

# EDITORIAL

In this Vol. 5 No. 4, October 2014 issue of Islam and Civilisational Renewal, the flagship journal of the Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies, we are pleased to present six papers, three Viewpoints, three Reports and a Book review.

The selection begins with my “Separation of Powers: An Islamic Perspective,” where I explore what role – if any – the doctrine of the separation of powers can play and has played in an Islamic system of governance. A look at historical experience confirms that a functional line of division of powers, resembling the modern doctrine of separation of powers, was practiced to a significant degree. While political leaders exercised executive power, judges enjoyed considerable independence in their judicial functions. Scholars, for their part, were entrusted with deriving the rulings of the Shariah from its recognised sources, in particular the Qur’an and hadith.

In his article entitled “Facilitating Affordable Housing in the UK Market through Socially-Oriented Islamic Financial Institutions,” Yusuf Jha who is a Shariah advisor to Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, addresses the issue of the global shortage of affordable housing. He suggests that Islamic financial institutions (IFIs) are well placed to provide financial support to community-based initiatives through the use of cash-based endowments or *awqaf*, and in this way fill a significant private “funding gap.” In his article the “Economic Benefits of Risk Sharing,” Abdul Karim Abdullah highlights various ways in which the implementation of risk sharing on a system-wide basis would contribute to the realisation of the leading objectives of macroeconomic stabilisation policies.

We have an interesting article “Whether to Say *Salām*,” by Kazunori Hamamoto of Doshisha University, Kyoto, which delves into the question whether Muslims are required to greet non-Muslims with a salam. He marshals evidence from the Qur’an and hadith and provides an overview of the perspectives advanced by the leading schools of jurisprudence on this issue. He finds that, notwithstanding some flexibility in the scriptural sources, compared to the modern perspective on this issue, the “traditional” view appears to be quite restrictive, as most medieval scholars did not approve of saying salam to non-Muslims.

In “A Cultural Analysis of Ottoman Algeria (1516–1830): The North–South Mediterranean Progress Gap,” Tarek Ladjal and Benaouda Bensaid focus on the cultural life in Ottoman Algeria. They explore in particular how Sufism helped to respond to the ideas of the Enlightenment and the French revolution and thereby assist in protecting the Muslim identity of the Algerian people during the colonial era.

Patrick Laude of Georgetown University contributed an article entitled “On the Epistemological Scope and Some Contemporary Implications of the Qur’anic Notion of *Āyāt*,” where he argues that literalist commentaries on the Qur’an,

which portray the Qur'anic ayat as manifestations of divine presence, are not entirely justified. By over-emphasising divine transcendence, they tend to gloss over the significance of the Qur'anic ayat as evidence of divine immanence.

In our viewpoints section, we present three viewpoints: "Caliph and the 'Islamic State' – Lessons of History," by Karim Douglas Crow; "The Good-Wholesome Life as an Islamic Lifestyle Standard," by Mohammed Farid Ali; and "Boko Haram Disgrace: Urgency for Renewal and Reform in Northern Nigeria Supported by the Muslim Leadership," by Daud Abdul-Fattah Batchelor – all on topical issues of considerable interest.

Our reports section covers three events. The first highlights the "International Conference on Developing Synergies between Islam and Science & Technology for Mankind's Benefit," held at IAIS Malaysia, on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2014. The second describes the "International Summer School on Islam and Science held in Paris, France on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2014. The third report highlights the "Shariah Governance Framework in Islamic Finance Forum," held 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in Kuala Lumpur. We conclude with a Book review by Asif Mohiuddin of "The Political Psychology of Globalisation: Muslims in the West," written by Catarina Kinnvall and Paul Nesbitt-Larking.

Interested readers are invited to contribute to our Journal either by submitting full papers, Viewpoints or Book reviews. Papers should address current topical issues facing both Muslim and non-Muslim communities, and recommend viable policy responses to them. Contributions should have a significant Islamic input and preferably not exceed 8000 words. Viewpoints and Book reviews should be approximately 1500 and 1000 words in length, respectively.

It remains for me to thank warmly all our contributors and my colleagues at the Editorial Committee and the Publication Unit. I look forward to their continued contributions and support.

Mohammad Hashim Kamali  
*Editor-in-Chief*