

EDITORIAL

The first paper in our present issue is by Abdullah H. M. al Khalifah and examines how religiosity in an Islamic context serves as a protective mechanism against criminal temptation. This is done, in short, by placing the concept of law in the realm of religion, which means that criminal activity is seen as a violation of God's law before it is seen as a violation of a person's rights. Such a perspective also reinforces the awareness of the certainty and severity of punishment in the afterlife. The author argues that Islam provides a unique social control perspective, one that has accounted for the main parameters that underlie the mechanisms of social control: religion, morality, and law. He first reviews the theories and literature concerning the religion-crime relationship and then proceeds to discuss the meaning of religiosity in Islam and how it has been transformed into a valuable force for crime control. He concludes his analysis with a discussion of the elements of Islamic ideology that constrain criminal behavior.

Muhammad al-Ghazali calls for a study of Shāh Walī Allāh's thought in greater depth, for the exceptionally futuristic thrust of his ideas are extremely relevant and promising for contemporary and future Islamic thought. He chooses to study Shāh Walī Allāh's synthesis of reason, revelation, and empiricism, which he claims has been unrecognized by many earlier and contemporary scholars. Al-Ghazali shows how Shāh Walī Allāh builds evidence from an inductive survey of social phenomena to substantiate the contentions of revelation while remaining within the doctrinal framework of revealed guidance and thus constructs a paradigm of universal social culture. Also covered is Shāh Walī Allāh's analysis of what separates human beings from animals and how the former, due to their inherent and God-given instincts, develop civilization.

Muhammad Hashim Kamali discusses the possibility of price control (*tas'ir*) in Islam law. He shows that Islam did not promulgate any law that limits profits and fixes prices. He also examines several provisions concerning price control and highlights some of the conflicting interests of freedom vs. authority that are reflected in relevant Shari'ah provisions. The underlying issue of his research is the extent to which price controls may or may not impinge on the basic freedom of trade and of the individual to sell items at the regular market price as opposed to one fixed

by the ruling authorities. In his discussion, he demonstrates that the Shari'ah's overriding intention is to preserve the freedom of trade, which, according to him, sometimes results in the implementation of a policy of price control.

Florence Eid was commissioned by the Ford Foundation to write a report on the status of Islamic studies in North America. The report is of scholarly value and will be of great benefit to our readers. We are glad that we had the opportunity of making this academic study available through *AJISS*.

We have fairly extensive reflections from Tāhā al 'Alwānī and Ismail Serageldin. Al 'Alwānī reflects on Muslim identity and the concept of nationality, whereas Serageldin picks up where the former had left off in earlier issues. He recognizes the need to understand the past and to decode its language through contemporary eyes so that what is relevant for contemporary Muslims can be sifted from what is timebound and, by extension, temporary and meant for a specific society.

In our "research notes" section, we feature a lecture on the challenges faced by Syria during its attempt to Arabize modern knowledge and education. We present this to focus our readers' attention on the need to undertake a similar effort in other Muslim lands. Islamization, after all, involves a certain degree of Arabization in the linguistic domain. We hope that this lecture will encourage our scholars to pursue this topic.

Out of three books reviewed in this issue, two come from Japan. Our first review is of a book, printed in the United States, that deals with a recently published bibliographic collection on publications dealing with the Islamic resurgence. Although it has some shortcomings, we feel that it will be a valuable research tool for both students and scholars. The other two books come from Japan. It is heartening to welcome objective study of Islam coming from the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, International University of Japan. Their publications display a genuine attempt to understand and interpret Islam on its own.

We have reports from three conferences. Even though the National Seminar on Developmental Journalism was not organized by an Islamic agency to discuss the topic from an Islamic perspective, the majority of speakers, organizers, and presenters were Muslims. This report will be quite relevant to our readers interested in developmental journalism.

Mohammed Karabal's comments on the clash of civilizations or the clash of religions is quite a timely response to Huntington's recent article on "The Clash of Civilizations." As usual, we have abstracts of recent dissertations on Islam and Muslims done in western universities.

There is some reorganization taking place at the two sponsoring institutions of *AJISS*: the International Institute of Islamic Thought and the Association of Muslim Social Scientists. We hope that this will not delay the next issue of the journal.