

Intellectual Discourse

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Editorial

Having completed 25 years of its existence, with this issue *Intellectual Discourse* (ID) continues its journey towards achieving adulthood. By now ID has become well-known as a serious academic journal both in Malaysia and abroad. It welcomes contributions from scholars based not only at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and other universities in Malaysia, but also from overseas. These contributions cover a wide range of issues from those theological in nature in Islam, to the socio-economic, political, and foreign policy issues concerning the Muslim world.

The new editorial team, which was asked to follow the footsteps of previous illustrious editors of ID such as late Zafar Ahmed, Abdul Rashid Moten, Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, and Abdullah al-Ahsan, is keenly aware of the heavy responsibility of maintaining the high standard set by them. Undoubtedly, the challenges were many. But by the grace of Allah (S.W.T.) and the hard work put in by each and every member of the current editorial team, it was possible to present the December, 2017 issue of ID to its readership on time. The editorial team contains some new young faces, who it is hoped would be able to continue the good work in future. We are convinced that the future of ID can only be bright.

This issue contains six articles, a conference report and five book reviews. The first article by Rahmah bt. Ahmad H. Osman and Abdullah Mekki focuses on the role of the following four Malaysian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – PERKIM, YADIM, ABIM, and JIM – in dealing with terrorism and peace building in Malaysia. Instead of taking a state-level and sociological approach, the authors of this article have used a cultural-critical approach in their study. Hopefully, such an approach to understanding terrorism would open doors to handle the serious threat posed by terrorism to the state and society.

It has been argued for a long time that a society divided along ethnic, linguistic, and religious lines is a recipe for disaster for the political order and stability of that society. Syaza Farhana Mohamad Shukri in the second article provides a counter argument. Using the example of Malaysia where relative peace and political order have been maintained since its independence in 1957, Syaza argues that having those differences does not necessarily lead to political disorder. On the contrary, these can be used as foundations for democratic consolidation.

The third article in this issue of ID, Muneer Kuttiyani Muhammad and Adibah Abdul Rahim provides a historical survey of the principle of *wasatīyyah* as a higher objective of the *Sharīʿah*. In their analysis, they examine relevant Qurʾānic and prophetic texts relevant to *wasatīyyah*. The article also deals with the views of early and modern Muslim scholars on the subject. The authors of this article conclude that *wasatīyyah* can be considered as one of the higher objectives of *Sharīʿah*. They also emphasise the need to obtain *wasatīyyah* both at the individual and collective level.

The fourth article, written by Majdan Alias and Mohd. Noh Abdul Jalil, provides a critical analysis of views of an early Muslim thinker Abū Al-Ḥasan Al-Masʿūdī (896-956 C.E.). He was considered both a historian and a geographer. But in this article, the authors provide his views on pre-Islamic Arab religions and beliefs by textual analysis of his works.

The fifth article, written by Abdulla Galadari, examines the concept of *creatio ex nihilo* meaning ‘creation out of nothing’ and the literal reading of Qurʾān. Following an in-depth analysis the author concludes that science and Qurʾān do not seem to be in conflict with each other on the question of creation.

In the sixth article, Hassan Sheikh Ali, Danial Azman, and Roy Anthony Rogers examine the external factors, in particular, the role of the Soviet Union, in the state-building of Somalia during the period 1969-1978. They develop the argument that by building the Somali state on radical socialist ideas, the society was put on a path of clash between modernity and tradition. This schism ultimately led the

Somali political elite to distrust the central state authority in Somalia. Given this context, it was only a matter of time before Somali State fragmented.

Ishtiaq Hossain

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