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Intellectual Discourse

Volume 33

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Palgrave Macmillan.
Reviewer: *Arief Arman*

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Transliteration Table: Consonants

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
ب	b		ط	ṭ
ت	t		ظ	ẓ
ث	th		ع	‘
ج	j		غ	gh
ح	ḥ		ف	f
خ	kh		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	dh		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	sh		و	w
ص	ṣ		ء	’
ض	ḍ		ي	y

Transliteration Table: Vowels and Diphthongs

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
اَ	a		اَ، اِيَّ	an
اُ	u		اُو	un
اِ	i		اِي	in
اَ، اِ، اِيَّ	ā		اَو	aw
اُو	ū		اَي	ay
اِي	ī		اُو	uww, ū (in final position)
			اَي	iyy, ī (in final position)

Source: ROTAS Transliteration Kit: <http://rotas.iium.edu.my>

Note from the Editor

In this issue – *Intellectual Discourse*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (2025) – we present 17 research articles and two book reviews. Five of the articles are selected from Communication and Media Centre International Conference 2024, with the help of our guest editor, Shafizan Mohamed. The articles in this issue cover various disciplines in Islamic studies, social sciences, and the humanities – with relevance to the Muslim World – including philosophy, *Ḥadīth* studies, international relations, literature, political science, public policy, social finance, education, and media and communications.

In the first article (The Existentialist Conception of Man: A Comparative Analysis between Muhammad Iqbal and Jean-Paul Sartre), Zubaida Nusrat and Adibah Abdul Rahim compare the existentialist conception of man between the philosophical and literary works of Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Jean-Paul Sartre. The authors highlight that despite the differences between the two philosophers in terms of their epistemological and metaphysical foundations, both incorporate Socratic *Know Thyself* into their existential views, emphasising self-knowledge in the quest for self-discovery in finding the meaning and purpose of life.

Nuzulul Qadar Abdullah discusses the debates on the analysis of texts (*mutūn*) of *Ḥadīths* by Muslim Feminists and their responses in the second article (Equal Before Allah, Unequal Before the Prophet? Ongoing Discourse on *Matn* Criticism and Its Influence on Muslim Feminist Thought). He explores the methodologies and limitations of contemporary feminist Muslim thought in criticising *ḥadīth* texts. He contends that while Muslim feminist criticisms are innovative, they remain subjective and therefore inadequate to categorically reject well-established narrations.

The third article (Critical Thinking as a Mechanism for Situation Handling and Problem Solving: Examples from *Ḥadīth* Literature) by

Bachar Bakour examines the critical thinking patterns from ḥadīth literature to investigate how Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions approached complex social situations and problems. The author develops a framework for understanding classical Islamic wisdom by linking them with contemporary cognitive theories, and in doing so, demonstrate how traditional approaches to critical thinking can help solidify modern problem-solving methods.

Geopolitics of the Middle East is the focus of the fourth article (Shifting Geopolitics: The Gaza War and the Contours of a Nascent Middle East Security Community) by Nath Aldalala'a and Syaza Shukri. The article, grounded on Karl W. Deutsch's concept of security community, argues that an emerging security community is developing in the Middle East based on regional dynamics of the Gaza War. Aldalalaa and Shukri argue that ideological divisions are increasingly subordinated to shared interests in regional stability and counter-militancy, moving towards a regional realignment grounded in mutual preservation rather than ideological affinity.

In the fifth article (Power of Knowledge vs. Self-Knowledge Production: The Protagonist's Journey towards Embracing Islam in Umm Zakiyyah's *If I Should Speak*), Nadia Brioua and Rahmah Ahmad H. Osman examine the prevalence of Islamophobia among non-Muslims as portrayed in fictions. Analysing Umm Zakiyyah's *If I Should Speak* (2000), the article argues that the power of media affects non-Muslims' attitudes negatively, resulting in prejudice and misunderstanding of Islam. The authors recommend that self-Islamic knowledge is a key for non-Muslims to understand Islam.

Raihan Rosman examines the quest for identity and its relation to Islamic faith in a Muslim female bildungsroman – an individual's self-development within the concept of a specific social order – in the sixth article (A Muslim Female Bildungsroman: Quest for Identity and Sisterhood in Islam in Leila Aboulela's *Minaret* (2005)). The article scrutinises the transition of the novel's main character, Najwa, whose identity evolved from a secular Muslim in Sudan, to a woman with dual identities, before she becomes a practicing Muslim in London. The article also explores the protagonist's search for an identity and rediscovery of faith through Islamic concepts of individualism and collectivism.

Aboulela's *Minaret* is compared to S.K. Ali's *Saints and Misfits* (2017) in the seventh article (Freedom as Connection to God: An Analysis of Two Novels by Muslim Women's Writers in the Western Diaspora) by Amrah Abdul Majid. Using Allison Weir's (2013) conceptualisation of freedom as connection and belonging to God, the article argues that the centrality of God in the lives of the protagonists is prominent in both novels. Both novels presented the subjectivities of devout Muslim women in connecting faith with their daily lives. The author concludes that their lives are governed solely by the terms set by God, embodying the ultimate definition of freedom portrayed in the narratives.

In the eighth article ('The Politics of Fear': How Does It Affect Youth Political Participation in Malaysia?), Norhafiza Mohd Hed examines the impact of political repression on youth political participation in Malaysia, particularly on the regime's efforts to 'depoliticise' and criminalise dissent. The study suggests that state-led repression has a negative impact on young people's political involvement in Malaysia, fostering a 'culture of fear' that serves as a significant barrier to political activism. Amid such 'culture of fear,' only a small group of determined and courageous young Malaysians are willing to challenge the status quo through channels like social movements and protest activism.

The ninth article (Perceived Determinants of Child Poverty in Malaysia: A Preliminary Analysis) by Norhaslinda Jamaiudin situates child poverty as a public policy issue. In exploring the factors that lead to child poverty in Malaysia, the author finds that adverse parental characteristics increase the likelihood of child poverty. Other factors are parental education level, household size, and family structure – specifically *single parent* households – are all significant contributors to child poverty. To overcome this issue, it is essential to have policy support from the government.

Burcin Demirbilek analyses Türkiye's shift towards low carbon policies in the tenth article (Türkiye's Climate Change Policy: An Evaluation of Its Transition to Low Carbon Policies). He postulates that climate change is to be a primary policy by states because it is to be resolved globally. His article establishes a framework on the consequences of climate change in Türkiye, evaluates how Türkiye shapes its climate and low carbon policies to reduce the greenhouse gases (GHGs) level through analyses of national and international documents and legal structures.

In the 11th article (The Role of *Ulama* in Shaping Attitude, Subjective Norms, Digitalisation and Trust Towards Cash *Waqf* Behaviour), Gustina et al. investigate the key determinants influencing the behaviour of *waqif* (donors) and prospective *waqif* towards cash *waqf* in West Sumatra, Indonesia. Through quantitative methods, the study finds that factors such as attitude, subjective norms, trust, the influence of religious leaders (*ulama*), and digitalisation play a crucial role in shaping the behaviour of *waqif* and prospective *waqif*. It recommends that the government, *nazir* (*waqf* managers), and other stakeholders should actively involve *ulama* in community education efforts.

The 12th article (The Role of Local Wisdom in Shaping Internationalisation Strategies of Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia) by Moh. Sugeng Sholehuddin et al. explores how Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Institutions (IHEIs) leverage local values, traditions, and practices to design and implement effective internationalisation frameworks. They find that the integration of local wisdom into the internationalisation strategies of IHEIs represents a multifaceted approach to balancing global academic standards with the preservation of cultural and religious identity.

The notes on the 13th to 17th articles by our guest editor, Shafizan Mohamed, follow after this paragraph. On behalf of the editorial team, we thank the authors who choose to present their research findings in *Intellectual Discourse*. We are also grateful for the contributions of the reviewers who assist us in improving the quality of the works that appear in this issue. On another note, the editorial team would like to announce that we are changing the publication schedule of *Intellectual Discourse* from June and December each year to April and October, starting from the next issue, Vol. 33 No. 3 (2025). (Please note that the special issue published in January 2025 was assigned Vol. 33 No. 1 (2025)).

Tunku Mohar Mokhtar
Editor

In this issue, we are pleased to feature five peer-reviewed articles selected from the “**Communication and Media Centre International Conference 2024 (COMETIC '24)**,” held on 16–17 October 2024. Organised by the **Communication and Media Centre (COMET)** of the International Islamic University Malaysia, this biennial conference brought together academics, media professionals, policymakers, and postgraduate researchers to engage critically with the conference theme, “*Communication and Media Pause: Reflecting Values and Impacts.*” As the media landscape continues to be disrupted by technological innovation, shifting audience behaviour, and global crises, the conference served as a timely intellectual intervention—inviting participants to pause, take stock, and reimagine the direction and values of contemporary media and communication. These selected articles represent a diversity of critical inquiries, methodologies, and perspectives aligned with the conference’s aim to interrogate both the promises and perils of media evolution in our time.

The 13th article (Perceptions of Three U.S. Presidents – Obama, Trump, and Biden: A Malaysian Perspective) by Syed Arabi Idid and Rizwanah Souket Ali presents a longitudinal study that tracks Malaysian public opinion on U.S. leadership over more than a decade. Through six nationwide surveys conducted between 2010 and 2023, the authors assess how Malaysians perceive the performance of Presidents Obama, Trump, and Biden in relation to three global issues: the U.S.–China rivalry, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and global economic challenges. The study reveals that while Obama initially enjoyed favourable perceptions due to his diplomatic approach, Trump’s presidency marked a decline in approval, particularly due to his foreign policy stance on Palestine. Biden’s leadership, though viewed with cautious optimism, is still shaped by long-standing concerns over American global influence. This paper offers a rare Global South perspective on international leadership and media framing, adding valuable depth to transnational political communication scholarship.

The 14th article (International Students’ Direct and Parasocial Contact, and Attitude towards Malaysian Host Nationals), by Tengku Siti Aisha Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen and her colleagues, examines how intercultural contact shapes international students’ attitudes toward Malaysians. Using a quantitative survey of 253 students and mediation analysis through Hayes PROCESS, the study explores both direct (face-

to-face) and parasocial (media-based) interactions. The authors find that cultural identification significantly mediates the relationship between both types of contact and students' attitudes, while Islamic identity does not exert the same influence. The paper underscores the importance of fostering cultural affinity—through both physical interaction and media representation—to enhance social cohesion and student integration. This study is particularly relevant in the context of Malaysia's ambition to become a regional education hub, providing actionable insights for institutions aiming to improve the international student experience through inclusive and strategic communication.

The 15th article (Artificial Intelligence in Sinar Harian: Embracing Readiness or Addressing Anxiety?) by Hafezdzullah Mohd Hassan et al. explores the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in Malaysian newsrooms, specifically within the daily operations of *Sinar Harian*. Through qualitative interviews with ten journalists, the study reveals a nuanced spectrum of responses—ranging from optimism and strategic readiness to deep-seated anxiety and fear of job displacement. The authors apply the lens of technological determinism to argue that AI is not merely a supplementary tool but a transformative force that is reshaping journalistic norms, workflows, and roles. The paper identifies three thematic responses: awareness of AI's capabilities, recognition of its potential to enhance journalistic output, and the conditional trust journalists place in its implementation. The findings offer timely insights into newsroom adaptation in the face of algorithmic media and serve as a valuable resource for media managers, policymakers, and scholars navigating the ethics and impacts of AI in journalism.

The 16th article (Healthcare Workers' Challenges in Managing Disease Outbreaks: A Systematic Review from an Islamic Perspective) by Zeti Azreen Ahmad et al. investigates the multifaceted difficulties faced by healthcare workers (HCWs) during public health emergencies such as pandemics. Based on a systematic literature review of 61 studies from Scopus and Web of Science, the authors identify knowledge deficits and communication barriers as key impediments to effective healthcare delivery. What sets this study apart is its rigorous attempt to frame these challenges through an Islamic lens—drawing on Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions to provide ethical and spiritual guidance for healthcare resilience. The study advocates for a more holistic understanding of healthcare that includes moral and religious fortitude,

especially in crisis contexts. This interdisciplinary synthesis contributes to the emerging field of Islamic bioethics and offers a culturally relevant response to the mental, emotional, and professional burdens experienced by HCWs in Muslim societies.

The 17th contribution (Faith-Based Approaches to Vaccine Misconception: A Systematic Literature Review), by Wan Norshira and her colleagues, addresses the ongoing challenge of vaccine hesitancy within Muslim communities by systematically reviewing religious messaging strategies grounded in Islamic sources. Drawing from 25 studies published between 2016 and 2021 and guided by PRISMA protocols, the authors analyse Qur'anic references, hadith, and fatwa documents that support the legitimacy and necessity of vaccination. Their review finds that Islamic perspectives—when clearly communicated through trusted religious leaders—can counter misinformation and foster greater acceptance of immunisation efforts. The study highlights the importance of integrating faith-based discourse into national health communication strategies and proposes a framework for religious literacy in public health. This article contributes to broader discussions on health communication, religion, and misinformation, offering practical recommendations for the Ministry of Health, educators, and community leaders in Muslim-majority contexts like Malaysia.

Collectively, these five contributions embody the spirit of COMETIC '24—pausing not to retreat, but to confront critical questions head-on. Through diverse lenses—technological, health, ethical, intercultural, and geopolitical—they enrich academic discourse and chart new directions for both scholarship and praxis.

Shafizan Mohamed
Guest Editor

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Intellectual Discourse is an academic, refereed journal, published twice a year. Four types of contributions are considered for publication in this journal: major articles reporting findings of original research; review articles synthesising important deliberations related to disciplines within the domain of Islamic sciences; short research notes or communications, containing original ideas or discussions on vital issues of contemporary concern, and book reviews; and brief reader comments, or statements of divergent viewpoints.

To submit manuscript, go to <http://www.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse>

The manuscript submitted to *Intellectual Discourse* should not have been published elsewhere, and should not be under consideration by other publications. This must be stated in the covering letter.

1. Original research and review articles should be 5,000-8,000 words while research notes 3,000-4,000 words, accompanied by an abstract of 100-150 words. Book review should be 1,000-1,500 words.
2. Manuscripts should be double-spaced with a 1-inch (2.5 cm) margins. Use 12-point Times New Roman font.
3. Manuscripts should adhere to the *American Psychological Association* (APA) style, latest edition.
4. The title should be as concise as possible and should appear on a separate sheet together with name(s) of the author(s), affiliation(s), and the complete postal address of the institute(s).
5. A short running title of not more than 40 characters should also be included.
6. Headings and sub-headings of different sections should be clearly indicated.
7. References should be alphabetically ordered. Some examples are given below:

Book

In-text citations:

Al-Faruqi & al-Faruqi (1986)

Reference:

Al-Faruqi, I. R., & al-Faruqi, L. L. (1986). *The cultural atlas of Islam*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Chapter in a Book

In-text:

Alias (2009)

Reference:

Alias, A. (2009). Human nature. In N. M. Noor (Ed.), *Human nature from an Islamic perspective: A guide to teaching and learning* (pp.79-117). Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press.

Journal Article

In-text:

Chapra (2002)

Reference:

Chapra, M. U. (2002). Islam and the international debt problem. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 10, 214-232.

The Qur'ān

In-text:

(i) direct quotation, write as 30:36

(ii) indirect quotation, write as Qur'ān, 30:36

Reference:

The glorious Qur'ān. Translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1977). US: American Trust Publications.

Ḥadīth

In-text:

(i) Al-Bukhārī, 88:204 (where 88 is the book number, 204 is the ḥadīth number)

(ii) Ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, p. 1

Reference:

(i) Al-Bukhārī, M. (1981). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

(ii) Ibn Ḥanbal, A. (1982). *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*. Istanbul: Cagri Yayinlari.

The Bible

In-text:

Matthew 12:31-32

Reference:

The new Oxford annotated Bible. (2007). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Transliteration of Arabic words should follow the style indicated in ROTAS Transliteration Kit as detailed on its website (http://rotas.iium.edu.my/?Table_of_Transliteration), which is a slight modification of ALA-LC (Library of Congress and the American Library Association) transliteration scheme. Transliteration of Persian, Urdu, Turkish and other scripts should follow ALA-LC scheme.

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