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AL-SHAJARAH

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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.

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ICRITC-24 REVIEW

*Khaliq Ahmad**

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Reviewer: Prof. Khaliq Ahmad, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC), IIUM

It is now almost inevitable that an agenda to identify the relevance of the thoughts of past scholars to the present-day circumstances facing the ummah is to be set that must look critically of the 'Methodology and Measures' for progress of the ummah in OIC and beyond. This is in its efforts to avoid any labelling of Islamophobic mindset to be in haled by the present-day media. Islamic studies, and civilisational discourse in our higher learning institutions especially for Muslims and others alike be planned, to give a chance to the idea of alliance of civilizations to prosper rather being dragged into otherwise an alien agenda of clash of civilizations, to be established. Thus, an International Conference on Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought and Civilization-*Enriching Islamic Discourse for Global Civilizational Relevance*, was organised to offer audience problems and solutions to create incredible ideas which may have positive impacts during the conference. International Conference on Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ICRITC24)-*Enriching Islamic Discourse for Global Civilizational Relevance*, therefore was a reality and was well organised. Papers in English, Bahasa Malayu and Arabic languages were presented and discussed. The themes covered during two days event mainly but not limited to were:

- Intellectual Renewal and Ethical Philosophy;
- Science, Technology, and Environment;
- Educational Reform and Islamic Thought;
- Radicalisation, Social Integration, and Gender Issues;
- Islamic Revivalism, Intellectual Renewal and Societal Change;
- Education, Knowledge Integration and Interdisciplinary Approaches;
- Islamic Thought and Society: Integration, Renewal, and Ethical Engagement;
- Intellectual Renewal, Ethical Philosophy and Regional Studies; and
- Islamic Arts, Cultural Diversity and Civilisational Dialogue.

This conference proceeding is therefore a compilation of such ideas and thoughts based on the papers presented during the International Conference on the Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ICRITC-24). The conference was organised by the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC-IIUM). The theme “Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought and Civilisation: *Enriching Islamic Discourse for Global Civilisational Relevance*” is not new but rather a continuous process. The event took place from April 23-24, 2024, in response to the challenges of this century that the Ummah is facing such challenges that are complex and involve values and morality, which have unfortunately taken a backseat.

There are high expectations from institutions of higher learning, such as ISTAC and similar institutions elsewhere, to evolve to serve the needs of the time and take the initiative in revivalism. There is a need for intellectual discourse to find resolutions and provide alternative solutions that are ever-present in the religion of peace (Islam) for mankind. Humanity stands at a crossroads, where "might is right" has often taken precedence over the rule of law. Malaysia has scripted the vision of Madani as the foundational vision and policy framework for building a socially cohesive, inclusive, and economically developed nation in post-normal times. These initiatives aim to fortify cross and inter-institutional cooperation to eliminate poverty, secure food security, and reduce inflation.

Additionally, there is a need for a humane approach to educational philosophy to raise awareness and learning about environmental issues, alternative sources of energy, advanced agricultural techniques, and modern scientific learning that promotes a holistic, balanced, humane, and compassionate approach to sustainable societal development for peaceful co-existence. All these efforts must be grounded in human civility with spirituality as a pre-condition for socio-economic-political and scientific rigor in our endeavours.

We prayed to Allah (swt) day and night that this conference, organised by ISTAC was in a timely manner, addresses the above challenges and rises to the occasion for the sake of revivalism and renewal of modern-day civilisational challenges. As the organising committee of ICRITC-24, ISTAC welcomed all distinguished delegates and speakers to ISTAC-IIUM for this event. This pioneering conference, entitled the “International Conference on Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ICRITC'24),” was held from the 23rd to 24th of April 2024 at ISTAC-splendid building to celebrate the 40th year of IIUM’s journey to academic excellence along with an exhibition of AlHamra, arranged by Embassy of Spain in Malaysia.

All prospective authors were cordially invited to submit original and unpublished works for presentation and eventual publications in this ‘Proceedings’ consists upon three languages (English, Bhasa Malayu and Arabic) were included in publication in the conference proceedings. All submissions underwent peer review before so an acceptance decision were to be made. The submitted papers addressed various issues related to the main theme, from civilisational and socio-cultural perspectives. Some submissions also explored issues related to the sub-themes mentioned above and displayed on the conference website. Unlisted but related sub-topics that were found interesting were also accepted by the organising committee.

Numerous ideas were shared by experienced academics and senior colleagues in their keynotes. The keynote speakers ranged from local luminaries such as YBhg. Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Osman Bakar, Chair Holder of the Al-Ghazali Chair of Epistemology and currently Rector of IIUM, who contributed extensively on the

Civilisational and Renewal Studies at ISTAC-IIUM, and Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Azizan Baharuddin, Director of the Centre for Civilisational Dialogue, Universiti Malaya, to international experts such as Prof. Dr. Jasser Auda, Distinguished Visiting Scholar at ISTAC-IIUM and President of Maqasid Institute Global Centre, and Prof. Dr. Hamidullah Marazi, Professor at the University of Kashmir and Visiting Research Fellow at ISTAC-IIUM. They covered a wide range of topics including Current Narratives for Islamic Studies Curriculum: The Case for Sustainability Leadership, Civilisational Renewal: The Essential Things to be Achieved, Integrating Sharia Law and Ethics into Modern Law: Enhancing Pluralism and Democracy, and The Renewal of Education and Islamic Traditions of Knowledge. Most of the deliberations were under these important themes covered during the two-day event; Philosophical Traditions and Modern Ethics in Islamic Thought and Civilisation; Islam, Science, and Sustainability; Ethics, Dialogue, and Sustainability in the Renewal of Islamic Thought; Integrating Tradition and Innovation: Pathways to Revitalising Islamic Education; Diverse Trajectories in Islamic Renewal: Law, Media, Art, and Regional Reflections; Foundations, Community Reform, and Women's Roles in the Dynamics of Islamic Thought and Societal Renewal; Pathways to Renewal in Education, Social Responsibility, and Spiritual Well-being; and Gender, Radicalism, and Social Change: Islamic Perspectives on Contemporary Challenges as these were basically themes proposed by the organiser of ICRITC-24. These themes culminated in the conference resolutions, recommendations, and solutions, and we hoped everyone (delegates from local, regional and international) enjoyed the ideas presented during ICRITC-24 and find the papers enriching.

All the papers presented by local and international delegates under the above eight categories were reviewed by experts. The presenters incorporated the feedback offered during discussions, which were further refined by the authors and have now become part of SCOPUS, WoS and ERA journals. We hope these contributions had enriched the literature on the renewal and reform of Islamic thought and civilisation. The editors of this proceedings and on behalf of the organising committee from ISTAC, declared to be

thankful for any feedback, should you have any, to help us in organising future events in Malaysia or elsewhere. They humbly said thank you for participation and keen interest in the events organised by ISTAC, for which the committee was ever grateful to all the attendees.

The statement by the YB Senator Dr. Zulkifli Bin Hasan, Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs Malaysia as below:

“International Conference on Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ICRITC’24) is timely. As we embark on this significant gathering, we are driven by a shared commitment to advancing the discourse on Islamic thought and civilisation in the contemporary world.”

He further mentioned as follows;

“ICRITC’24 comes at a pivotal moment in history, where the Muslim Ummah is confronted with multifaceted challenges spanning global politics, environmental sustainability, economic governance, and societal development. Our collective objective in this conference is to delve into these pressing issues and to seek solutions rooted in the rich tradition of Islamic civilisational perspectives”

The statement by the Datuk Abdelaziz Berghout, Dean, ISTAC, IIUM explained the event as follows;

“The conference seeks to advance the principles of sustainability, care, compassion, respect, innovation, prosperity, and trust, as outlined in the Madani Civilisational framework. It emphasises the importance of engaging with other civilisations, cultures, and individuals, from an inclusive civilisational Islamic perspective.”

He further explained the event and said;

“This conference extended invitations to renowned scholars and researchers to engage in discussions

regarding the pressing challenges confronting the Islamic world and the global community, with a specific emphasis on exploring Islam and its solutions from a civilisational standpoint. The conference will emphasise the global perspective of Islam, the ethical principles of Islamic culture, and the all-encompassing character of Islamic thought. ISTAC suggested the conference as a first step towards participating in more extensive intellectual pursuits and conventions with the goal of rejuvenating and changing Islamic thought and civilisation to have active roles in the present and future.”

In the conclusion I would like to emphasize the need of the time for renewal and reform of an Islamic Thought as a way forward. Civilizations do follow the life cycle as we are born, grow, mature, contribute further development, and finally decline stage comes. Civilizations also have initially such stages to follow such as ‘*Spirituality, Rationalisation, Decline, and Pre-and Post-decline*’ stages. Islamic civilization had a history of the above process and now we have to arrest such a decline by provoking thoughts and necessary reforms before it is too late. We are not pessimistic rather full of optimism that revival and renaissance is forthcoming. The papers were invited and intellectual inputs were sought after which these had to be compiled in this proceeding of ICRITC-24 to carry on the legacy and continuity of the intellectual debates.

Towards the end of the conference and concluding session, the following resolutions were unanimously passed, as mentioned below:

- A. To explore emergence of thought for ‘Revivalism and Renaissance’ of Muslim societies as propounded by our contemporary thinkers, we resolve to continue organising future conferences on the themes relevant to the idea of ‘Renewal and Reform of the Islamic Thought and Civilization’
- B. Addressing the challenges of disrupted complexity, contradictions and chaos faced at personal and societal levels by monitoring and enabling institutions in addressing these challenges facing the whole of *Ummah*, we therefore resolve with the inputs from the Muslim intellectuals and thought

- leaders for brighter future of Muslims’ educational philosophy/thoughts to raise awareness by teaching and learning about environmental issues, alternative sources of energy, advanced agricultural techniques for food security and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) that promotes holistic, balanced, humane and compassionate approach to sustainable societal development.
- C. Fostering collaboration among institutions to take turn, we hereby resolve to organize seminars, conferences, intellectual discourse, collaborative research, exchange of scholars and students to pursue higher education through research leading to the training and award of graduate and doctorate degrees in area of ‘inter-civilizational research’ in Muslim countries for the development of new knowledge by promotion of interdisciplinary research, from various departments to be encouraged.
 - D. Considering our conversations on *Islah* and *Tajdid*, we recommend and resolve a more thorough engagement with the topics of renewal and reform. Building on the strength of ISTAC (IIUM)’s library where we have extensive collection of Fazlur Rahman’s works, we suggest funding for students to engage with this collection and we try to facilitate the process in terms of funding for these students, and to organize more academic seminars on *Islah* and *Tajdid* in general and Fazlur Rahman in particular, and finally;
 - E. Create a start-ups fund and micro-funding for specific practical and theoretical research of Islamic and Muslim scholars’ great ideas. This can begin to sponsor/reward ISTAC postgraduate students who successfully published in notable journals, for example RM 500/- per publication. The pool of publications can then be marketed to attract potential donor who look towards *sadaqah/waqaf*/tax relief even zakat to support the cause of the research.

This “Proceedings of the International Conference on the Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ICRITC’24)” is interesting reading for graduate students of civilizational

studies, working in field and social workers and civilian NGOs, Executives, intellectuals, and government and policy makers. The main audience for the book is university students taken civilizational studies and Islamic studies courses specialising revivalism courses. However, the editors have compiled this collection of papers in way which, we hope, would also benefit senior academics and practitioners from the wide range of industries due to practical example of former reformers and revivalist biographies added in the three different languages.

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