

## *Editorial*

Noraini M. Noor  
noraini@iiu.edu.my

*Intellectual Discourse* has evolved from a Kulliyah-based publication to being one of the flagship journals of the university. It is indeed a great honour for us and special thanks are due to the past editor, Abdul Rashid Moten, who has been at the helm of the journal for eight years. Under his editorship, the journal has expanded its scope to include other fields besides the Islamic Sciences. At present, we believe that this is indeed the way to move the journal forward – to include a multitude of areas that are relevant to Muslims. Because we come from different regions of the world, we have experienced respectively of living as minorities, as majorities and in plurality. Therefore, the journal's coverage will remain broad and eclectic taking into account our multiple identities and belongings.

This issue consists of six articles; four special focus articles on Izutsu and two regular ones.

The special focus papers on Izutsu are from a conference held last year at the university to celebrate Japanese contribution to Islamic Studies – the legacy of Toshihiko Izutsu (1914-1993). Izutsu was Japan's foremost scholar of Islam in the history of Muslim-Japanese relations. His work on the study of the Qur'ān and Islam (both in Japanese and English) was unique because he combined philosophical and semantic methods in dealing with the subject. Though he lived and taught in several universities in the West, the East and Iran, he managed to keep a clear distance from the Orientalist tradition that has dominated the field of Islamic studies in the West. Muslim and non-Muslim scholars alike have acknowledged the depth and breadth of his scholarship. The first three papers are interpretations of Izutsu's legacy whereas the fourth shows how his legacy can be utilised.

The first paper by Yoshitsugu Sawai outlines the structure of reality in Izutsu's "Oriental Philosophy" by discussing the main characteristics of his philosophical perspective of reality and consciousness. Using semantic approaches, Izutsu developed a theory of Oriental Philosophy described by a multi-layered correlation of reality and consciousness.

The next paper by Kojiro Nakamura shows how this structural framework of Izutsu contributes to the study of comparative religion. Kamada Shigeru's paper, on the other hand, considers Izutsu's study of Islamic philosophy, specifically his work on Mullā Ṣadrā's *Kitāb al-Mashā'ir*, a philosophical treatise on existence and quiddity, which may be regarded as a case study of his "Oriental Philosophy." On the applied side, Haneef and Furqani show how Izutsu's semantic analysis approach is used to extract relevant Islamic values from the Qur'ān that could form the ethical base of Islamic economics.

The paper by Muhammad Maroof Shah provides an analysis of Iqbal's interpretation of the Legend of the Fall. Premised on a modernist rationalist approach of the West, Iqbal reinterprets the traditional account of the fall of Adam. He believes that the fall of Adam represents the exercise of free will rather than transgression, and as such, it represents the birth of self-consciousness. His interpretation, which is unique and unprecedented in Islamic history, is an attempt to bridge modern science and philosophy to Islam.

The final paper by White argues for an alternative approach to studying history based on the work of Ibn Khaldūn, known by many as the father of social sciences. Ibn Khaldūn's historical method, rooted in the Qur'ān, is compared to secular attempts to understanding history, notably that of Karl Marx's "historical materialism." White further makes a case for Muslims to comprehend Khaldūn's approach to create a more God-conscious society.

Despite the varied nature of the papers in this issue by writers from different backgrounds, we still share a common heritage. On this note, I would like to end this issue with the following poignant message from the Qur'ān:

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other) (*Sūrat al-Hujurat*, 49:13).