

Note from the Editor

In this issue of *Intellectual Discourse* (Vol.29, No. 1), a total of ten research articles are presented to our esteemed readers. These articles reflect the results of research carried out by academics and researchers based not only at International Islamic University Malaysia but also from other universities at home and abroad. In addition to the research articles, this issue also contains a Research Note and three book reviews.

The first article ('Travelers of Unknown Path': On the Aim of Islamic Education) is contributed by Rahmah Binti Ahmad H. Osman and Naseeb Ahmed Siddiqui. The focus of this study is the aim of Islamic education and, according to these authors, its 'incoherencies'. This article discusses these incoherencies in three stages. The first stage involves providing a cursory view of the initial period of Islam. According to the authors, this stage involved combination of reason and revelation in order to establish a premise for Islamic education. The second stage covered the period from the 19th to the 20th century. The authors analysed this period by focusing on the philosophical and practical achievements of three philosophers. In the third stage, the article considers the results of the first two stages in order to analyse the weaknesses in the Islamic education system and map out necessary works to produce a true product of Islamic education.

The second article ("Da'wah and Politics Among Muslim Preachers in Contemporary Indonesia") is authored by Imron Rosidi. In recent years *Da'wah* movements in various parts of the Muslim world have attracted a lot of interest due to their activism. This study focuses on the *Da'wah* movement in Indonesia. The author of this study, Imron Rosidi, finds that the discourse of globalization has allowed Indonesian Muslim preachers to gather information about Islamic movements in other countries. The second finding of the research blames government policies for the rise in influence of Muslim preachers in Indonesia. The third finding is interesting. Contrary to the popular perception that Muslim preachers in Indonesia are interested in establishing an Islamic

state, this study finds that these preachers are concerned about pragmatic goals.

Ikomatussuniah, Mohammad Reevany bin Bustami, and Abdul Rahman Abdul Latip contributed the third article (“Social Constructs Halalan Thayyiban Food Law: A Social Scientific Study into the Insight of Muslim and Non-Muslim in Banten Indonesia”) to this issue of *Intellectual Discourse*. Halal thayyib food law is based on the Qur’an. However, the authors point out that the level of understanding based on the opinions of Muslims and non-Muslims should be mapped out on halal thayyib food law as a social construct. It should be noted that this work is not a theological study. Rather it is based on the sociological methodology of an abductive study. The result of this study revealed that Muslims and non-Muslims have different definitions of *ḥalāl* food. But it is interesting to note that the research also found that their understanding of thayyib food has the same basic constructs related to hygiene and freshness in pre-processing, during, and post-processing of food.

Islamophobia is the subject of the fourth research article. This study was carried out by Ruqaiya Taha Alalwani and Arshad Islam. The article is titled “New Paradigm in Addressing Islamophobia: An Analytical Study Based on the Life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)” and deconstructs this concept by examining its elements such as hatred, hostility, and racism against Islam and Muslims. The study shed light on some methods applied by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in dealing with the roots of hatred, racism, and stereotypes. In this context, the research confirms the depth of the prophetic biography and its ability to provide the modern world with systematic methods in dealing with its growing problems and challenges. Based on this biography, the study proposes solutions to the matter of Islamophobia including the need for Muslims to interact with regional and international societies from a standpoint of collaboration and engagement. This, according to the authors, would be for the universal benefit of all societies and humanity.

The fifth article (“Sharī‘ah Framework for Pricing Family *Takāful* Products”) is written by Younes Soualhi and Fares Djafri). This research examines the Sharī‘ah compliance of pricing elements used in family *takāful* products. The research findings indicate that the assumptions of mortality and morbidity are Sharī‘ah compliant based on the principles

of *ibāḥah* (permissibility), *maṣlahah* (public interest), *istiqrā'* (induction) and *'urf* (custom). However, the research also points out that the investment returns assumption is not quite fair in the event of investment losses. The findings also highlight pricing elements, such as health condition, are deemed unfair by some practitioners.

In the sixth article (“Banks’ Gifts in Islamic Financial Institutions”), Abdulrahman Abdullah Alssadi discusses the issue of prizes in Islamic financial institutions by highlighting the different advantages and disadvantages of possessing a current account. The paper discusses ruling on prizes and gifts for current accounts and adopts a qualitative research methodology. First, the paper discusses truth in regards to prize giving by Islamic banks. Second, it examines rulings on prize giving in current accounts in addition to prizes and gifts. And finally, the research provides an additional focus on rulings regarding prize giving in investment accounts.

The seventh article [“Investigating *Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq's* Methodology in the Study of Christian Doctrine of Trinity Based on His *al-Radd 'Alā al-Tathlīth (The Response to Trinity)*”] is written by Fatmir Shehu. This paper seeks to investigate the methodology of *Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq*, the classical Muslim scholar, in the study of Christian doctrine of the trinity with special reference to his master piece *al-Radd 'Alā al-Tathlīth: Al-Juz' al-Awwal Min Kitāb al-Radd 'Alā al-Thalāth Firqat Min al-Naṣārā* (The Response to Trinity: The First Part from the Book in Response to the three Christian Sects). The objective of this research is to investigate *al-Warrāq's* polemical discourse consisting of arguments, disputes and refutation, while responding to the claims of three Christian sects, *Malkiyyah* (Melkites), *Nasṭūriyyah* (Nestorians) and *Ya qūbiyyah* (Jacobites) in relation to the concept of the trinity. This study concludes that *Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq's* methodology, which is of a polemical-critical-refutative nature based on pure human reasoning, is relevant to the contemporary scholarship of comparative religion, through which sound responses can be provided to issues related to God, cosmology, man, eschatology, ethics, rights, freedom, tolerance, leadership, etc.

Syaza Farhana Binti Mohammad Shukri is the author of the eighth article (“Dignity and Political Expectation of the Malay Electorate in Malaysia”). This paper deals with the continued feeling of economic

political insecurity by the Malay community in Malaysia which, according to the author, accounts for the continued support for conservative figures and political parties. This study proposes that the Malays fear the loss of their dignity in a multicultural world more than the fear of being left behind. She opines that despite better conditions, the Malays are still reluctant to embrace inter-ethnic equality as it is perceived to threaten the community mindset of the Malays. The author found that most of the Malay respondents expect it to be the government's duty to empower and protect the Malay community. Her research also discovered that there is a modest relationship between those who feel dignified and secure and those who are more liberal in their political expectation. The implication is that government policies should continue in uplifting the Malays as a pre-condition for a more egalitarian Malaysia.

In the ninth article ("Social Media and Islamic Ethics: An Insight to Instagram Use by Muslim University Students in Malaysia") Aida Mokhtar and Che Amnah Bahari analyses the use of Instagram by Muslim students at an Islamic University in Malaysia. The findings discovered that Instagram was used in an Islamic manner by most Muslim students who were interviewed. In addition, most of these students were dissatisfied with the features on Instagram, and hence gave recommendations. The study is important as it provides recommendations for both Instagram and marketing communicators on the ideal ambience of a social media platform for Muslim university students.

Khauthar Ismail writes the tenth article ("Ethnic Boundaries and Class Consciousness within Malaysian Employment Sector"). This article investigates the importance of ethnicity in the Malaysian employment sector and its intersection with social class. The study is based on fifty-five in-depth interviews conducted among the Malay and Chinese Malaysian ethnic groups residing in Penang, Malaysia as well as Glasgow, United Kingdom. Data was analysed using thematic analysis and discussions were based on the post-colonialism theory and constructivism. Results suggested a dialectical relationship between ethnicity and class awareness in the respondents' understanding of the present-day Malaysian ethnic segregations of labour. Top-down ethnic bureaucratisation and everyday cultural boundaries emphasise

the significance of ethnicity and inter-ethnic group relations in the Malaysian employment sector. On the other hand, social capital was found to address individual and intra-ethnic class relations in this sector.

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