

Editorial

With this issue we enter the fourth year of *Intellectual Discourse*. We thank Allah *subḥānahu wa ʿālā*, who gave us strength to continue our efforts during this period. With this issue, a new editorial board is taking over. We thank the members of the previous editorial board, and welcome the new ones.

This issue contains five articles.

Daud Bakar has taken up the issue of context (*al-Hāl*) and the importance of its understanding in relation to the problem of *Ikhtilāf* in Islamic legal theory. In view of the breadth of this problem, he has confined his article to two books of Imām al-Shāfiʿī. He shows that the work of al-Shāfiʿī is not only pioneering, it is relevant even now.

The next article is an evaluation of the promotional tools of marketing from an Islamic perspective. The authors, Muhammad Anwar and Mohammad Saeed, raise some basic issues regarding marketing. Are promotional tools of marketing acceptable in an Islamic society, particularly because they aim to persuade the consumers to spend on things that are attractive to him and thus maximise the profit of the marketer? The learned authors believe that promotional tools have a place in an Islamic society, but they have to be subservient to the goals and ideals of the society. The marketers have to be not only socially responsible, they have to be Islamically responsible also.

The subject of human rights has been a major issue in Muslim societies. It has been one of the issues about which the Western powers have shown a great deal of concern; although the concern has been shown quite selectively. Jorgen S. Nielsen has tried to present an analysis of the various dimensions of this issue, in a historical context.

Othman Ali offers an analysis of the Assassin movement in terms of its dynamics, particularly in view of its hostility to Islam. This article is an interesting attempt to understand the *Fidāwiyyah* by comparing the findings of modern scholars on the subject against data collected from the primary sources.

Ataullah Kopanski who has recently written so much regarding Islam in eastern Europe, has produced another interesting article on the question of Muslim-Christian relations during the middle ages. This article throws considerable light on the background of the clash of religions in this area.

There has been some problem in bringing out *Intellectual Discourse* on time. In order to regularize its appearance, the editorial board has decided to make this issue a combined one: numbers 1 & 2 of volume 4. We hope that from now on the journal would appear more regularly—and seek your cooperation and support in this endeavour.