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Al-Shajarah is a refereed international journal that publishes original scholarly articles in the area of Islamic thought, Islamic civilization, Islamic science, and Malay world issues. The journal is especially interested in studies that elaborate scientific and epistemological problems encountered by Muslims in the present age, scholarly works that provide fresh and insightful Islamic responses to the intellectual and cultural challenges of the modern world. *Al-Shajarah* will also consider articles written on various religions, schools of thought, ideologies and subjects that can contribute towards the formulation of an Islamic philosophy of science. Critical studies of translation of major works of major writers of the past and present. Original works on the subjects of Islamic architecture and art are welcomed. Book reviews and notes are also accepted.

The journal is published twice a year, June-July and November-December. Manuscripts and all correspondence should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Shajarah*, F4 Building, Research and Publication Unit, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), No. 24, Persiaran Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, Taman Duta, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. All enquiries on publications may also be e-mailed to alshajarah@iium.edu.my. For subscriptions, please address all queries to the postal or email address above.

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the potentials of Taymiyyan discourse impacting modern areas of study. Nevertheless, these may display the practicalities and instructive nature of Hoover's historical approach, which manifest through the impartiality and objectivity of his writings. These qualities enable him to exhibit the depth and richness of the theologian's corpus, the influence of which runs through various sects of Islam with their own different takes and perspectives, despite of his conventional disparaging imagery. All things considered, this book helps re-address several misrepresented ideas of Ibn Taymiyya, at least in providing a new narrative, contextual constructs, and epistemic conception for the scholar's broad spectrum of views, critiques, refutations, and his methodology of writing. Hoover's exhilarating and purgative perspective of the scholar did justify to some extent his aim to provide an 'accurate image' of the scholar, thereby making this book an essential reading for anyone seeking a more authentic account of his life and thought.

A. Helwa, *Secrets of Divine Love: A Spiritual Journey into the Heart of Islam*, Capisatran Beach, CA: Naulit Publishing Hous, 2020.

Reviewer: Dr. Ratna Roshida Ab Razak, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Email: ratna_razak@upm.edu.my

The book under review teaches us how to discover our true purpose in life and our spiritual potentials. It is about a spiritual journey into the heart of Islam that brings together under the theme of Divine Love the Quran's spiritual secrets, ancient mystical poetry, and stories from the world's greatest prophets and spiritual masters to help readers reawaken their faith, overcome their doubts, and build their relationship with God. The author, A. Helwa uses scientific facts, practical exercises, and guided meditations as tools and means of awareness to detect and conquer the negative inner critic that

prevents us from experiencing God's all-encompassing love. In this book, the author illuminates, inspires, and praises God with such loving honesty that it is impossible not to feel elevated and share her joy. The book is replete with Quranic verses extolling wisdom and beauty, exquisite poetic metaphors, sometimes amusing but always profound teaching stories, and simple but effective spiritual practices that carry the reader deeper into the mysteries encountered in each chapter. In short, the book is to be lived and experienced rather than just to be read.

The book is for everyone, including the general public, laypeople, and non-academics. It describes spiritual practices that could strengthen faith in God, inspire love of Him, and bring souls ever closer to Him, particularly for those who are seeking for a spiritual upliftment to be His righteous servants. For those who are striving to understand Islam as a way of life and to be close to God, this book would indeed be a great manual.

The chapters of the book are a good source of guidance to seekers of spiritual tranquillity and serenity as well as full surrender and submission to God. The book is organised into twelve chapters beginning with an Introduction in which its author explains the importance of love to the Creator as a means of gaining a spiritual nuance on the core of Islamic beliefs and practices.

In Chapter 1 titled “Allah: The Origin of Love” the author discusses God, Allah, Who God is, and how He completely loves us humans precisely as we are, which is a fundamental and significant aspect of Islam. In Chapter 2 titled “Who Are You” the author reflects on the reasons why humans were created and what their life mission should be. In Chapter 3 titled “The Mysterious World of the Quran” the author discusses how God has already provided us humans with all that we need in order to communicate with Him, and how to delve into who we are through His words, the Quran. The chapter provides a detailed explanation of the Quran, including about how to read the sacred Book from the heart and how it can be a game changer. After reading this chapter readers get the feeling how much they are loved by God.

In chapter 4 “The Spiritual Dimension of Islam” the author emphasises on how to manage our ego and awaken our heart through

the correct understanding and practice of *Imān, Islām, and Ihsān*. She also talks about how to clean the mirror of our heart so that it will reflect the presence of God everywhere. By uncovering the spiritual mysteries contained in these three dimensions of the religion we may be led to contemplate on the divine beauty that is inherent in every atom of our existence. In chapter 5 titled “Tawba: Repent and Return to Unity” the author digs into ways to repent in a way that would change sins into good acts, alter rituals into a strong booster by stressing that our sins are truly emblems of Allah's love, and redirect our sight to the face of the Divine.

Chapter 6 titled “Shahadah: In the Ecstasy of Oneness” emphasises that faith is a journey of uncovering what we have already been given by God rather than something that we must attain or earn. Chapter 7 titled “Salat: How to Tune into Divine Love” addresses the meaning, purpose and value of life through prayer, which is by helping the soul to see that its longing for all earthly manifestations, is really a deep longing for God. Chapter 8 delves deeper into the subject of “Zakat: Giving as a Divine Instrument.” The author emphasises that we are merely stewards of this planet, and that we are here to both gratefully enjoy and generously distribute the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon all people without distinction.

Chapter 9 titled “Ramadan: The Holy Month of Fasting” underlines the significance and value of Ramadan and the fasting ritual. The true test of a successful Ramadan, according to the author, is who we are after the Ramadan is over. As Imam al-Ghazālī explains, “The merit of fasting is not in hunger, just as the worth of medicine is not in its bitterness.” Chapter 10 titled “Hajj: A Pilgrimage to God” emphasises that Hajj is about letting go of restrictions and romanticised representations of reality. This is because our journey on earth is a pilgrimage from Allah to Allah, for we return to Allah every time we sleep, and we are returned to our bodies by His compassion every morning. The Hajj has begun. Right now, “we are in the midst of circumambulating the Kaaba in our life.”

In Chapter 11 “The Spiritual Secrets of Death” the author goes into the truth of death, which is that it is not the end but the beginning

of eternal life. Finally, in Chapter 12 “The Mysteries of Heaven and Hell” the author explained in details that these two regions are not just physical destinations but also metaphysical realities that go beyond what we as humans have collectively experienced with our senses.

Overall, this book is a treasure mine of innovative ideas, profound insights, and heartfelt instruction that will inspire and delight readers every time they read. Thanks to her ability to speak to the heart, Helwa appears to have succeeded in writing on spirituality with empathy, encouragement, and practical counsel in a way that will appeal to people of all faiths, particularly Muslims. Muslims will admire her calm and compassionate approach towards God and His creation, the Prophet Muhammad, and all of Islamic essential teachings.

The book has engaged other writers' works on the same subject and guides readers, no matter their religious background, through the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad the celebrated poet Rumi, and other luminaries. If you like theology backed by modern science and psychology, receiving instructions for contemporary Muslims, and motivational lessons from the Quran, then you will adore Helwa's insightful book.

The author has a unique way of conveying her messages through the book. She does not only use Quranic verses and Prophetic hadiths but also her own poetic way of conveying messages. Because of this, this book is filled with dozens of poems, stories, as well as profound spiritual concepts. Indeed, the way she writes the book makes it so meaningful, especially for those who are longing to experience a more intimate and loving relationship with the Divine and to have a feeling of worthy of love from the perfect Creator.

By following the principles and practices of Islam as outlined in the book we will come to understand the divine purpose underlying our existence as well as to realise how the spiritual potentials within us could be unleashed. The book takes a rational yet heart-centred approach to the Quran that not only enlightens the mind, but also inspires the spirit to a deeper relationship with God. It directs readers to the hidden meanings of the Quran via passion and

joy. Written with accuracy and care, A. Helwa's metaphoric insights attract us to join her in her earnest search for truth and understanding. By accessing the inner workings of the Islamic tradition, she has helped us to better appreciate that our constant struggles in faith would be met with a deeper connection to Allah rooted in compassion. The book is a welcome guide to those who are interested in experiencing the spiritual journey to the heart of Islam.

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR
ء	‘	‘	‘	ز	z	z	z	گ	—	g	g
ب	b	b	b	ژ	—	—	ř	ل	l	l	l
پ	—	p	p	ژ	—	zh	j	م	m	m	m
ت	t	t	t	س	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n
ٹ	—	—	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ş	ه	h	h	h ¹
ث	th	th	th	ص	ṣ	ṣ	ş	و	w	v/u	v
ج	j	j	c	ض	ḍ	ḍ	ž	ی	y	y	y
چ	—	ch	çh	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ة	-ah	—	-a ²
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al ³	—	—
خ	kh	kh	kh	ع	‘	‘	‘	¹ – when not final ² – at in construct state ³ – (article) al - or l-			
د	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğh				
ڈ	—	—	—	ف	f	f	f				
ذ	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	k				
ر	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	k			

VOWELS

		Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	Ā	—
	و	ū	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī	ī
Doubled	ي	iiy (final form ī)	iy (final form ī)	iiy (final form ī)
	و	uww (final form ū)	uv	uvv
	و	uvv (for Persian)	—	—
Diphthongs	و	au or aw	au	ev
	ی	ai or ay	ay	ey
Short	ا	a	a	a or e
	ا	u	u	u or ū
	ا	i	i	o or ö
	ا	—	—	ī

URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g. چھ jh گھ gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.

AL-SHAJARAH

Vol. 26, No. 1, 2021

Contents

ARTICLES

- THE PERSONIFICATION OF HOSPITALITY (DIYĀFAH)
IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE
ON SOCIAL SOLIDARITY (TAKĀFUL IJTIMĀ'Ī) THROUGH
THE PROPHETIC TRADITION (SUNNAH) 1

*Ahmad Hassan Mohamed, Mohamed Aslam Akbar,
and Hassanuddeen Abd. Aziz*

- IBN AL-'ARABĪ'S CONCEPT OF DREAMS 27
Megawati Moris

- SYED AHMAD KHAN'S TWIN OBJECTIVES 49
OF EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN BRITISH INDIA:
MUSLIM ADVANCEMENT AND HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY
Md Yousuf Ali and Osman Bakar

- ISLAMOPHOBIA IN INDIA DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS: 71
A SURGE OF STIGMATIZATION, VILIFICATION AND MURDER
Thameem Ushama

REVIEW ESSAYS

- SYED MUHAMMAD NAQUIB AL-ATTAS AND THE DIALOGIC 99
OF OCCIDENTAL KNOWLEDGE: A PASSING GLANCE TO
THE STUDY OF SOCIETY IN THE MALAY ARCHIPELAGO
Ahmad Murad Merican

- ALBERT CAMUS, THE ABSURD AND MARTYRDOM 111
Arief S. Arman

- BOOK REVIEWS** 121

AL-SHAJARA

Vol. 26, No. 2, 2021

Contents

ARTICLES

- ORIENTAL MIMICRY: CONTESTING ISLAMOPHOBIA IN
AYAAN HIRSI ALI'S *INFIDEL* 141
Sadiya Abubakar Isa & Md Salleh Yaapar

- ADMIRAL ZHENGHE AND THE WEST: A COMPARATIVE
ANALYSIS IN CONFUCIAN AND CHRISTIAN
CIVILISATION POWERS 159
Peter Chang

- RESTORATION OF RIAU SULTANATE-OTTOMAN
RELATIONS (1857-1904): EXPLANATORY FACTORS 177
Alaeddin Tekin

- LITERARY AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN
NINETEENTH-CENTURY PENYENGAT
ISLAND, RIAU: THE WORKS OF RAJA ALI HAJI 197
Arba'iyah binti Mohd Noor

- THE POSSIBILITY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE
IN ISLAMIC THEOLOGY 219
Mustapha Tajdin

REVIEW ESSAYS

- TARIQ RAMADAN'S IDEA OF REFORM: REALIZING
INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE (IOK) AND
DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC ECONOMICS (IE) 241
Jasmin Omercic

- ALBERT CAMUS, THE ABSURD AND MARTYRDOM
BY ARIEF S. ARMAN: A REJOINDER 251
Malick Elias

- BOOK REVIEWS** 261

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