Classical and Contemporary Approaches to Education: An Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

The gap between the classical and contemporary approaches to education in Islam is a theme which has not yet met with adequate response and solution. To fully comprehend the nature of classical education demands no less than a thorough understanding of its characteristic features as distinct from the modern methods of education, yet appreciating how later developments brought about its eclipse. This article charts the historical trajectories of education in Islam, surveying the scriptural, philosophical, and institutional foundations and examines how they have been affected by reforms following the advent of modernity and its attendant philosophies. The discourse begins with an enquiry into the ethico-religious basis of learning in the Quran, Sunnah and juristic doctrine, as well as the spirit that guides them, such as academic freedom, classifications of knowledge, and teaching methodologies. The discussion proceeds to consider contemporary challenges to Islamic approaches to learning especially those coming from scientific modernity, rationality and science, which need to be negotiated, confronted if necessary, and integrated when deemed beneficial.

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The Islamic perspectives will include Qur'anic verses, Prophetic Hadiths, stories of the Prophets and Companions, and the work of early Muslim scholars such as Ibn Sina and al-Ghazali using terms familiar to contemporary psychology. This section will evaluate contemporary Western theories of learning from an Islamic perspective. At each of this prohibition stage, and while Prophet Muhammad SAW education on 'aqidah, Hbadah, and akhlaq continues, some of the Companions may have totally abstained from alcohols, some of them may have reduced themselves to social drinking only, some of them may have felt guilt, and some of them just getting ready for the next stage to stop drinking. Islamic International Law – Classical Rules and Modern Developments. Whereas these Islamic approaches to international law do not seem to have left many visible traces on the surface of international relations today, their fundamental assumptions nevertheless deserve a closer inspection. For a short introduction to Islamic international law from various perspectives, see M. Fadel, International Law, Regional Developments: Islam, in: R. Wolfrum (ed.), MPEPIL, on-line edition, available at; and S. Mahmoudi, Islamic Approach to International Law, in: R. Wolfrum (ed.), MPEPIL, online edition, available at; M. Khadduri, Islam and the Modern Law of Nations, AJIL 50 (1956), 358 et seq. This chapter takes a conceptual approach to the topic, providing an overview of Islamic resources for theologies of religious diversity while surveying some major and representative Muslim approaches... Cite this chapter as: Hermansen M.K. (2016) Classical and Contemporary Islamic Perspectives on Religious Plurality. In: Aslan E., Ebrahim R., Hermansen M. (eds) Islam, Religions, and Pluralism in Europe. Wiener Beiträge zur Isalmorschung.