difficult to accept Hutchings' viewpoint which is expressed in the following statement:

> Education implies teaching. Teaching implies

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> knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence, education should be everywhere the same.[1]

As long as a strong relationship exists between the aims and the content of education, each educational theory has its own criteria for selecting the content. The present chapter will be devoted to the discussion of the content from the Islamic viewpoint. Because the Qur'ān is considered the corner-stone of Islamic educational theory its principles form the integral factor that unites the different subject matters which constitue the curriculum. We will argue that there are no subjects which may be classified either 'religious' or 'secular'. All subjects — including the natural sciences — must be taught from an Islamic viewpoint. We will attempt to show that dualism in the curriculum is not an inherent aspect of the Qur'anic outlook; where it exists, it is to be attributed to socio-political factors, both internal and external.

Our discussion of the nature of knowledge in Chapter Three has revealed that Allāh's signs *(āyāt)* do exist in man and the universe in addition to their existence in the Qur'ān itself. The high prestige which is given to the revealed word suggests that it should be given the leading role in education. Hence the subjects which are connected with the study of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* as well as the Arabic language constitute the first category of the content of education. These subjects are referred to by some educators as "religious" or "traditional" subjects. Our forthcoming discussion will attempt to show that such descriptions are inappropriate to Islamic education and hence we suggest that they should be called the "essential Islamic subjects". Such a description reflects the importance which should be given to them.

The second category of the curriculum subjects include the fields of knowledge which study man as an individual or as a member of his society. Psychology, sociology, history, etc. belong to this category. Fārūqī calls this category "The Ummatic Sciences."[2] If the recurrence of a term in the Qur'ān is taken as a criterion for its preference then these subjects may be called *"al-'ulūm al-insāniyyah"* (the sciences of man) since the term *insān* recurrs with more frequency than the term *ummah*.

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The third and the last category includes the fields of knowledge which are concerned with the study of nature. They may be called *"al-'ulūm al-kawniyyah"* (natural sciences) and they include astronomy, biology, botany etc. Dodge who refers to the first category as "revealed sciences" describes other sciences as "rational sciences".[3] Such a description is also inaccurate since the irrationality of the first category may be implied.

The description of the subjects which belong to the first category as "religious" or "traditional" is not without its shortcomings. To say that certain elements of the curriculum are religious suggests that other elements could be described as non-religious. But we know that from the Qur'anic outlook there can be no contradiction between the sciences which deal with the several types of Allāh's signs. Fārūqī explains the main reason for the unity of knowledge in Islam by saying:

> ... for the truth... is none other than the intelligent reading of nature in scientific report and experiment, or the reading of God's revelation in His Holy book. God is the author of both; and both of His works are public, appealing to no magisterium other than that of reason and understanding.[4]

It appears that dualism in the content of the curriculum which perpetuates the dichootomy between Allāh's signs, between Man and the Universe on the one hand and the Qur'ān on the other, is not an integral element of the Qur'anic outlook. Its introduction in the Muslim world may be attributed to both internal and external factors. Tibawi mentions that the successive waves of external invasions resulted in the destruction of knowledge and the development of negative attitudes towards what comes from outside on the part of the Muslims.[5] The outcome of these factors was a rigidity in the curriculum which became limited in its scope as well as in its quality. Sciences which belong to the second and third categories were expelled from the school curriculum with emphasis on learning by rote of the Qur'anic sciences and Arabic. It was this type of curriculum which was prevailing in the Muslim world when the Western system of education began to penetrate this world through

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military occupation or missionary work or reform movements which were generated by various motives.[6] It is no wonder that the term "traditional" which was used to describe the inherited system of education in the Muslim world in the last few centuries has acquired unfavourable associations. The negative attitudes towards it through its association with a rigid curriculum may still persist even when it is used in reference to a different type of subject. It is for this reason that the phrase "the essential Islamic subjects" is suggested to refer to the revealed knowledge and the Arabic language.

It is not our intention to undertake a detailed discussion of the dual system in the Muslim world. What concerns us here is that the existence of two different systems led later to dualism in the very same curriculum.[7] The subjects which were borrowed from the modern schools were adopted and put alongside the inherited subjects without modification.

Two dangers — which every Muslim educator should beware of — result. The first danger is that the new subjects will be given more time and that this will be at the expense of the "essential Islamic sciences" which form the corner-stone of the curriculum. Scientific subjects which were introduced in the Muslim world took the place of knowledge built upon the Qur'ān.[8] Giving less weight to the principles of Islam leads to the weakening of the Islamic spirit among the students. It is not suggested that the advances of science should not find their way into the school curriculum, but this does not mean that educators should be enchanted by the wonders of science and technology and consider it a rival or even superior to the essential Islamic sciences.

The second and the most serious danger is the adoption of secularism which contradicts the Islamic way of thinking. The domain of religion is restricted to the few hours which are allotted to "religious education". It has nothing to do with other subjects which may propagate anti-religious values or concepts. Instead of opening the senses of the learner to Allāh's signs in the self and the universe, the new subjects are geared to fill him with doubt about the teaching of Islam or at best to be unaware of their realities. Secularism began to develop among the students. Because such a conception leaves a great effect we will consider it in greater detail.

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There are some who may argue that there is no harm at all in adopting secularism in the Islamic curriculum, and that its coexistence with Islamic principles is quite possible. In his Ph.D. thesis, Hassan maintains such a positive outlook towards secularism.. He says:

> In this respect the recognized Islamic scholars as well as the traditional rulers have a duty to educate their people that the Western secular approach does not necessarily act as a means of proselytizing for Christianity nor is it anti-Islamic but rather that it provides a necessary instrument for the social and economic development of the community.[9]

In his justification for this stand, he mentions that knowledge as an attribute of Allāh occurs in one hundred and sixty-two places in the Qur'ān.[10] He also quotes the saying "Educate your sons, they must live in a time different from yours" and attributes it to the Prophet.[11] In addition to these reasons which are related to the principles of Islam he resorts to historical evidence. He maintains that some Muslim states — like Iraq and Saudi Arabia — have succeeded in solving this issue, i.e. modernization versus traditional and hence there is no justification for not doing the same thing in Northern Nigeria[12] It is those causes which lie behind his dismissal of one of the recommendations of the International Islamic Seminar on Education which was held in Nigeria in 1977 because that recommendation rejects any division between secular and religious education. His rejection is based on the view that such a recommendation is contradictory without explaining satisfactorily what he means by this.[13]

However, secularism specifically excludes religion from certain aspects of man's life especially the scientific domain.[14] The exclusion of religion from certain aspects of life can be interpreted from the Qur'anic viewpoint as a rebellion against Allāh which disbars man from the title of *"khalīfah"*.[15] Cragg emphasizes the concern of Islam with this issue as follows:

> ... there is no contemporary faith more radically

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> involved in this type of secularity. For there is no faith that has so ambitiously or so programmatically related the human order and the Divine will.[16]

The Islamic teachings which relate human behaviour to the Divine will do not leave the door open for conceptions which contradict them. It is no wonder that the evidence of Hassan which he relates to the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* is not accurate. The emphasis of the Qur'ān on knowledge is illogically equated with secularism. The very same thing applies to the saying which he attributed to the Prophet without reference to his source. As a matter of fact, this saying does not appear in any of the authentic books of *Ḥadīth*. Even if one accepts for the sake of argument that it is a *Ḥadīth*, it would be far-fetched to derive from it what he tries to establish. His reference to modernization in some Muslim states is even more confusing. He fails to differentiate between states which adopt different ideologies. It should be noted that the educational theories of Saudi Arabia and Iraq are not the same. Islam, which is the main source of the educational *ḥikmah* in Saudi Arabia,* is given a secondary role in Iraq. In his book *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, Mishail 'Aflaq, the general secretary of the Ba'th ruling party in Iraq and one of the founders of this party says:

> Arabs nowadays do not want their nationalism to be religious, because religion has another function which differs from that which unifies the nation. On the contrary, religion may divide the one nation.[17]

This shows that Hassan was inaccurate when he put on a par different Muslim states which adopt different ideologies. It is a grave mistake to consider secular states which adopt Arab nationalism as Islamic states and to look upon them as a good example to be followed.

It is hoped that our previous discussion has shown that a dualism in the content of the curriculum which differentiates between religious and secular subjects is alien to the Qur'anic perspective. It

* See 'Abdullāh, *Tarīkh al-Ta'līm fī Makkah*, p. 313.

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is rather a by-product of several factors. Hence it is the responsibility of the Muslim educator to realize the nature of this issue and to take the necessary precautions. The content of the curriculum should be selected with special care. The following criteria may be suggested to help educators who are responsible for the selection of the content of the curriculum.

The first criterion is that the three categories of knowledge which were mentioned earlier should find their way to the curriculum. This comes from the fact that the Qur'ān refers to Allāh's signs in the self and the universe alongside with His signs in the Book. It would be in contradiction with the Qur'anic inspiration if the content of the curriculum consisted only of the essential Islamic sciences because this exludes the study of the other signs of Allāh. Each category should be given the relevant amount of time and emphasis. Advances in science and technology should not be taken as an excuse to give them an unduly prominent role and to allot more time to them. Such downgrading leads to superficial knowledge of the realities of Islam.

The second criterion is that knowledge which is selected from the three categories should reflect the characteristics of that knowledge. Since the nature of Allāh's signs differs, knowlledge which deals with them differs accordingly. Methods of study in the three categories also differ It follows that scientific knowledge need not be derived from the Qur'ān or the *Ḥadīth*, though there is nothing in the Qur'ān which contradicts it. The following *Ḥadīth* may be cited to support this viewpoint.

> It happened that the Prophet passed by people near date-palm trees who were combining the male with the female tree. On that he made a comment that such practice is useless. When the people heard his comment they abandoned it. Later, the Prophet was informed that abandonning that practice made the yield drop sharply. On that he said:"If there is any use of it, then they should do it, for it was just a personal opinion of mine, and do not go after

> my personal opinion; but when I say to you anything on behalf of Allāh, then do accept it.[18]

This *Hadīth* makes it clear that Islamic principles are silent regarding this problem which concerns farmers. The very same thing applies to the facts which are related to Allāh's signs in the self and the universe and which have been discovered by man. The written signs do not furnish all the information about man and the universe.

On the other side, the scientific method which must be reflected in the content of the third category should not be applied to the content of the other two categories. In Chapter One we rejected the concept of "theory" which considers scientific knowledge as a paradigm for other types of knowledge because it fails to explain revealed knowledge. Just as scientific facts cannot be derived from the Qur'ān, revealed knowledge does not yield itself to scientific observation or experimentation. This means that the method which fits one category of knowledge should not be imposed on the other categories of knowledge which deal with different objects.

However, the independence of the second and the third categories as far as the method and the subject of study is concerned should not be interpreted to mean their remoteness from the revealed knowledge. All the subject matters of the curriculum should lead to the very same goal which is the formation of Allāh's *khalīfah*. Each subject matter should contribute to the growth of the good Muslim who is a member of the best *ummah*. Everything in this universe is created for a purpose. In (38:27) we read:

> Not without purpose did We
> Create heaven and earth
> And all between .That
> Were the thought of Unbelievers.

If nothing is created in vain, the study of these things is also not in vain; on the contrary it is indeed purposeful. Any subject matter which does not lead to the Islamic educational aims loses the justification of its existence in the curriculum. Thus to say that the Qur'ān does not provide us with information about the moon is not equated with saying that studying the moon has nothing to do with Islam. Cragg puts this fact clearly by saying:

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> There may be areas of neutral silence in the divine documents. There are no areas of neutrality in the divine claim.[19]

In the remaining part of this chapter this fact will be exemplified. Our main argument is that the content of the curriculum in Islamic education has its own identity. History, psychology and natural science will be examined in order to illustrate this issue.

History

The Qur'ān is not meant to be a book of history since it does not deal with historical events which occur in it in a systematic way. As we will see in the next chapter — while discussing Qur'anic stories — the facts which relate to the same event are scattered in different *sūrahs*. These facts do not cover all the aspects which concern the historian; usually chronological order of events is not observed.

However the Qur'anic reference to past generations as well as to contemporary events which relate to the Muslim community and their struggle with their opponents makes it clear that the Qur'ān is not devoid of historical data of a specific type. In the case of events contemporary to the Prophet, the Qur'ān goes sometimes beyond mere narration of the event and furnishes us with explanations. In (3:152), for example, the setback at Uḥud is attributed to disobedience and failing to maintain discipline. In the case of past nations, the emphasis is laid on their destinies and Allāh's punishment for disobedience.[20] It seems that this fact made Ansari conclude that:

> .... it is necessary to point out the differences between an Islamic view of history in general and of history of religion in particular. The Qur'ān is directly concerned with the later only. But this does not mean that we cannot have or should not have an Islamic view of history. This is one of the important tasks which scholars should take up.[21]

Siddiqi holds a similar view when he says that the Qur'ān is mainly concerned with the moral factors which lead to the

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disintegration of societies.[22] On the other hand, Iqbal believes that the Qur'ān goes beyond this, and provides us with historical generalizations and also contains an essential principle of historical criticism. He refers to the Qur'anic rejection of news unless it is ascertained.[23] The *āyah* which contains this principle read as follows:

> O ye who believe!
> If a wicked person comes
> To you with any news,
> Ascertain the truth, lest
> Ye harm people unwillingly.[24]

From the above quotation we see that there exists more than one view concerning a Qur'anic approach to history; such a theoretical discussion is beyond the scope of the present study. However, it is pertinent to show that teaching history from an Islamic outlook has its justifications. History has been used by Marxism to back its ideology. Historical facts are understood differently in Western countries which take democracy as their ideal way of life. In either case the study of history is not limited to mere narrations of facts; usually something beyond these facts is desired. History is regarded as a process leading to some ultimate aims.

Aim-orientation of history is also clearly evident in the Qur'ān. The fact that the history of past generations is viewed as one of Allāh's signs indicates that reflecting on history has a purpose. It is true that past civilizations are viewed through the ruins they have left. Yet the aim is not to generate a gloomy attitude towards life. The emphasis of the Qur'ān on *'ibrah* (instruction) which one gets from the study of past generations reveals that there is an implication of the relevance of past events to present situations.[25] In other words, the study of past events serves a purpose at present, and this suggests that teaching history in schools should be geared to helping in attaining the educational aims. History which seeks to strengthen Islamic brotherhood, for example, should not tolerate describing the Ottomans as imperialists — as is the case in most if not all Arab countries — because it undermines one of the fundamental Qur'anic principles. To write history in a way which enhances Islamic aims is the first point which must be taken into

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consideration. Teaching the *sīrah* of the Prophet must aim at making students admire his characteristics and try their best to take him as their good example.

The second point to be emphasized is the effective role of man as an individual and as a member of his society in shaping the events of history. It is relevant to recall at this moment the discussion of man's free will in Chapter Two. Since all materialistic elements which exist in the universe are subjected to him, they cannot be considered the prime force in human history. The land on which the farmer lives as well as the machine which the industrial man operates do not initiate social and historical changes.[26] The historical event is tied up with the human being. Sayyid Quṭb notes that while the Qur'ān describes what happened at Uḥud in (3:121 ff) several other matters such as *ribā* (usury) and *shūrā* are mentioned. He believes that the reason which explains this phenomenon is that the Qur'ān concentrates on building the Islamic personality which is capable of performing its duties properly.[27]

Such analysis looks incompatible with the view held by 'Alī Shari 'ati who reads in the struggle between the two sons of Adam some form of materialistic dialecticism. He argues that Abel represents the age of pasture-based economy while Cain represents monopoly ownership. His argument is based on the type of sacrifice which was offered by each of them, a camel by Abel and yellow corn by Cain.[28] The difference in sacrifice is referred to by the books of interpretation.[29] However, it would be difficult to imagine that each of the two brothers who lived at the same time represents a different stage of human development. The reference of the murdered brother to Allāh in (5:30) gives enough justification to understand the struggle as that between two different individuals who hold different beliefs.

Just as determinism was proved to be irrelevant to the personality of the *khalīfah*, the very same stand should be taken when human history is considered. As Berlin correctly says, a historical event cannot be viewed or studied as if it were gamma-rays.[30] Man's free will opens the door for different alternative lines of development which historical events may take. Anyhow, man's free will is not the only will which operates. It is Allāh's will which comes first. Allāh

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willed that man have a will; the latter is dependent upon the first. In (3:125) the Qur'ān urges the Muslims to remain firm in the battle while (3:160) reads as follows:

> If God helps you
> None can overcome you
> If He forsakes you
> Who is there, after that,
> That can help you.

Without belief in Allāh's will it becomes impossible to explain extraordinary events such as the division of the sea when the Jews made their exodus to Palestine.[31]

The third point which must be emphasized is that civilization cannot be restricted to materialistic aspects. Principles which regulate man's relations with others as well as with nature are of prime importance. This is not to say that in the Islamic curriculum materialistic achievements are to be overlooked. They have to be studied. In (8:60) the believers are urged to be ready to fight their enemy and to strengthen themselves to the utmost of their powers. Commenting on this *āyah* Ṭabarī mentions that the term *quwwah* (strength) which occurs in it refers to all machines *(ālāt)* which could be prepared.[32] Dhū al-Qarnayn whose story is narrated in *Sūrat Al-kahf* is referred to in (18:94 — 98) as being engaged in building defensive barriers; iron, lead and stones were used in that enterprise. In addition to this the Qur'ān refers to commercial as well as agricultural activities. In (34:15) the flourishing condition of Saba' in agriculture is referred to while *sūrah* 106 mentions the trade of Quraysh with Syria and Yemen. This shows that several aspects of materialistic advances are referred to in the Qur'ān and this indicates their importance. As a matter of fact the concept of *khilāfah* which was discussed in Chapter Two cannot be detached from the materialistic aspects which exist in man's environment.

However, the Qur'ān which recognizes the importance of these factors does not give them overdue emphasis. They are not the valid criteria for judging human advance throughout history. Material strength cannot alone protect nations from destruction or disintegration. In (30:9) we read:

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Do they not travel
Through the earth and see
What was the end
Of those before them?
They were superior to them
In strength: they tilled
The soil and populated it
In greater numbers than these
Have done.

In another *āyah* the Qur'ān indicates the importance of *īmān* in the struggle which makes it possible for twenty Muslims to defeat two hundred.[33]

This being the case, books of history in an Islamic school should not contain or propagate concepts which contradict the Islamic outlook which has just been emphasized. In order to illustrate this issue let us take the "Renaissance" and show how it should be viewed from the Islamic perspective. The "Renaissance" is used to refer to the cultural changes which started in Italy in the fourteenth century and spread in the following two centuries to the rest of Europe. This movement coloured life in Europe up to the eighteenth century.[34] The major new element which was introduced in this period was the revival of Greek and Roman classics. The new element which was added to an old compound left its effect on the social values. Although some believe that the description of the "Renaissance" as paganism does not bear examination,[35] others maintain that "it was characterized by admiration for and imitation of Greece and Rome and rejection of medieval values."[36]

A renaissance which has its roots in non-Islamic soil should not be thaught in such a way that positive attitudes towards it are developed. From an Islamic perspective, the "Renaissance" as well as other civilizations such as the Pharaonic or the Phoenician should not be admired since they reflect the Jāhilī spirit. The very same thing applies to the contemporary Western civilization which excludes Allāh from different spheres of human life. Since the Prophet is considered the seal of Prophets, his message is the source of any social movement. Renaissance or re-birth or *tajdīd* should

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mean going back to the Qur'anic principles. Nasr puts it clearly when saying:

> A true Islamic renaissance is then not just the birth or re-birth of anything that happens to history but the re-application of principles of nature.[37] a truly Islamic nature.[37]

This suggests that deviation from the Qur'anic principles should not be hailed as progressive even if it is accompanied by some political, economical or social achievements. If this analysis is accepted, then the history of some political movements in the Muslim world which copied the Western concept of nationalism cannot be considered as a type of renaissance from the Islamic outlook.

The fourth point which must be emphasized is that there are patterns in history and hence students should be helped to grasp these patterns and not to limit their knowledge to the acquisition of unrelated facts. The Qur'ān refers on several occasions to these patterns using the term *sunan* (singular *sunnah)*. Ṭabarī explains *sunnah* to mean the example which is followed *(al-mithāl al-muttaba')*.[38] The struggle between *ḥaqq* and *bāṭil* does not cease. Nations which deviate from the straight path ultimately disintegrate. In (17:16) we read:

> When We decide to destroy
> A population, We first send
> A definite order to those
> Among them who are given
> The good things of this life
> And yet transgress; so that
> The word is proved true
> Against them: then it is
> We destroy them utterly.

This general pattern which awaits nations which deliberately do wrong is best understood in the light of the following principles:

1. Destruction of such nations is not necessarily immediate. This is explicit from (22:48) which mentions that many nations were given respite before being punished.

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2. Destruction does not necessarily come after every misconduct because had Allāh the Merciful done so, not a single living creature would have survived.[39]

3. The fall of every nation has a definite time which can neither be deferred not hastened.[40] This fact is expressed in (10:49) which states that to every nation there is an appointed time. The duration of this *ajal* cannot be calculated.[41]

To sum up: The content of history in Islamic education should aim at developing desirable attitudes towards Islamic principles and past generations which supported Allāh's messengers. Negative attitudes towards non-Islamic values should be encouraged regardlless of the civilization in which they prevail. It is true that history is the record of facts concerning past events; but not all facts are given the same value. In Islam, materialistic factors, whose importance is not denied, rank next to the Islamic principles. Historical concepts — such as the Renaissance — which contradict the Islamic perspective should be analyzed and judged in accordance with their relevance to Islam. The fact that the study of the history of past nations is considered as a study of Allāh's signs which leads to *'ibrah* (instruction) suggests that the content of history in Islamic education cannot be limited to the study of Islam. Other nations as well must be studied provided that the ultimate educational aims are not violated.

Psychology

Psychology may be defined as the study of man's behaviour while he interacts with his environment. However, this definition seems rather loose since it includes areas of human behaviour which belong also to other fields of knowledge like sociology and education. There are, for example, certain issues which are of common interest to psychology and education, and the study of these by psychologists is classified as educational psychology. But this does not mean that all issues studied by psychologists are at the same time of interest to specialists in other fields of knowledge. Motivation and learning are examples of issues which are the concern of psychologists alone.[42]

Since psychology is concerned with man's behaviour, it is

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expected to be of relevance to Islam as well as other religions which aim at controlling human behaviour in one way or the other. As a matter of fact, there is a branch of psychology known as the Psychology of Religion which aims at shedding light on the religious attitudes of individuals. Some psychologists maintain that religion is a phenomenon which can best be understood if it is considered in its historical perspective. Belief in Allāh is an advanced stage which was preceded by primitive stages such as totemism and the cult of heroes.[43] Some analytic psychologists have tried to explain belief in Allāh in terms of the Oedipus complex. In his introduction to Mīlijī's book *Taṭawwūr al-Shu'ūr al-Dīnī 'ind al-Ṭifl wa al-Murāhiq*, Ziyūr — an Egyptian analyst — writes:

> There is no doubt that psycho-analysis gives a clear picture of the sources of religious feelings and their development. The child tends to glorify his father's power, ability and knowledge which encompasses earth and heaven. He looks at his father as if he were holy and perfect. It is self — explanatory that these feelings are caused by specific psychological needs at some stages of the child's psychological development. At a later stage, the child suffers from severe emotions as far as his relation with his father is concerned especially during the well-known Oedipus situation; but such emotions are repressed. Soon he faces the bitter fact and recognizes that his father is not as complete as he had thought before. He finds himself forced to transfer the attributes which were given to the father to a supreme being which is Allāh who becomes his father in the skies.[44]

It should be perfectly obvious that such an approach is incompatible with the Qur'anic approach being developed here.

What has been said about Psychology of Religion does not by any means cover the whole activity in this field. It has only been cited to show that there is something in common between psychology and religion since they are concerned with man's behaviour. However,

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the relationship between Islam and psychology may be stronger than in other religions because the Qur'ān considers man one of Allāh's signs which must be studied with reflection. In (41:53) we read:

> Soon will We show them
> Our Signs in the furthest
> Regions of the earth, and
> In their own souls.

In their explanation of the signs which exist in the self, interpreters usually refer to the physical characteristics such as the good shape and the senses as well as to other attributes — such as the ability to learn and use symbols — which are of interest to psychology.[45] Man's behaviour which is affected by the attributes which Allāh gave to man deserves to be studied. It is no wonder that the Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyyah classifies the issues which deal with the love of Allāh, patience, hope etc. as *'ilm al-sulūk* (science of behaviour).[46]

If the Qur'ān urges us to study man, it becomes necessary that such study will lead to *īmān*. The study of man is purposeful and not sought for its own sake, and this implies that the Qur'ān is not neutral as regards the content of psychology. We have already quoted Ziyūr who distorts the concept of belief and replaces the Islamic concept of *fiṭrah* with the Freudian hypothesis of the Oedipus complex. The theories of psychologists about the development of religious belief which have been mentioned above are in sharp contradiction with the Qur'anic assertion that belief in One Allāh has existed on earth since the first *khalīfah* was asked to leave Paradise.

It appears that the existing branch of psychology which takes religion as its subject matter contains assumptions which are incompatible with the Qur'ān. Hence its content must not be accepted without question. Not only that, but Abū Ḥaṭab — a Professor of Psychology at 'Ayn Shams University — argues that in Islam it is not accepted to have a branch of psychology which may be called the Psychology of Islam because it implies that Islam is a phenomenon and not a way of life.[47] This means that from an Islamic viewpoint the whole area of psychology should be influenced

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by Islam. One does not expect detailed Qur'anic principles in this respect, but certain guide-lines must be worked out. Otherwise neither the selection of the content of psychology from non-Islamic sources nor writing on psychology from the Islamic outlook may be possible.

The call for what may be called "Islamizing psychology" may be viewed with suspicion especially from those who claim that psychology is a science and not an art. It is clear that psychologists conduct their experiments before reaching a fact or formulating a law. Every student of the psychology of learning is quite familiar with the experiments conducted on cats, rats etc. If this is the case then one has the right to question the validity of the call for Islamizing psychology.

Nobody would deny the reliance of psychologists on experimentation. Some psychologists have considered science a good example which should be copied without reservations. The following quotation which expresses Skinner's viewpoint is an example:

> Science... is an attempt to discover order, to show that certain events stand in lawful relation to other events... Science is not concerned just with 'getting the facts', after which one may act with greater wisdom in an unscientific fashion... If we are to enjoy the advantages of science in the field of human affairs, we must be prepared to adopt the working model of behaviour to which a science will inevitably lead.[48]

However, the objectivity of psychology — which is derived from the scientific method — is shaken when it is subjected to critical examination. Some aspects of human behaviour are not studied properly by mere reliance on the scientific method. To know that a specific person will be motivated or not towards the opposite sex depends upon an understanding of the social values. Lack of knowledge of such values makes it difficult for psychologists to know whether the boy who refrains from having contacts with girls is a well-adjusted person or an abnormal person who needs help. When psychologists tend to classify the personal traits of individuals,

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they do not always rely on empirical scientific research. Normality or abnormality are concepts which are highly attached to social values. This fact is supported by Qur'anic evidence. In (7:82) the people of Lūṭ demand the expulsion of the righteous because they are clean and pure. Purity was considered by them a kind of deviation from their norms which viewed homosexuality as something normal.

In addition to this point it may be added that even in areas where they conduct experiments, psychologists tend to make assumptions which are questionable. When findings from animal psychology are applied to human beings, the underlying assumption is that there is some relationship between man and animals. Koch — a professor of psychology at Boston University — criticizes the reliance of psychologists on assumptions.

> Everyone knows that psychology is stocked with a large inventory of 'images of man'... Indeed, the pooled pseudo-knowledge that is much of psychology can be seen as a congeries of alternate — and exceedingly simple — 'images', around each of which one finds a dense, scholastic cluster of supportive research.[49]

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This sceptical attitude towards science as a paradigm for psychology is in agreement with our analysis of the concept of "theory" in Chapter One which led us to reject scientific theory as being a paradigm for educational theory.

In Chapters Two and Three the nature of man in the Qur'ān was discussed. It was emphasized in Chapter Two that man has free will which simply means that his behaviour is not determined for him but depends upon his choice. Psychologists should not view man's behaviour in the same way that scientists view the motion of bodies. The freedom of man becomes more evident if a comparison is made between the alternatives which face an infant and an adult in a certain situation. From a Qur'anic outlook the behaviour of man cannot be considered as a natural phenomenon which is similar to actions of other biological organisms. The free will which the *khalīfah* enjoys differentiates his behaviour from the actions of non-human

beings. This forms the first principle which is to be emphasized in Islamic psychology.

The second attribute of the *khalīfah* is that he has a good *fiṭrah* which leads him to *īmān*. The innate tendency towards belief in Allāh plays a prominent role in the Islamic motivation theory. The *khalīfah* who interacts with his environment does not fall an easy prey to it. The principles in which he believes guide his interaction with it. Hence it falls short in explaining *īmān* — as we have seen in Ziyūr's explanation. Commenting on this issue, the Sudanese analyst Mālik Badrī says that religious life cannot be reduced to mere responses acquired through contact with environment.[50] The other implication of the good *fiṭrah* is that suppression or repression is not a must which exists in every individual. The Oedipus complex of Freud is countered by the harmonious relations between the child and his parents. The special Qur'anic emphasis on being kind to the mother is not explained in terms of competition between the male child and his father for her affection, but in terms of her sufferings during her pregnancy. In (31:14) we read:

> And We have enjoined on man
> To be good to his parents:
> In travail upon travail
> Did his mother bear him.

Belief in Allāh and its role in motivation is another principle which Islamic psychologists should take into consideration.

The third principle is that scientific method cannot be the only method in studying human behaviour. Man who has a spirit *(rūḥ)* differs from non-organic objects, of as Fārūqī says cannot be a silent data.[51] Our discussion in the previous chapters shows that every action of man is affected in varying degrees by the non — materialistic aspect, i.e. the *rūḥ*. The observable actions of a person who performs his prayers can be studied by scientific method; but it is highly impossible to apply the same method when it comes to the inner feelings of that person during prayer. This fact is emphasized by two psychologists who believe that.

> ...while human bodies are physical systems and

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> human actions involve physical processes, nothing in that statement implies that non-physical variables cannot influence, cause or determine the same actions.[52]

Fārūqī adds that even if a pattern of behaviour could be studied by observation, the results of such study depend upon the personal feelings of the observer. He argues that human feelings and desires shut themselves off to observers who are not in sympathy with them.[53]

Our discussion in Chapter Three showed that man has another attribute which enables him to perceive and understand; this attribute is *'aql*. We have discussed the nature of *al-asmā'* which Adam was taught. Nabhānī argues that it is this *a priori* knowledge which distinguishes man. According to his viewpoint *'aql* has three components: brain, an object which can be perceived and *a priori* knowledge. Animals share with human beings the first two components while they lack the third one.[54] The belief in *a priori* knowledge is also maintained by Hamlyn, although he does not necessarily maintain that it extends beyond the present. He argues that learning a specific answer presupposes the existence of *a priori* knowledge if it is meant to make sense to the learner.[55] Although it would be difficult to argue that *al-asmā'* which Adam was taught imply or mean *a priori* knowledge, it is clear that human beings are distinct in their thinking from animals. The elevation of man's *'aql* is clear from the *āyahs* which call men ***ulū al-albāb***. This description is solely limited to man.

Having this view of *'aql*, the Islamic psychologist is justified in sharing attitudes with psychologists who cast doubts on theories of learning which are founded on animal experimentation. In their experimentation on animals, psychologists assumed that animals have minds. Their assumption comes from the broader assumption that there is continuity in biological life.[56]

But it would be difficult to equate the patterns of behaviour of animals with those of human beings. The first are rigid while the latter are more flexible. Peters indicates that laws of learning which were reached by experimentation on some rats cannot even explain

fully the behaviour of other animals.[57] Generalizing psychological findings on animals to human beings is criticized by Boulding who says in an article entitled "Am I a Man or a Mouse or Both".

> We can see immediately, however, how dangerous the methods of analogy may be. None of man's direct genetic ancestors are any longer around. Their behaviour cannot be studied, though their bones may be. The Monkeys of today may have diverged almost as much from their ancestors of two million years age as man has diverged from his. In jumping from monkey to man, therefore, we are really making two leaps in the dark, one from the monkey back to man's common ancestor, and again from this ancestor to man.[58]

Thus if one accepts for the sake of argument that man evolved from animals it would be impossible to claim that nothing new exists in him. Moving from the simple to the complex implies that new elements exist in the complex which distinguish it from the simple. This suggests that human learning cannot be put on a par with animal learning.

This being the case, psychology from an Islamic viewpoint does not concentrate on studying reflexes and simple patterns of behaviour. Emphasis in human learning should be on those areas where man is unique. The ability to use symbols is one of the areas in human learning which deserves more attention. In addition to this, psychology of learning should be concerned with helping the individual to control himself. Self-control becomes possible when the person is aware of the consequences of his behaviour. Usually, individuals prefer to choose the alternative which provides immediate satisfaction even though it is less rewarding than other alternatives. To make a shift of emphasis from the immediate to the future helps in achieving this pattern of behaviour, and there is no doubt that belief in the reward in the Hereafter can be a strong motivating force towards building self-controlled personalities. Thus emphasis in human learning on those aspects which character-

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ise man forms the fourth principle which could guide Islamic psychology.

To sum up: Man who is considered Allāh's *khalīfah* cannot be viewed as a rat, a cockroach or a dog. His unique attributes indicate that his behaviour must be so. Hence it becomes essential for Islamic psychology to investigate man's uniqueness and to reject any assumptions which violate the Qur'anic principles.

Natural Sciences

Natural sciences are concerned with the study of what exists in nature such as the planets, plants, water etc. Because these objects are subjected to man,* their study enables him to make use of them in the best way. In addition to this aim, the study of these objects — which are considered as Allāh's signs — is viewed in the Qur'ān as a way which leads to belief in Allāh. This suggests that studying natural objects is not without divine purpose. This being the case, the content of science should be selected in view of this two-fold general aim. It is highly difficult to speak about science at schools without defining clearly the aims to be achieved. Arrayed takes such a stand when saying:

> ...any enquiry into school science education in a particular country or region should begin by examining the relevant aims, without a knowledge of which one cannot examine and evaluate the methods and content of the science taught there.[59]

It really makes a difference whether the content of science is written in a way which glorifies Allāh or substitutes nature for Him. When Allāh is believed to exist everywhere, one expects science to breathe in an atmosphere favourable to *īmān*.[60] On the other hand, when study of natural objects is cut off from Allāh, secularism is most likely to develop.

In addition to the impact of the general aim which the teaching of science must achieve, the Qur'ān has many references to Allāh's signs in the universe *(kawn)* or nature which also have their

* The concept of *taskhīr* (subjection) was discussed in Chapter Two, pp. 75-76.

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implications for the content of science. The Qur'ān refers in its *āyahs* to the day and night, the sun and the moon, the clouds, water etc. Thus it provides us with some facts about objects to which it refers. In (13:2) it is mentioned that the heavens are raised without any pillars. In (39:21) the formation of springs is explained in terms of the rain which comes down from the sky. In (14:33) we read:

> And He hath made subject
> To you the sun and the moon
> Both diligently pursuing
> Their courses.

The term *"dā'ibayn"* which occurs in the *āyah* in reference to the movement of the sun and the moon is interpreted by Qurṭubī to mean continuous and regular movement.[61] Bucaille expresses a similar view when he says that the term is used to mean movement in accordance with set habits or invariable manner.[62]

The Qur'anic references to objects which exist in the universe was understood by Islamic scholars in more than one way. While some maintain that the Qur'ān contains some general scientific facts, others believe that the Qur'ān has more than such facts, and argue that the Qur'ān contains within itself the achievements of science and technology. The most famous book of interpretation which adopts this view is *al-jawāhir*, written by Ṭanṭawī Jawharī, who makes it clear in his introduction that he aims at proving the scientific originality of the Qur'ān.[63] One finds that his interpretation is filled with scientific data, hypotheses and theories. Commenting on the term *"hadīd"* (iron) which occurs in (57:25)* he writes:

> Before human beings and animals existed on earth, iron and other minerals were in liquid and gaseous states. When it was in the gaseous state it looked like clouds. This was followed by its condensation and falling down to earth as rain does... Thus iron fell down from the sky

* The *āyah* reads as follows:
"We sent aforetime
Our apostles with clear signs
.....
And We sent down Iron."

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just as rain does. This fact shows the wonders of the Qur'ān which was discovered by geology.[64]

If the Qur'anic scientific facts are viewed in this way, then there is enough justification if one goes to the Qur'ān to search for *āyahs* which refer to any recent scientific discoveries. Although Bucaille does not express this attitude in general in his treatment of the issue, the following view expressed by him is a good example of the efforts which are made to try to read scientific discoveries into the Qur'ān.

Bucaille argues that the possibility of the "conquest of space" — which was recently actualized — is referred to in the Qur'ān. The *āyah* which he quotes in support of his view is (55:33) which reads as follows:

O ye assembly of Jinns
And men! If it be
Ye can pass beyond
The zones of the heavens
And the earth, Pass ye!
Not without authority
Shall ye be able to pass.

In support of this view, Bucaille resorts to grammatical evidence. He mentions that *in* which occurs in the *āyah* is usually connected with a possibility which is likely to be achieved. In addition to this, he argues that the phrase *nafadha min* which also occurs in the *āyah* refers to deep penetration into the region under consideration and emerging at the other end. For these reasons, he maintains that the Qur'ān is referring to "possibility of concrete realization."[65]

It would be highly difficult to read the Qur'anic *āyahs* as referring to scientific discovery. One main reason for this is that scientific findings are liable to change. One wonders whether the scientific information about iron which is explained in *al-jawāhir* is still valid from the scientific point of view. In this respect it is relevant to mention that while some narrations in the books of interpretation refer to iron as an element which came down from heaven with Adam, other narrations interpret the verb "*anzalnā*" (sent down) which occurs in (57:25) to mean created.[66] Some books of

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interpretation even mention nothing about the way iron was formed.[67] This implies that facts concerning how iron was formed cannot be verified by going back to the Qur'anic *āyahs*.

This very same fact applies also to what Bucaille refers to as the possibility of the conquest of space. As a matter of fact books of interpretation explain the *āyahs* in terms of man's inability to escape from Allāh's judgement.[68] Nothing is mentioned explicitly or implicitly regarding space. In addition to this, the grammatical evidence does not support Bucaille's view. Ibn Hishām — a well-know grammarian in the fourteenth century — mentions that the conditional particle *in* is used to give several meanings and that one of these is connected with unexpected possibility.[69] This discussion allows us to conclude that there is no genuine justification for forcing scientific meanings upon the Qur'anic *āyahs*. The *Ḥadīth* which relates to palm trees and which was quoted earlier in this chapter shows that facts concerning objects which exist in the universe are not necessarily derived from the Qur'ān and that it is left to man to acquire them. If this is the case, the question which arises is this: What guide lines does the Qur'ān furnish for the selection of the content of science teaching at school?

Scientific facts which are acquired through observation and experimentation do not contradict the Qur'anic *āyahs*. This comes from the fact that scientific method depends upon *'aql* — whose role is recognized in the Qur'ān — and is not antecedent to it. Scientific facts cannot be Islamic or anti-Islamic; they are common and shared by different societies. However, well-established facts should not be mixed with hypotheses or theories which lack sufficient data. Such hypotheses should not be included in the content especially if they contradict Islamic perspective. The theory of evolution which was refered to when we discussed the content of psychology undermines the concept of the *khalīfah*. In Islamic schools, pupils cannot be taught a Darwinian theory of evolution which would deny the role of Divine purpose. But this is the case in the content of current science courses in some Muslim countries. In his questionnaire which was answered by seventy four teachers of science at the junior high school level in Bahrain, Arrayed included the acquisition of the concept of evolution among the forty nine items which comprise the aims of teaching science. The responses of

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the teachers showed that thirty five believed that acquisition of this concept is important.[70] It would be highly difficult for students who study the Qur'ān which emphasizes man's *khilāfah* to integrate what they study in biology with the principles of Islam. Contradicting concepts in the same curriculum lead to conflicts, not to integration.

In addition to the rejection of anti-Islamic concepts, the content of science should be written in such a way that desirable attitudes are developed. As a matter of fact, teaching scientific facts and laws does not constitute the only concern of educators. From a Qur'anic outlook the following attitudes may develop from teaching science:

1. Formation of a sense of order in the universe because Allāh has perfected all things which He created.[71] This belief in an ordered universe frees man from many fears and subjects him to one sovereignty alone.

2. Formation of positive attitudes towards nature because everything is subjected to man. Aggressive tendencies towards it which are reflected either in the use of terms such as "to conquer" or man's misuse of natural resources are to be discouraged.

3. Rejection of superficial information and looking for more data before accepting a fact. In (30:7) those who are content with outer things in this life are condemned.

4. Acceptance of the fact that one's knowledge is limited and not absolute. In (12:76) it is stated that Allāh's knowledge is over all those who are endowed with knowledge.

5. Rejection of information which stems from subjective opinions. We have already discussed the dangers of *hawā* which is an obstacle to the recognition of objective facts and puts limits upon one's way of thinking.[72]

These attitudes are not meant to include all the attitudes which may result from teaching science, but rather are examples of such attitudes. Such attitudes may be shared by educators who do not adopt the Islamic outlook. In his questionnaire, which is mainly

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derived from Western literature on the aims of science education, Arrayed lists several items which refer to desirable attitudes, among which are the following:

1. Development of an attitude of open-mindedness and willingness to reconsider the situation in the light of new facts.

2. Not to generalize from insufficient data.

3. To develop the habit of using all the senses.

4 Understanding of the limitations of the scientific method.[73]

A comparison of the two sets of attitudes reveals that there is no contradiction between them. Openmindedness may correspond to rejection of *hawā;* the limitation of the scientific method is comparable to man's limited knowledge. However, differences emerge when attitudes are viewed in a wider context. Developing the habit of using the senses may lead to one of two alternatives: secularism or belief in Allāh. The very same thing applies to the formation of a positive attitude towards the universe, because such an attitude may be held by a believer who thinks that Allāh made such an order and by a non-believer who argues that the laws of nature are responsible for order. Hence it becomes necessary not to view the specific attitudes in isolation from the general aim which was stated at the beginning of our discussion of the nature of the content of science. Failing to do so may undermine the general aim. In view of this analysis, it is easy to understand why Arrayed, who devoted his study to the teaching of science in the Arab world, does not refer to belief in Allāh as a general aim. In response to a question from the present writer concerning this issue, Arrayed replied that he believed that the achievement of the various specific attitudes which were mentioned in his checklist, from which we mentioned four items, leads eventually to a belief in Allāh.[74] This assumption is highly questionable since, as mentioned immediately above, belief in a universe which is governed by laws may be shared by believers and non-believers. One may add that when the specific aims are stated, the general aim should not remain implicit, especially in cases where a competing aim may exist.

So far, two main points have been emphasized. The first of these is

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that scientific facts should be taught while assumptions which contradict Islam should not. The second is that teaching scientific facts must lead eventually to belief in Allāh. One more point should be made before we conclude the discussion of the content of science courses. Science, which forms an essential part of the school curriculum, should not be viewed as if it were superior to other types of knowledge. We have already rejected the treatment of psychology according to the scientific method on the basis that man and objects are not the same thing. Teaching science at school should not mean that its insights should colour the content of other subjects.

To sum up: Our discussion in this chapter has aimed at clarifying the nature of the content of education. We argue that all subjects should be tought from an Islamic viewpoint. Dualism in the curriculum which differentiates between religious and other subjects is alien to the Qur'anic perspective. The Qur'ān, which forms the foundations of Islamic education, provides us with guidelines which help in selecting the content of different subjects. Because its principles are taken as a criterion for evaluating newly discovered facts and guiding our response to them, the Qur'ān integrates different fields of knowledge. The discussion of the content of history, psychology and natural science courses is intended to clarify this main aim by providing illustrative examples of the general approach to be adopted.

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Notes

1. *The Higher Learning in America,* Yale University Press, 1936, p. 5. Quoted in Bandman, *The Place of Reason in Education,* p. 13.
2. "Islamizing the Social Sciences" in *Studies in Islam,* vol. 16, no. 2, p. 115.
3. *Muslim Education in Medieval Times,* p. 29.
4. *Op. cit.,* p. 117.
5. *Islamic Education,* p. 45.
6. Tibawi, *op. cit.,* pp. 50-67. See also Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology,* p. 174.
7. Al-Beely, "The Islamic Concept of Educational Curricula" in Al-Afendī, *Curriculum and Teacher Education,* pp. 28.-31.
8. Dodge, *op. cit.,* p. 89.
9. *Islamic Society in Nigeria: Its Implication for Educational and Social Growth,* p. 298.
10. *Ibid.,* p. 299.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 357.
12. *Ibid.,* pp. 295, 356.
13. *Ibid.,* p. 355.
14. Hirst, *Modern Education in a Secular Society,*pp. 1-2.
15. See Chapter Two, p. 54.
16. *The Privilege of Man,* p. 123.
17. p. 213.
18. Muslim, vol. 4, p. 129.
19. *The Mind of the Qur'ān,* p. 192.
20. Watt, *Islamic Revelation,* p. 40.
21. "Transformation of the perspective" in Attas, *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education,* p. 124.
22. *The Qur'anic Concept of History,* p. 197.
23. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam,* p. 139.
24. *Sūrah* 49:6.
25. See Ṭabarī, vol. 16, pp. 312-13.
26. Khalīl, al-Tafsīr al-Islamī li-al-Tārīkh, pp. 154-55.
27. *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān,* vol. 2, pp. 73, 119-121.
28. *On the Sociology of Islam,* pp. 98.-99.
29. See for example Baydāwī, vol. 2, p. 145. Rāzī, vol. 3, p. 391.
30. "Historical Inevitability" in Gardiner, *The Philosophy of History,* p. 186.
31. See for example *sūrah* 2:50.
32. Vol. 14, p. 31.
33. *Sūrah* 8:65.
34. Hay, "Idea of Renassance" in Winner, *Dictionary of the History of Ideas,* vol. 4, p. 121.
35. *Ibid.,* p. 128.
36. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica,* Micropedia, vol. 8, p. 504.
37. "Decadence, Deviation and Renaissance in the Context of Contemporary Islam" in Ahmad (editor) *Islamic Perspectives,* p. 39.
38. Vol. 7, p. 230.
39. *Sūrah* 16:61.
40. Idrīs, *The Process of Islamization,* pp. 5-8.
41. See, for example, Zamakhsharī, vol. 2, p. 350. Rāzī, vol. 4, pp. 580-81.
42. Walker, *Psychology as a Natural and Social Science,* p. 1.
43. Stollberg, "Psychology of Religion" in *Encyclopedia of Psychology,* vol. 2, p. 922.

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44. pp. 8-9.
45. Baydāwi, vol. 5, p. 96. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 4, p. 105. Qurṭubī, vol. 15, p. 375. Zamakhsharī, vol. 4, p. 399.
46. *Majmū' Fatāwā Ibn Taymiyyah*, vol. 10.
47. "Al-Tawjīh al-Islāmī li-'ilm al-Nafs"; a paper read at a seminar on Islam and Psychology held at Riyadh University, 1978, p. 8.
48. Quoted in Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
49. "Psychology as Science" in Brown (ed.) *Philosophy of Psychology*, p. 7.
50. *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists*, p. 8.
51. "Islam and the Social Sciences" in *Al-Ittihād* (January-April 1977), p. 38.
52. Mandler and Kessen 'The Appearance of Free Will" in Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 310.
53. "Islamizing the Social Sciences" in *Studies in Islam*, vol. 16, no 2, p. 111.
54. *Al-Tafkīr*, pp. 19-26.
55. "Human Learning" in Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
56. Rachlin, *Introduction to Modern Behaviourism*, p. 47.
57. *Authority, Responsibility and Education*, p. 121.
58. In Montagu (ed.) *Man and Aggression*, p. 85.
59. *A Critical Analysis of School Science Teaching in Arab Countries*, p. 24.
60. Nasr "Religion and Secularism" in *The Islamic Quarterly*, vol. 6, nos. 3, 4, p. 124.
61. Vol. 9, p. 367.
62. *The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science*, p. 153.
63. Vol. 1, p. 23.
64. Vol. 24, p. 100.
65. *Op. cit.*, p. 168.
66. Qurṭubī, vol. 17, p. 261. Zamakhsharī, vol. 4, p. 480.
67. Baydāwī, vol. 5, p. 120. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 4, pp. 314-15.
68. Baydāwī, vol. 5, p. 110. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 4, p. 274. Qurṭubī, vol. 17, p. 170. Zamakhsharī, vol. 4, p. 449.
69. *Mughnī al-Labīb*, vol. 1, pp. 21-22.
70. Arrayed, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
71. *Sūrah* 27:88.
72. Chapter Three, p. 105.
73. *Op. cit.*, p. 86.
74. Letter dated April 4th, 1981.

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CHAPTER VI

THE METHODS OF EDUCATION

In the previous two chapters we have attempted to lay the foundations of a Qur'anic approach to the aims and the content of Islamic education. Having discussed these more theoretical topics we now turn to a question which, while equally essential, is of a rather more practical nature.This is the way in which these goals can be achieved, in other words, the educational methods.

The importance of the educational methods comes from the fact that the content of any curriculum cannot be learned efficiently unless it is presented in a specific way. Inadequacy of methods may handicap learning or cause undue wastage of effort and time. If an ordinary teacher is asked about what he does in the classroom he will either simply respond by saying that he teaches, or will give examples of the activities that he undertakes or supervises. He may mention one or more of the following activities which shed light on his role in the classroom: communicating verbally with the pupils, watching their behaviour, arranging the learning situation etc. The nature of what he does depends to a large extent upon the aims which it is hoped to attain and upon the general policies adopted by the establishment in which he finds himself. Teaching in a school where memorization of the text forms the first priority differs from teaching in another school where understanding is given more importance.

In this chapter we propose to concentrate upon three essential aspects which relate to the work of the dedicated teacher who is fully aware of his responsibilities as a Muslim towards those in his charge. These are firstly the nature of the method and its relevance to the main objective of Islamic education, i.e. building the individual

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believer who acknowledges his slavery to Allāh. The second aspect concerns the actual instructional methods which are referred to in the Qur'ān or which can be deduced from it, while the third deals with motivation and discipline, or in the Qur'anic terms reward *(thawāb)* and punishment *('iqāb)*.

Where the question of character-building is concerned, we have already pointed out in Chapter Two that in the Qur'ān man is born with a good *fiṭrah*. Clearly this belief in the goodness of the *fiṭrah* will have practical implications for the methods the teacher will adopt. It will not be sufficient for the teacher to merely attempt to shield the pupil from harmful influences and to wait for his nature to manifest itself. The Muslim teacher cannot adopt the attitude of Rousseau, who, discussing education in early childhood says:

> ...the first education should be purely negative. It consists not in teaching virtue and truth, but in preserving the heart from vice and the mind from error.[1]

Although an individual thinker like Ibn Ṭufayl was able to suppose that the hero of his story *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān* was able to reach a state of perfect Islam without any instruction at all,[2] this is certainly not representative of Islamic thought and in any case goes against common sense. The many references to *'ilm* discussed earlier in this thesis make it clear that the teacher has a role to play here. It is true the pupil has free will which enables him to choose one of the alternatives which face him in a given situation, but it is true also that the educator has a will which should be geared to the advantage of the learner. The Islamic educator who is concerned with bringing up the learner in a particular way is engaged in the moulding of persons. His role is not limited to merely arranging the teaching situations and leaving the learner to decide for himself which choice to make regardless of the outcomes of that choice. He cannot stay silent while his students are choosing the wrong path. The Prophet who describes in a *Ḥadīth* his mission as that of a teacher[3] *(mu'allim)* felt very worried at one stage of his mission because of the negative responses of the people of Makkah. The term *"bākhi' "* which is mentioned in the Qur'ān[4] referring to this psychological distress may be understood to mean self-destruction.[5] However, this

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understanding seems too extreme; commenting on the term, Zamakhshari mentions that the feelings of the Prophet could be held in similitude to those of a man who had lost the company of his relatives whom he loved.[6] In (9:128) the Prophet is described as "ardently anxious over the believers." To this fact we should add that the Prophet, who considers himself as a teacher, must be taken by all believers — including teachers — as their best example. In (33:21) we read:

> Ye have indeed
> In the Apostle of Allāh
> A beautiful pattern of conduct
> For anyone whose hope is
> In Allāh and the Final Day
> And who engages much
> In the praise of Allāh

This being the case, one may conclude that the Islamic teacher is deeply involved in the moulding of persons and will feel worried whenever his students fail to reach the desired standard.

This prominent role assigned to the Islamic teacher may disturb some educators who believe that the student should be given more freedom in determining what to learn. It may be argued that the teacher who is emotionally involved in the moulding of persons tends usually to impose his own personal ideas on the learner whose wishes are ignored or at best given a secondary rank. The Islamic teacher who is anxious to gear all his efforts to forming the complete individual may be viewed as an authoritarian person who cares very little for the inner motives of his students.

In reply to such an attitude, it should be pointed out that interrelations between the teacher and his students exist in every school regardless of its educational theory. In so far as such relations have effects on those who participate in the interaction one may conclude that the teacher has an undeniable impact on his students no matter what he does. Any teacher who is in contact and interaction with his pupils will evoke some kind of response, whether negative or positive. The teacher may not force certain values upon others, but being a human being will have certain attitudes which

are bound to be transmitted to those whom he teaches. Even if the teacher attempts not to form attitudes, he cannot do this. This is supported by Phenix who says:

> Yet in broad outline, the case for the teacher as maker of persons seems irrefutable... People inevitably enter into the making of the human beings.[7]

If people inevitably have a role in the making of persons in one way or the other, it is much more desirable that the teacher himself should be aware of this process. In any case, Islamic educational theory, which recognizes the role of the teacher in this area, does not allow the teacher to remain neutral in matters of faith. We can contrast this with Rousseau who says when discussing the religious education of Emile:

> We will not make him join this sect or that, but put him in the position to choose the one to which he himself is led by the best use of his reason.[8]

For the Islamic educator, reason properly implied will lead the pupil to Islam; but the pupil is entitled to sound **guidance** along the right path from his early childhood. It is unlikely that the pupil will make the right choice without some instruction, as is implied by the fact that Islam itself is a revealed religion. Unlike the educational theories which deny the existence of anything innate, the Islamic educational theory cares for the **good** *fiṭrah* which should not be changed. In (30:30) we read:

> To the pattern on which
> He has made mankind:
> No change let there be
> In the work wrought.

This pattern which should be preserved forms the starting point of the educator, and this puts limitations on the authority given to him. He cannot behave in an authoritarian manner which violates the innate qualities of the learners. The basic needs which were discussed in the previous chapters form the focus of all the activities

which take place at school. At this point one needs to differentiate between the basic needs of the individual and the personal interests which exist at a certain time. These two categories are not necessarily the same. A student who is supposed to acquire useful mental skills may be interested in activities which give him immediate enjoyment but are of little value as far as mental development is concerned. Interests which exist at a given time are by no means the only concern of the educator. Magee puts it clearly when he says:

> The psychological fact that the pupil must be interested is not the same thing as saying that the child's immediate interests are the proper focus of teaching. Human beings can be interested in almost anything, however mean or bizarre.[9]

The fact that the existing interests do not necessarily reflect the best alternative is supported by the Qur'ān. When the Muslims left for Badr they were not interested in fighting the non-believers, but rather were concerned with capturing the caravan of Quraysh. As the following *āyah* shows, their attitude was not the best one. The *āyah* reads:

> Ye wished that the one
> Unarmed should be yours,
> But Allāh willed to justify the Truth
> According to His Words[10]

What applies even to grown men should apply even more strongly to those who are still being educated. When the present interests of the learners are anti-education they cannot be taken as the starting point. However, it is the duty of the teacher to encourage his students to be interested in activities which are relevant to the satisfaction of their basic needs. Trying to make pupils interested in worthwhile activities is a matter of method and not an end in itself. Failure to make such differentiation made some educators — like the Progressivists in the United States — give more emphasis to the existing needs of the child. Unless the teacher succeeds in guiding their interests, students may learn to be interested in harmful or use-

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less activities. His success depends upon the way he approaches his students; otherwise he might make things more difficult. Thus developing interests can be a valuable approach, although this must be always governed by the basic objective of forming the individual believer for whom the most important thing is to lead an Islamic way of life in this world and to attain Paradise in the next.

As stated above, the teacher cannot force the student in a way which violates his *fiṭrah*. Furthermore, being kind to the learner is confirmed explicitly in the following *Ḥadīth*:

> Allāh did not send me to be harsh or cause harm, but has sent me to teach and make things easy.[11]

The kindness of the Prophet to his followers is mentioned in the Qur'ān. In (3:159) it is stated that had the Prophet been severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about him. In (15:88) he is ordered to "lower his wing in gentleness to the believers." The phrase *"wa-ikhfid janāḥaka"* which is used in the *āyah* in reference to this intimate relationship is originally used to describe birds which cover their young with their wings.[12]

The teacher who is keen to make things easy for his students to arouse their interests will not achieve this by merely having feelings of this kind. In order to achieve his aims he will have to consider the methods which he will employ, such as choosing the proper timing. When the educator fails to choose the right time negative results are likely to ensue. This principle is in accordance with a *Ḥadīth* attributed to Ibn Mas'ūd who said:

> The Prophet used to take care of us in preaching by selecting a suitable time, so that we might not get bored.[13]

In addition to this, progression from the simple to the more complex is a sound educational procedure which is also commended in the Qur'ān. The *rabbānī* (pl. *rabbāniyyūn*, who are referred to in the Qur'ān with approbation on three occasions)[14] is explained in Bukhārī as "the good instructor who starts teaching people simple subjects or knowledge before teaching big ones."[15] The fact that this

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term is derived from the same root from which *Rabb* is derived indicates the importance of the method adopted in teaching.

Variation in the method employed in order to achieve the same goal is another way of approaching learners. Teaching a pupil how to write a sentence correctly may be achieved by asking him to write it on the blackboard or in his copybook or by asking him to watch a skilful pupil. In the Qur'ān, several methods are used to convey Allāh's Words to human beings, which implies that variation of methods is of vital importance. The verbal methods which occur in the Qur'ān and which will be dealt with here are: telling stories, asking questions, deduction and giving metaphors. Two other non-verbal methods which could be derived from the Qur'ān will also be referred to briefly.

Telling stories — especially historical ones — is the most frequent Qur'anic method. Most of the *sūrahs* contain one or several stories or at least a portion of a story; besides nearly thirty *sūrahs* derive their names from one of the stories mentioned in them.• In the Qur'anic story non-human beings—like the ant and the Jinn — are mentioned, but most of the characters are human beings. Here, the story may narrate events which concern one person, a small group or a whole community or nation In (18:83 — 98) the story of a ruler called Dhū al-Qarnayn is narrated; it dooes not appear in any other *sūrah*. In this respect it is similar to the story of Joseph which occupies the whole *sūrah* named after him. In (2:259) we read about a man whom Allāh made to die for a hundred years. At the opposite extreme, the relation between the Pharaoh of Egypt and Moses is mentioned in not less than eighteen *sūrahs*.[16] As for the stories of the nations, one observes that among the most frequently recurring in the Qur'ān are those of Banū Isrā'īl, 'Ād and Thamūd.

Examination of the Qur'anic story reveals several facts. While the story of Dhū al-Qarnayn occurs only in *Sūrat al-kahf*, the story of the Pharaoh of Egypt occurs in numerous *sūrahs;* this means that the recurrence of the story varies. Besides, the length of the story varies; it may be noted that while *sūrah* (12) is completely devoted to Joseph's story, other stories like that in (2:259) are narrated in a

• Examples of these *sūrahs* are the following: *al-Baqarah, Āl-'Imrān, al-Mā'idah, Yunus, Hūd, al-Kahf, al-Naml, Nūḥ* and *al-Jinn.*

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single *āyah*. This fact even applies to the stories of nations. Some of these nations are given very little space; the people of Tubba', for example, who are mentioned in (44:37) and in (50:14) along with other nations occupy very little space in the Qur'ān compared with other nations such as Banū Isrā'īl. The third fact concerning the Qur'anic story is that the identity of the individuals or nation is not always revealed. The phrases "other people" *(qawm ākharīn)* and "another generation" *(qarn akharīn)* which refer to unidentified nations occur in several *sūrahs*. The identity of the man in (2:259) remains unknown. As for the Pharaoh of Egypt, his name not mentioned in the Qur'ān. Books of interpretation mention that the term "pharaoh" is a title and not a name.[17] Bucaille expresses a similar view when saying:

> The Qur'ān does not provide a name which enables us to identify who the reigning Pharaoh was... All that is known is that one of his counsellors was called **Hāmān**.[18]

Since the identity of the hero of the story is not always disclosed, one can conclude that personal glorification is not the central theme. This becomes more evident when one examines the stress given to the personal characteristics; such attributes are not given importance in any story. It follows that it is the behaviour of the personalities described in the stories, not their personal attributes in themselves which are the central aim. The stories of the past nations deal with one common theme, i.e. the struggle between good and evil which results in the defeat of the latter. If — for illustrative purposes — we take the story of 'Ād which occurs in eleven *sūrahs*[19] we find that their fate is mentioned in all of them. The emphasis on their fate is intended to cause individuals to think of their existence. In (22:45 — 46) the destroyed nations are mentioned in association with an injunction to use the eyes as well as the heart. In (7:176) we read:

> So relate the story
> Perchance they may reflect.

In (12:111) it is mentioned that stories contain instruction for men endowed with understanding. Reflection and not mere narration or amusement lies at the heart of the Qur'anic story.

A more specific aim of the Qur'anic story was to give psychological reinforcement to the Prophet in his struggle against non-believers. Any person who is surrounded with difficulties and enemies may feel frustrated or discouraged. But if he knows that his situation is not unique and that others who were in a similar situation have attained their goals successfully, he is more likely to reach a positive outcome. Such persons should be considered as examples to be followed. The stories of the prophets in the Qur'ān are meant to be of relevance to the Prophet and the believers. In (11:120) we read:

> All that we relate to thee
> Of the stories of the apostles
> With it We make firm
> Thy heart: in them there cometh
> To thee the Truth, as well as
> An exhortation and a message
> Of remembrance to those who believe.

The relevance of telling stories in the classroom environment seems quite straightforward. They are a useful way of conveying information and instruction; and the Islamic educator will realize their potential for building up attitudes, which is an essential part of educational aims.

One main point which concerns educators and which is highly relevant to the Qur'anic story is the phenomenon of repetition. Most of the Qur'anic stories occur in more than one *sūrah*. This phenomenon does not disturb Sayyid Quṭb who believes that repetition does not exist in the Qur'ān, because in every *sūrah* the story is narrated with the aim of confirming a specific fact.[20] However, it would be unfair to dismiss this issue without giving attention to the other view which maintains that the Qur'anic story is repetitive. In order to treat this problem in an objective way the story of Adam — which occurs in eight *sūrahs* — will be analyzed. There are two main reasons for this choice; the first is that it deals with the creation of the *khalīfah* which is our main concern in Chapter Two, and the second and more important one is that its recurrence in the Qur'ān is roughly average. Some stories occur

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more frequently than the story of Ādam, but there are many which occur with lesser frequency.*

Analyzing the story in the eight *sūrahs*, one could summarize its facts as follows:

A. Allāh announces the creation of the new *khalīfah*.
B. The new *khalīfah* was taught the names of all things.
C. The clay nature of Adam.
D. Allāh fashioned him and breathed into him.
E. The refusal of Iblīs to prostrate himself to Adam.
F. The whispering of Iblīs to Adam and Eve.
G. Allāh warns Adam against approaching the tree.
H. Adam disobeys Allāh's orders.
I. Allāh forgives Adam.
J. Descent of Adam and Eve to the Earth.
K. Iblīs threatens to mislead Adam's progeny.

If each element in the story is represented by the letter allotted to it we get the following table:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
2:30-39							x	x	x	x	
7:11-25	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
15:28-44	x	x	x						x		
17:61-65	x		x						x		
18:50				x							
20:115-123					x	x		x	x	x	
32:7-9			x	x							
38:71-85			x	x	x						x

* If the *āyah* which mentions more than one nation or individual is not counted, then the recurrence of some stories in the Qur'ān is as follows:

Luqmān : *Sūrah* 31:12-19.
Ayyūb : *Sūrahs* 21:83-84; 38:41-44.
Yūnus : *Sūrahs* 10:98; 37:139-148; 68:48-50.
Thamūd : *Sūrahs* 7:73-79; 11:61-68; 14:9-14; 15:80-84; 17:59; 26:141-159; 27:45-53; 41:17-18; 51:43-45; 53:51; 54:23-31 69:5 89:9 91:11-15.

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It is evident that the recurrence of the facts that relate to Adam's creation varies; some occur only in one *sūrah* while others occur in two, three, four, five or even seven *sūrahs*. If the average of the recurrence of these facts is calculated it will be slightly above three. This demonstrates that repetition exists. The concept of repetition exists also in the *Ḥadīth*. Bukhārī narrates that before the first *āyahs* of *Sūrah al-'Alaq* were revealed, The Prophet replied: "I do not know how to read." After this, the order and answer were repeated for the third time, the Prophet was told by the angel: "Read in the name of your Lord"[21] Darāz mentions that the Prophet used to repeat what he said three times so that be would be quite understood.[22] This repetition corresponds to that of the angel when he came to him for the first time at the cave of Ḥirā'.

However, two points must be clarified at this stage. The first is that the figure (3) which is mentioned in Bukhārī does not necessarily mean that the average of the recurrence of the facts that relate to one story in the Qur'ān corresponds to it. It simply happened that this is the case in the story which is taken here as an example. The second point is that recurrence is not equivalent to repetition; the fact which recurs in several *sūrahs* is not necessarily repeated in the very same way. In order to illustrate this, let us examine a fact which is repeated in seven *sūrahs*, i.e. the refusal of Iblīs to prostrate himself in respect to Adam.

The negative attitude of Iblīs towards Adam is expressed in seven *sūrahs*. In three *sūrahs* (2, 18, 20) his refusal is mentioned and nothing more. In (20:116) the verb *abā* (refused) is mentioned while in (2:34) and in (18:50) the verb *istakbara* (was haughty) is associated with the verb *abā*. In the other four *sūrahs* (7, 15, 17, 38) the reason which made him do so is mentioned with some variation. In (17:61) it is mentioned that the refusal was due to the fact that Adam was created from clay *(Ṭīn)*. In (15:28) clay is given the description "sounding' (ṣalṣāl). In the other two locations[23] the clay nature of Adam is compared to the fire nature of Iblīs who considers this as a sign of Adam's second rank. Here we read:

I am better than he

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Thou didst create me from fire
And him from clay.

From this analysis one observes that recurrence of the same fact in several *sūrahs* is not equated with mere repetition. Here, repetition is accompanied by some variations. This fact has a significant relevance for education. When the students need repetition of part of the content the teacher must not repeat the very same thing, because it is likely that they will not learn anything new. The fact that something was not understood the first time indicates that some change in the method is required. Repetition which is accompanied by new illustrations or comments is more productive than mere repetition which is likely to be boring.

Asking questions is another method used in the Qur'ān. Questions in the Qur'ān may be posed in reponse to a statement or they may serve as a starting point. In (2:30) the angel's question: "Wilt thou place therein one who will make mischief?" comes in response to Allāh's announcement that a *khalīfah* will be created on earth.In (7:12) Allāh's question to Iblīs comes after he has refused to bow down to the *khalīfah*. In (2:260) the question "Dost thou not then believe?" is addressed by Allāh to Abraham after he had asked Him how life is given to the dead. In (21:52) Abraham starts his discussion with his father and his people by asking the following question: "What are these images to which you are devoted?" As it appears from these *āyahs* the questions and their answers occur between Allāh and the angels, Allāh and man and between man and man. In the first three passages mentioned above, the answer to the question resolves the issue; the question and the answer form a complete unit. What follows the answer is not essential for understanding the question although it may be related to it.

The type of question in (21:52) is different from the questions in the first three passages. Here, the question is considered as a step and when it is answered a dialogue takes place; questions are asked and answers are given and this leads finally to the discovery of the truth. The following *āyahs* which **describe** Abraham's relations with his people are a good example of this type of dialogue.

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Behold! he said
To his father and his people
'What are these images
To which you are devoted?'
They said: 'We found
Our fathers worshipping them.'
He said: 'Indeed ye
Have been in manifest
Error — Ye and your fathers.'
They said: 'Have you
Brought us the truth?'

He said: 'Nay, your Lord
Is the Lord of the heavens and the earth.'

'And by **Allāh** I have a plan
For your idols after you go away
And turn your **back's**
So, he broke them to pieces

They said: 'Who has
Done this to our Gods''

They said: 'We heard
A youth talk of them''

They aid: 'Then bring him
Before the eyes of the people.'[24]

In this dialogue the first question which appears in (21:52) aims at making them express or define their belief. The first step then was to make them aware of the existing situation. In order to make them detect the fallacy of their beliefs they were not given an answer to their question concerning the person who destroyed their idols. Instead, they were asked to go and direct their question to the biggest idol. The aim at this stage was to make them perplexed; and this was achieved when they confessed that the biggest idol could not respond to their question. The aim in the final stage was to make them move from worshipping the idols to worshipping Allāh. Here again, the truth came in the form of a question (21:66):

Worship besides Allāh
Things that can neither
Be of any good to you.

The whole discussion in these *āyahs* which preceded the last question is geared to the very same goal which is expressed in the last stage; there is sequence in the discussion.

Putting several consecutive questions with the hope of helping the person discovering the truth is found also in the *Ḥadīth*. Abū Hurayrah narrates that a man came to the Prophet to get an explanation of the fact that he had had a black child born to him although neither he nor his wife were black. The dialogue is narrated by Bukhārī as follows:

The Prophet : Have you got camels?
The man : Yes.
The Prophet : What colour are they?
The man : Red
The Prophet : Is there a grey one among them?
The man : Yes.
The Prophet : Whence comes that?
The man : Maybe it is because of heredity.
The Prophet : Maybe your latest son has this colour because of heredity.[25]

The consecutive questions of the Prophet relieved the man of his suspicions.

Examination of the questions put forth by Abraham or the Prophet in the two examples shows that they do not aim primarily at eliciting information, but rather provoke thought which should help in understanding the issue under consideration. The questions which are put are not of a speculative nature; they are rather connected with objects which are familiar to those who were asked, and are not beyond the experience or the mental ability of those who were asked the questions. Hence they could be described as purposive, easy and reflective.

The technique of asking questions leads sometimes to that of deduction which was in fact an element in the last two examples discussed. However, deduction is not limited in the Qur'ān to asking

questions, but it is also found in situations where the conclusion or underlying principle is reached after several objects or facts have been presented. The general principle is reached when the common element in the different facts is isolated. The following *āyahs* show how by following deduction Abraham reached the conclusion that there is only One Allāh.

> When the night covered him over
> He saw a star
> He said: 'This is my Lord'.
> But when it set,
> He said: 'I love not
> Those that set.'[26]

The very same thing happened on seeing the moon and the sun which looked much bigger. He had observed that the common element in the three objects is that they set. Since this attribute which denotes change cannot be one of Allāh's Attributes, he deduced that none of the three objects could be Allāh.

The statement "This is my Lord" which is attributed to Abraham is given different interpretations. According to one point of view, Abraham had actually worshipped these objects before his deduction led him to *tawḥīd*. Ṭabarī is in favour of this viewpoint[27] while one finds in Rāzī several pieces of evidence against it.[28] A second interpretation maintains that the statement of Abraham was meant to express an apparent acceptance of the belief in having partners to Allāh in order to make it his stating point is his argument with his people.[29] Our aim at this point is not to examine the validity of these interpretations, but to see their relevance to deduction. If we accept the first view, then one can say that deduction was the means that led Abraham to *tawḥīd* while if we accept the second view one can say that deduction was used as a tool to convince others. Thus, deduction in both interpretations is recognized as a method which leads to discovering truth.

In education, deduction is of great importance; this fact becomes more clear when one recalls that learning scattered facts does not form the core of teaching. Formulation of a general principle out of such facts is more valuable because it allows the pupil to compare

and formulate concepts. But when some facts or elements are missing, the pupil is unlikely to reach his aim. This suggests that the teacher can play a role in developing deduction by providing his pupils with the necessary facts or materials and giving them the chance to discover the general principle. In situations where pupils rely merely on trial and error or when reaching the general principle is unlikely to happen — as was the case with the people of Abraham — the teacher can take the initiative and show them how to reach the conclusion.

The fourth Qur'anic method which will be dealt with is giving metaphors or similes. In (2:26) we read:

> Allāh disdains not to use
> The similitude of things
> Lowest as well as highest.

In these metaphors tangible objects are used in order to facilitate understanding the concept under consideration. In (29:41) the partners of Allāh are held in similitude to the spider's web which is very flimsy. In (24:35) Allāh's light is illustrated by comparting it with the light of a lamp enclosed in glass and put in a niche. Such metaphors are used to show the attributes of Allāh and to negate the worship of other objects. The second function of using metaphors is to make the deeds of the believers attractive and those of the non-believers repulsive. In (14:18) the works of the non-believers are held in similitude to ashes over which the wind blows furiously on a tempestuous day. In (2:261) spending in the cause of Allāh is mentioned as being similar to a grain of corn which produces seven ears each having one hundred grains. Here, the concept of spending in the cause of Allāh is explained in concrete terms.

Explanation of the abstract concepts by means of concrete examples is closely related to the Qur'anic conception of perception where the senses are given a prominent role. This fact has its direct application in the classroom. Whatever exists in the environment and helps in understanding the concepts under consideration should be utilized. Abstraction is only possible after the learner has been provided with the tangible data from which he can conceptualise.

The various methods described so far depend on verbal symbol-

ism. All of them rely on the word in conveying their message. In addition to this type of method one finds reference to other methods which require other things besides verbal symbolism. In (5:34) it is mentioned that one of the two sons of Adam learned now to bury the body of his murdered brother by observing a raven which had performed the very same thing. This *āyah* describes a visual demonstration of a skill whose acquisition was possible only after the learner was involved in watching its performance. Ibn Tufayl borrowed this idea when he described how Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān buried the body of the gazelle which fed him during his infancy.[30] Another method which is mentioned in the Qur'ān is taking a journey with the intention of learning. In (18:60 — 82) some details of the journey which Moses undertook are mentioned. This method was used by the Islamic scholars on a large scale, which reflects its importance in acquiring knowledge. Of course we do not expect detailed information about these methods in the Qur'ān but the injunction upon man to examine and reflect on Allāh's signs and the prominent role given to the senses shed some light on methods which make use of the senses in addition to verbal symbolism, and allows us to incorporate methods which are built on observations and the use of senses. Islamic education is not based merely upon verbal communication, but will make use of audiovisual methods and other appropriate measures of this kind.

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Having discussed the educational methods we now turn to the discussion of how the teacher can motivate his pupils through reward and punishment. The effectiveness of reward and punishment stems from the fact that they are strongly related to the needs of the individual. A student who receives a reward understands it as a sign of acceptance of his personality, which makes him feel secure. Security is one of the basic psychological needs. punishment is regarded with aversion since it threatens that security. In (106:4) security from fear is considered as a bounty from Allāh which should be repaid with obedience. The relevance of reward and punishment to human nature becomes more clear when it is viewed in connection with man's responsibility. In Chapter Two the responsibility of the *khalīfah* was emphasized and *āyah* (33:72) was quoted. As a matter of fact the following *āyah* refers to reward and punishment, and this indicates that they are strongly linked to responsibility. The first

word in (33:73) which is *liyu'adhdhib* (so that He may punish) starts with *lam-ta'lil* which indicates that what follows is a consequence of what precedes it.[31]

Having shown the relevance of reward and punishment to human nature through their influence on the security of the individual and the choices he makes, we move to an examination of the motivating power of each of them. Both of them may be used by the teacher to strengthen or weaken a specific response. More emphasis will be given here to punishment since its employment is highly controversial; but reward will be our starting point because it is given priority over punishment, which is not introduced unless reward alone fails to lead to the desired outcome.

The term *thawāb* (reward) is used in numerous *āyahs* in reference to what one gets in this life or in the Hereafter for the good deeds one performs. In (3:148) we read:

> And Allāh gave them
> A reward in this world
> And the excellent reward
> Of the Hereafter. For Allāh
> Loveth those who do good.

The superiority of the reward in the Hereafter is derived from the superiority of its source. This illustrates why the Prophet expected to be rewarded by Allāh alone. Any learner in the Islamic educational system should be highly motivated by this reward, or as Tibawi puts it: "The Prophet considered teacher and learner as partners in this divine reward."32 This goes in accordance with a *Hadīth* narrated by Ibn Mājah which mentions that the *'ālim* (scholar) and the *muta 'allim* (learner) are partners in the reward.[33] As long as the reward is something which is highly desired and Allāh rewards every single act, pursuit of *'ilm* will not cease.

However the remoteness of the reward in the Hereafter, especially in the case of young pupils, makes it necessary to give rewards during this life. This fact is even emphasized in the Qur'ān which refers to reward in this life on several occasions. This makes it highly relevant to give rewards to youngsters who are less attracted by remote rewards. Praising may be used to reinforce a desired

response; the teacher can show his satisfaction with the pupil's achievement by verbal expression. The use of this technique is implicit in (18:39) where the companion of the man who possessed two gardens reminded him that on entering his gardens he should have said: *"mā shā'a Allāh"* (Allah's will be done). If this should be said in response to the bounty of Allāh who does not need any praise, there is all the more reason to use it in response to the successful achievements of human beings who are eager to be praised.

As the prestige of the source of rewards is highly important, the teacher should pursue every means to make his rewards more attractive. Rewards which are given easily for any performance tend to lose their effect. Brophy and Everston who conducted a study on primary school children emphasize this when saying:

> ...many young children apparently turn out the verbal praise of female adults. Perhaps they are so accustomed to it that it no longer functions as motivation.[34]

What could be concluded from this study is the positive relationship between the effect of the reward and its source; and this confirms what we have said regarding the superiority of the reward in the Hereafter. The teacher who wants his reward to be effective must be highly respected; otherwise the pupils will not be eager to earn his praise. In the Qur'ān the personality of the *'ālim* is held in high esteem since he is mentioned in association with Allāh and the angels.[35] A reward given by such a respected person is superior to that of a person who holds less prestige. Hence it becomes of high importance to the teacher to acquire the attributes of the *'ālim* if his reward is intended to be effective.

Giving rewards is not without its negative by-products. A student who is rewarded may overestimate his ability or look down upon others. The negative attitudes which may result are mentioned in a *Ḥadīth* narrated by Bukhārī. It is narrated that the Prophet heard a man praising another man and exaggerating in his praise. On that the Prophet said: "You have destroyed the back of the man."[36] If exaggeration in praising is undesirable because of its

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negative by-products, one could infer that other practices which lead to similar results are also undesirable. It is left to the teacher to weigh the consequences of giving rewards to his students.

In any case, whatever reward the teacher may give to ensure effective learning some students will at one time or another fail to make the right response. A student may find it more interesting not to respond to the teaching situation while another maybe interested in creating disciplinary problems by one means or another. In such situations where one or more of the possible responses is considered undesirable, the teacher is advised to remind his students of the consequences that result from such behaviour. Giving a warning helps the individual in evaluating the consequences of his behaviour. It is no wonder that the attribute "warner" *(nadhir)* is ascribed to the Prophet.[37] The student may be warned against a certain action, before committing it. When the warning follows the action, the student is being advised not to repeat what he has done. In fact, a warning at this stage carries also with it the element of admonition for the action already committed. As we have seen in Chapter Three the Prophet himself was admonished on several occasions, which means that he was asked not to repeat certain actions. In order to make the student respond positively to the teacher's requests which tell him what not to do, it is recommended that the reason for such requests should be explained. A student who is asked not to perform an action is more likely to respond positively when the relevant information is expressed clearly to him. The adjective *mubīn* (clear) which is attached to the attribute *nadhīr* in several *āyahs* makes it clear that telling someone not to do something is not enough. The warning should be accompanied by an explanation of the reason and an indication of the other alternatives which are considered acceptable.

Yet even after an explanation of the reasons for not performing certain actions some individuals still persist in them. This fact is evident in the Qur'ān which tells us the warnings of the prophets were disregarded by numerous individuals. Here punishment may be introduced to guide human behaviour.

However, before discussing corporal punishment and its relevance to school environment it may be helpful to examine in brief the place

of punishment in Islamic society. Here three categories may be distinguished: *ḥudūd, qiṣaṣ* and *ta'zīr*. *Ḥudūd* are defined as fixed punishments inflicted on a person who comits specific undesirable actions; these punishments cannot be waived under any circumstances once the conditions which justify the infliction of *ḥudūd* are proved. The *ḥudūd* punishments are inflicted on persons who commit one of the following: theft, wine-drinking, armed robbery, apostasy, unlawful sexual relations and slanderous allegation of unchastity *(qadhf)*[38] The punishment laid down in the *ḥudūd* varies; the *ḥadd* of theft is punishment by cutting off the hand and the *ḥadd* of *qadhf* is flogging with eighty strokes. In his Ph. D. thesis El-'Awa excludes wine-drinking and apostasy from the *ḥudūd* in spite of the fact that the *fuqahā'* tend to classify them as *ḥudūd*. His justification is that neither of them is allotted a specific punishment in the Qur'ān or the *Ḥadīth*.[39]

Qiṣās resembles the *ḥudūd* in that it is concerned with specific offences for which there is a fixed punishment. The difference is that the *ḥudūd* are reserved to Allāh and cannot be waived while *qisās*, although equally commanded by Allāh, can be waived.[40] The offences which entail *qiṣās* involve physical violence against an individual, either by killing or disfiguring, and the punishment is in kind. In (5:48) we read:

> Life for life, eye for eye,
> Nose for nose, ear fo ear,
> Tooth for tooth, and wounds
> Equal for equal wounds.

However the offending party may escape retaliation in kind if the injured party renounces his claim and forgives him.

Ḥudūd and *qiṣās* are restricted in their application in that they are inflicted for specific offences and entail specific punishments. The wide range of other offences is punishable by *ta'zīr*. In general the *ta'zīr* punishment is less severe than that of *ḥudūd* and *qiṣās*. The punishment is left to the *qāḍī* depending on the circumstances. In cases where a reprimand or a warning is sufficient, no severe punishment will be inflicted.[41] Typical offences which entail *ta'zīr*

would be insulting others, failure to perform prayer or breaking the fast in Ramaḍān.

Although the three categories of punishment vary in their severity, they are inflicted with the intention of regulating human behaviour. Punishment in Islam is not inflicted for the sake of mere suffering. The relationship between aims and punishment becomes clearer if one recognizes that the Arabic term *"jazā'"* is used to mean either reward or punishment; the reference to both of them occurs sometimes in the very same *āyah* as is the case in (53:31).

Moreover, it is mentioned that inflicting *qiṣās* is meant to cause self-restraint among the men of understanding.[42] Inflicting the punishment of *ḥudūd* is done publicly. In (24:2), for example, it is stated that the punishment of those who indulge in unlawful sexual relations should be witnessed by a group of people. Three interpetations are given concerning the attendance of a group of people at the infliction of the punishment mentioned in the *āyah*. The first interpretation refers to the deterrence of the person who is being punished because their presence puts him under more pressure not to repeat the action.[43] The second interpretation maintains that witnessing the punishment is meant to have some effect on those who witness it since it will deter them from doing the same thing in the future. This being so, it is recommended to urge those who are likely to misbehave to witness an infliction of the punishment. According to the third interpretation the attendance of a group of people is justified on the grounds that during a person's punishment they will pray for him, hoping that he will be granted repentance.[44]

The third interpretation which considers the presence of others useful to the person who is being punished is hard to accept. Usually no one welcomes the presence of others while he is being punished since this contributes to lowering his self-image. Besides, there is no evidence from the Qur'ān or the *Ḥadīth* to support it. As a matter of fact none of the *Ḥadīths* which relate to this issue mention praying for the punished person. *Bukhārī* narrates that a man who drank wine was brought to the Prophet. Some of those who participated in beating him said: "May Allāh disgrace you." On that the Prophet Said: "Do not say so, for you are helping Satan to overpower him."[45]

From the text of the *Ḥadīth* one finds that they were asked not to

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say anything against him; but they were not asked to pray for him. The last sentence of the *Ḥadīth* "for you are helping Satan to overpower him" shows that a personal attack on the punished individual should not be made. It is difficult to infer from the *Ḥadīth* that the spectators should pray for the person being punished and even if this is so, it cannot be accepted as the only reason for attendance. Hence the infliction of punishment in front of others is primarily meant to deter. The person who is punished as well as those who witness the infliction of punishment are likely to be affected by it.

The above discussion makes it clear that the role of punishment, including corporal punishment, in correcting and deterring the offender, is recognized in the Qur'ān and in some cases is specially laid down. In fact, physical chastisement is clearly approved in the Qur'ān in certain situations which have no connection with legal processes. Thus a husband is allowed to discipline his wife for *nushūz* (refractoriness) by the psychological punishment of refusing to share her bed, and then by beating her lightly if the psychological punishment proves to be inefficient.[46] More important for the present study, the father has the right to inflict corporal punishment on his children. The *Ḥadīth* which refers to this states that children are to be asked to perform their prayers at the age of seven and to be beaten at the age of ten if they refuse to do so.[47] Islamic educators have understood from this *Ḥadīth* that punishing children at school is not in contradiction to the teaching of Islam . The principle was accepted, but some differences arose regarding the number of the strokes as well as the authority given to the teacher in this respect. In his treatise *al-Mufaṣṣalah li-Aḥwāl al-Muta'allimīn wa-Aḥkām al-Mu'allimīn wa-al-Muta'allimīn,* The Tunisian educator al-Qābisī (died in 1012) states that the teacher must have the permission of the parent or the guardian of the child before punishing him with more than three strokes. In certain cases he allows the infliction of more than ten stokes which is usually considered the maximum penalty.[48] Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī (d. 1567) also discussed this issues in his educational treatise *Taḥrīr al-Maqāl.* He asserted that the teacher has no right to inflict corporal punishment on the child unless he takes the permission of the father or the guardian.[49] He does not even authorize the teacher to inflict the first three stokes —

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as is the case with Qābisī — without having the father's permission. Other conditions were imposed on the teacher in order to restrict this pracice and minimize its negative by-products. Beating the child on the face is not allowed. This principle comes from a *Hadīth* which forbids beating even animals on the face.[50] Qābisī and Ibn Saḥnūn* assert that the teacher should not inflict punishment when he is angry because his personal feelings may overshadow the facts of the situation.[51] Another principle which is emphasized is that the teacher must not inflict punishment for personal reasons. This is in agreement with (3:134) which describes the righteous as *al-kazīmina al-ghayza wa-al-'āfīna 'an al-nās*. If a man is asked to restrain his anger and pardon others while he is capable of punishing them,[52] it is all the more reason to give such treatment to children.

Corporal punishment is charply criticized by modern educators to the extent that its infliction is often prohibited. The first major criticism which is directed against it is that it does not lead to learning. It is argued that a child who fails to solve a mathematical problem, for example, is likely to be perplexed if he is punished for this. The anxiety which accompanies punishment directs the attention of the punished student towards the teacher and not towards the problem which he is trying to tackle. An example of the studies which cast doubts on the efficiency of punishment is the study of Brophy and Evertson which was conducted on children at the primary school. The say:

> Simple warning and other reactions geared toward changing student behaviour were more effective than severe threats of punishments.[53]

One more criticism which may be directed against punishment is that it brings with it negative results. The student might come to hate the teacher of the school or the subject matter or all of these together.

It cannot be denied that the vast majority if not all modern Western educators are opposed to the use of corporal punishment in schools. To this it must be simply replied that in the Islamic system corporal punishment is recognized and regarded as an effective

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* Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Salām b. Sa'īd.

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means of correction. In addition we may point out that what is effective in one society may not necessarily be effective in another society. At present we have no studies which show that corporal punishment has a harmful effect on education in a society which has been moulded according to Islamic ideals. As for the negative effects of punishment, they cannot be denied. In fact the Islamic educators were well aware of this fact. Ibn Khaldūn, for example, mentions in his *Muqaddimah* that the punished child may learn cheating or lying.[54] This requires the teacher to regulate his use of punishment so that the negative results do not outweigh the desired ones. Punishment is not inflicted in isolation from the aims to be achieved and hence cannot be pursued for its own sake. The woman who may be corrected by the husband is asked not to obey him when he orders her to commit unacceptable behaviour.[55]

By way of summary and conclusion: The student and the teacher are two poles of the teaching process. The teacher's role is of high importance since he is concerned with directing the school activities towards the established aims. His impact on his pupils comes through the way he shares ideas with them as well as his personal conduct. The high prestige of the teacher in Islamic education is derived from the high rank of *'ulū al-'ilm* (men of knowledge) who are mentioned in the Qur'ān in association with Allāh and the angels.

Since learning is an activity, the teacher should do his best to motivate his students by selecting the approppriate method. Besides, the teacher may use reward and punishment as motivating forces. Man's good *fiṭrah* presupposes the precedence of reward over punishment. The high prestige of the Islamic teacher makes his reward more attractive. When punishment is inflicted on certain occasions, it must be linked to the educational aims. The existence of the principle of corporal punishment should not be taken as an excuse to use it indiscriminately. It must be remembered that the Prophet says:

> Allāh loves that one should be kind and lenient in all matters.[56]

Education is undoubtedly one of these matters where kindness is loved.

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Notes

1. Boyd, *The Emile of Jean Jacques Rousseau*, p. 41.
2. pp. 92-93.
3. Muslim, vol. 2, p. 763.
4. *Sūrah* 18:6.
5. Cragg, *The Mind of the Qur'an*, p. 88.
6. Vol. 2, p. 704.
7. *Philosophy of Education*, p. 41.
8. Boyd, *The Emile of Jean Jacques Rousseau*, p. 116.
9. *Philosophical Analysis in Education*, p. 126
10. *Sūrah* 8:7.
11. Muslim, vol. 2, p. 763.
12. Qurṭubī, vol. 10, p. 57.
13. Bukhārī, vol. 1, p. 60.
14. *Sūrah* 3:79; *Sūrah* 5:47, 66.
15. Vol. 1, p. 60.
16. *Sūrahs:* 2, 7, 10, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 40, 43, 44, 51, 73 and 79. In addition, the refusal of the Pharaoh to believe in Allāh is mentioned in other *sūrahs* where Moses is not mentioned. Here their relationship is implicit; for example in (50:13) 'Ād, the Pharaoh and the brothers of Lūṭ are mentioned as examples of those who denied the Hereafter.
17. Bayḍāwī, vol. 1, p. 152. Qurṭubī, vol. 1, p. 383. Rāzī, vol. 1, p. 339. Ṭabarī, vol. 2, p. 38.
18. *The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science*, p. 222.
19. *Sūrahs* (7:65-72; 11:50-60; 14:9-14; 26:123-39; 41:15-16; 46:21-25; 51:41-42; 53:50; 54:18-20; 69:6-8; 89:6-8). The *sūrahs* where 'Ād is mentioned with other nations in one *āyah* were not counted.
20. *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān*, vol. 5, p. 464.
21. Vol. 1, p. 3.
22. *al-Mukhtār min Kunūz al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah*, p. 24.
23. *Sūrah* 7:12 and *Sūrah* 38:76.
24. *Sūrah* 21:52-67
25. Vol. 7, pp. 171-172.
26. *Sūrah* 6:76.
27. Vol. 11, p. 485.
28. Vol. 4, pp. 75-76.
29. Rāzi, vol. 4, p. 76.
30. *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān*, p. 40.
31. Qurṭubī, vol. 14, p. 258. Zamakhsharī, vol. 3, p. 565. Ibn Kathīr, vol. 3, p. 524. Bayḍāwī, vol. 4, p. 169.
32. "Muslim Education in the Golden Age of the Caliphate" in *Islamic Culture*, vols. 27-28, p. 420.
33. *Sunan al-Muṣṭafā*, vol. 1, p. 101.
34. *Learning from Teaching*, p. 93.
35. *Sūrah* 3:18.
36. Vol. 8, p. 54.
37. See for example *Sūrah* 7:184 and *Sūrah* 11:12.
38. 'Amir, *al-Ta'zīr fī al-'Uqūbah al-Islāmiyyah*, pp. 13-29.
39. *The Theory of Punishment in Islam*, p. 17.

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40. See *Sūrah* 2:178 and its interpretation in Ṭabarī, vol. 3, pp 366-73.
41. 'Amīr, *op. cit.*, p. 57-69.
42. *Sūrah* 2:179
43. Zamakhsharī, vol. 3, p. 211. Baydāwī, vol. 4, p. 73.
44. Qurṭubī, vol. 12, p. 167.
45. Vol. 8, p. 506.
46. *Sūrah* 4:43.
47. Abū Dāwūd, vol. 1,p. 193; also Ibn Ḥanbal, vol. 10, p. 166 and vol. 11, p. 41.
48. Ahwānī, *al-Tarbiyah fī al-Islām*, pp. 133-34, 270.
49. 'Aṭṭār, *Ādāb al-Muta'allimīn*, pp. 315-16.
50. Muslim, vol. 3, p. 1163.
51. Ahwānī, *al-Tarbiyah fī al-Islām*, pp. 126, 310.
52. Ṭabarī, vol. 7, p. 215.
53. *Learning from Teaching*, p. 99.
54. See also, 'Aṭṭār' *Ādāb al-Muta'allimīn*, p. 272.
55. Bukhārī, vol. 7, p. 101.
56 *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 33.

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CONCLUSION

Education is a purposeful process which is usually initiated to produce in those who are being educated certain patterns of hehaviour. Every educative situation comprises specific aims, relevant information of experiences which may be described as content and adequate methods which present the content efficiently. Hence the formulation of any theory of education cannot escape the discussion of these three components: aims, content and methods. The aims of education are of the utmost importance because they govern to a great extent, the nature of methods and content. However, this does not mean that the other two components are of minor importance. The lack of adequate methods or content results in serious damage to the process of Education even though the aims might be of a high standard. It must be emphasized that aims do not operate in a vacuum.

It is self-evident that different societies do not aim at inculcating identical patterns of behaviour in their members. Each society has its own perspective, it has its own image of the ideal individual. This means that its aims of education are not necessarily shared by other societies. Because educational aims are the core of the process of education, it follows that the theory of education of a certain society has its own characteristics. Nevertheless, the uniqueness of education of a certain society does not mean that they should reject the experience of other societies or deny similarities between some of its components and those of other theories of education.

The Islamic way of life is defined in the Qur'ān; it follows that the foundations of the Islamic theory of education are mainly derived from the Qur'ān. Any approach which ignores this fundamental fact is doomed to produce inaccurate perceptions. Although the Muslim

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society during past centuries has been influenced by the principles of the Qur'ān in varying degrees, it would be erroneous to establish an Islamic theory of education on the basis of actual educational practices of the Muslims, especially in times of stagnation. By the same token, the writings of some scholars, especially philosophers who do not view revealed knowledge from a purely Islamic point of view, should not be considered as representative of the Islamic theory of education. The Qur'anic principles are the main criteria by which we judge what is Islamic.

The Qur'anic principles which lay down the foundations of the Islamic theory of education are not opposed to educational elements of other theories which are not contradictory with them. However, whenever such elements are incorporated, they are subjected to the Islamic outlook. Unless this measure is taken, they might dominate the scene and overshadow Islamic principles or even replace them. The suggestion here is that when an element is incorporated in any theory of education, it goes through some changes, especially those aspects which are culturally orientated. The content of science courses may not differ from one society to another, but certain attitudes which are associated with these courses vary from one society to another depending upon their values and belief. In the Islamic theory of education there is no place for secularism which is erroneously considered as an inseparable attribute of science. Western Democracy and Marxism share advances in science and technology, though each has its own values and beliefs.

In any theory of education, discussion of the nature of human nature is of high relevance. Indeed, the image of the desired individual forms the focus of any discussion of educational aims. We will not know exactly what are our expectations from the process of education unless we have a clear concept of the nature of man and his attributes. From the Qur'anic point of view, man is unique since he is considered as Allāh's *khalīfah*. He possesses a good *fiṭrah*, free will, body, soul and mind. Education should aim at developing all these attributes. Thus Islamic education aims at shaping the faithful individual who cares for the various components of his nature without sacrificing one for the sake of others. Belief in the unseen does not mean the denial of rational thinking. Similarly, caring for the spiritual values does not mean the suppression of the biological

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needs. This comprehensive perception leaves no place for views which understand "the faithful individual" in terms of formal religious observations only. Our discussion of the educational aims does not agree with El-Garh's conception of these aims when he says that they should aim "not only at producing the faithful Muslim, but also at developing his faculties to their utmost, in order to ascertain his mastery upon his natural environment... Such a revolutionary change in the basic educational objective is speedily taking place in Afro-Arab countries like Egypt."[1] Our disagreement with such a view lies in its unjustifiable dichotomy between the *khalīfah* and his attributes. What he calls for already exists in the Qur'ān and hence its achievement does not need a revolutionary change but merely a better understanding of the Qur'anic *āyahs*. In the Islamic theory of education, one finds no contradiction between the individual and his society or between the idealistic principles and the biological needs or between this life and the Hereafter. The integration of different elements which may compete with each other in other theories of education is a fundamental characteristic of Qur'anic education.

The comprehensiveness of the aims is parallelled by the variety of the methods which range from verbal symbolism to direct interaction with the learning situation, for example, by undertaking a journey for the sake of learning. The Muslim educator who is involved in the making of persons subjects his methods to the educational aims which he tries to accomplish. The good *fiṭrah* of the *khalīfah* suggests that reward is given precedence over punishment; but the liability of the *fiṭrah* to be spoiled by various factors requires that it be safeguarded against such factors. Hence punishment should not be ruled out since it helps in protecting the good *fiṭrah*. However, the recognition of the function of punishment in certain circumstances must not be confused with using the cane indiscriminately, as is a widespread practice in some Muslim countries.

One last point needs to be emphasized here. As long as the *khalīfah* has a unified personality, none of the courses given to students require to be defined as non-religious or secular. All courses should lead to the same aim. The unity of Allāh's signs in the Book and the physical phenomena of the Universe suggests the unity of the content of education. Unity and, not dualism, is a main characteristic of the content in Islamic theory of education.

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Notes

1. "The Philosophical Basis of Islamic Education in Africa" in *West African Journal of Education*, February, 1971, p. 20.

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