Book Reviews

The Islamic worldview, ethics and civilization: Issues in contemporary interdisciplinary discourse. Edited by Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IIUM Press, 2012, pp. viii+279, ISBN: 978-967-0225-63-0.

Reviewer: Rafiu Ibrahim Adebayo, Department of Religions, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Email: adrafhope@yahoo.com.

That civilization was borne out of the 'pursuit of luxury' or out of 'pursuit of profit' as argued by Bertrand Russell and Adam Smith respectively, or that it was borne out of the 'pursuit of surplus' or out of 'pursuit of creative synthesis' as advocated by Karl Marx and Ali Mazrui respectively, gives credence to the fact that civilization is a product of a worldview. Therefore, it can be argued that differences among civilizations are not only real but also basic. The differences among civilizations are further stated by Samuel P. Huntington who observes that perpetuity in civilizational differences cut across all strata of human life, and that such civilizational differences are far more fundamental than differences among political ideologies and political regimes.

Unfortunately, the Muslim *Ummah* has been grossly absorbed in the alien civilizations introduced through colonization, which now appears in the garb of globalization, to the extent that it nearly forgets its own worldview. The consciousness of Muslim intellectuals to revive their civilizational worldview despite all odds led to the 1977 First World Conference on Muslim Education, where a milestone achievement was made in the establishment of international Islamic universities one of which is in Malaysia. *The Islamic Worldview, Ethics and Civilization, Issues in Contemporary Interdisciplinary Discourse* edited by Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu is a product of research project funded by the Research Management Centre of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). IIUM's mission and vision of infusing Islamic values

into academic disciplines seems to have guided the contributors in their approaches to issues discussed in this volume.

The book is divided into two parts containing eleven chapters written by scholars, mostly from Malaysia, with a separate introductory chapter written by its editor. The first part which contains five chapters is captioned "Worldview and Civilization," while the second part is titled "Ethics and Religion" containing six chapters as opposed to seven mentioned by the editor (p.7). The chapters and the discussion therein reflect the title of the book. The first part addresses the epistemological framework of the concepts of worldview and civilization as they affect such sociological issues as urbanization and resource sustainability, moderation and extremism, and restoration of mental health. All these have been analysed within the broad spectrum of the Islamic worldview and in the spirit of integration and Islamisation of human knowledge. The second part of the book discusses issues in contemporary interdisciplinary discourse like euthanasia, suicide attack, volunteerism and servant leadership from the point of view of Islam.

In chapter one, Suleiman M. H. Boayo examines the concepts of culture and civilization from the Western perspective comparing those with that of Islam. He identifies the conceptual and terminological confusions in the Arab-Muslim conception of civilization and suggests that the Muslims should go back to the drawing board to search for the original understandings of terms like *ḥaḍārah, madaniyyah, tamaddun, 'umrān* and *thaqāfah*. He is also of the opinion that the concept of civilization as understood in Turkish, Persian and Malay languages should also be compared with the Western concept of civilization. In chapter two, Abdelaziz Berghout observes that no meaningful development can take place without spirituality. In order to achieve a balanced development, he calls for the integration of development with moral and spiritual values based on the Islamic worldview. Chapter three demonstrates the relevance of Islam to geography as a discipline. Here, Ali-Agan Imam and Muhammad Bello look at *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* as a tool for urbanization and resource sustainability. "Defining Moderation and Extremism in the Light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah" (chapter four) authored by Jamal Ahmed Badi reminds one of the *Islamic Awakening between Rejection and Extremism* by Yusuf al-Qaradawi. Indeed, the chapter though reads like a recapitulation of the latter, expands more on the concept of *wasaṭiyyah* from the Qur'ānic and *ḥadīth* perspectives, which is buttressed with that of the *Mufassirūn*.

Unlike the secular approach to the study of mental health, Abdul Latif Abdul Razak, in chapter five, discusses the spiritual factor in psycho-spiritual and physiological illnesses from the tripartite composition of man-body, mind and spirit. His view concurs with that of Salisu Shehu (2003) who understands mental illnesses through primary and secondary sources. The primary causative force according to him is the irresistible Will of Allah, while the secondary agents could be biological, psychological and social factors.

The next two chapters in the second part of the book are ethical and comparative in nature. chapter six discusses the role of religion in shaping moral character from the perspectives of Islam and Catholicism. The author argues that no ethical system can be effective if based mainly on human rationality and that ethics based on religion can only be effective within the environment of willingness and not through compulsion. In the same vein, Abdul Kabir Hassain Solihu discusses "Media Audience Ethics in Islam and Christianity" in chapter seven. Here, the author reflects on the ethical principles of responsibility and accountability expected of Muslims in making use of modern information and communication technology, particularly electronic media. He identifies *taqwā* and *ḥaqq* as two important concepts related to Islamic media audience ethics. While admitting the indispensability of the media to Muslims and Christians alike, he acknowledges its negative effects, which presuppose that moral integrity is needed for the preservation of religious values and cultural identities against the onslaught of negative ideas thrown to the world through television and the Internet.

In a chapter titled "Volunteerism: An Islamic Perspective", Kabuye Uthman Sulaiman discusses the ethics of volunteerism in Islam, its benefits and kind. Although the title of the chapter does not identify it as a case study, the author determines the extent of participation of the IIUM community in volunteer activities. He concludes that volunteerism is essential for the physical and spiritual development of the Muslim community. Chapter nine ("Servant Leadership in Islam") discusses the meaning of the term servant leadership, its epistemological foundation in Islam, comparing this with other leadership theories. The authors of this chapter identify *taqwā* (God-fearing), *amānah* (integrity or trustworthiness), *ḥikmah* (wisdom), *'adl* (justice), *iḥsān* (benevolence) and *raḥmah* (compassion) as ingredients of servant leadership with adequate reference to its practice by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the *Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn* (the Rightly Guided Caliphs).

In chapter ten, the author delves extensively into the etymology and historical survey of suicide attacks, submitting that the practice has psychological, social, political and religious backings as reasons for its practice. With relevant Qur'ānic passages and Prophetic traditions, as well as the interpretations of the various Muslim scholars and *mufassirūn*, he concludes that Islam vehemently rejects this practice. He then corrects the wrong impression that Muslims can resort to the practice to protect themselves and their religion by drawing a line of demarcation between *Shahīd* (martyr) and *Intiḥār* (self-killing). This view of his, tallies with the stand of Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri who also cites Qur'ānic texts and *ahādīth* on the unlawfulness of suicide and other acts of terrorism.

The last chapter of the book discusses the meaning, types and historical background of euthanasia. The controversy surrounding the permissibility of euthanasia by Islam is also examined in this chapter. The author deals with a wide range of issues such as the withdrawal of a life-supporting system from a patient, and refusal of medical treatment by a terminally-ill patient on the basis of futility of such treatment. The chapter is however silent on the ethical and jurisprudential implications of euthanasia.

There are certain lapses in this volume, which need to be pointed out here. For example, the editor needs to confirm some Qur'ānic verses cited in the book. Such include Qur'ān 2:195 (quoted on p. 213) which was not accurately cited and Qur'ān 12:112, which to the best of our knowledge, does not exceed 111 verses. Some editorial works need to be carried out on pages 211, 216 and 217 of the book. In addition, some passages in chapter five of the book need to be multi-paragraphed. For example, the introductory page of the chapter is a paragraph (See pp. 77-78). Generally speaking, the book is useful for a comparative study of religion and will prove to be equally useful for the interdisciplinary study of related concepts. The book further substantiates the fact that Islamic Studies is a broad discipline that covers all aspects of human endeavour and encompasses other disciplines. Finally, the book is a good contribution to the discourse on topical issues from the Islamic worldview, and a volume such as this one deserves attention from students and scholars engaged in research in Islamic Studies.

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