

EDITORIAL

The present issue of the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* represents a ground-breaking effort of sorts in that it is the first to be organized around a single theme. Thus, all papers presented here revolve around the issue of modernity and the response of Muslims to its challenges. Although this clearly is not a novel subject for the pages of the journal, this thematic issue brings to its readership a number of informed perspectives that contribute significantly to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon as it relates to the contemporary Islamic experience.

In "The Dance of the Pen, the Play of the Sign: A Study in the Relationship between Modernity, Immanence, and Deconstruction," Abdel Wahab Elmessiri delves into the Western philosophical tradition and its discourse regarding modernity, recalling some of his earlier contributions in the pages of this journal. Elmessiri takes a hard look at the underlying assumptions of modernity, including its view of humanity, and explains how the nature-matter paradigm has insinuated itself as the underlying paradigm of Western modernity. Of particular interest to readers will be his exploration of the idea of *comprehensive secularism* as opposed to *partial secularism* and his study of the metaphysics of immanence.

The second study, M. Mumtaz Ali's "The Concept of Modernization: An Analysis of Contemporary Islamic Thought," may be viewed as an attempt to construct a working definition of Islamic modernization through a critical analysis of the Western concept's epistemological foundations. The author discusses the responses of such contemporary thinkers as Iqbal, Qutb, Mawdudi, al-Fārūqī, al-Attas, al-'Alwānī, and AbūSulaymān on the subject of modernization and concludes by suggesting a four-phase project for the modernization of Islamic thought.

While the next contribution to the journal's theme takes the Indian subcontinent as its venue, its discussion of modernization, like the work of the poet Iqbal himself, is directed toward the entire ummah. Through Athar Farqui's translation, readers of English may now have a look at the work of Justice Javaid Iqbal. In his "Modern Indian Muslims and Iqbal," Iqbal's son, who is a scholar in his own right, analyzes the substance and significance of his father's thought as expressed in the controversial Madras lectures and *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.

On perhaps a deeper microlevel than that of the preceding papers, Omar H. Khaleefa challenges, in his "The Imperialism of Euro-American Psychology in non-Western Cultures: An Attempt toward an Ummatic Psychology," the notion that psychology, defined as the scientific study of human behavior, is based on theories and methods that are *universal* or *objective* and therefore *valid* for all peoples and under all circumstances. Beginning with a study of the effects of Western education on non-Western cultures (and concluding that these have been disruptive rather than integrative), the author explores how various sciences, not least of all psychology, were considered a highly relevant controlling tool of a supposedly more rational colonial politics. He then discusses how a great deal of so-called psychological data is only relatively—not universally—true and valid only within certain cultural contexts. The author concludes his research with an examination of a select number of blind spots in Euro-American psychology.

In this issue's Reflections section, we present the thoughts of Muhammad Abdou Yamani, a former minister in the Saudi Arabian government, on selected aspects of the relationship between the Muslim and the Western worlds. These are based on a paper he presented at a conference on the subject held in London not too long ago.

The issue also includes an analytical report by Sophie Gilliat on "Muslim Youth Organizations in Britain: A Descriptive Analysis." Gilliat's article is an engaging study of the activities, rationale, and appeal of three major Muslim youth groups functioning in the United Kingdom today (where 60 percent of Muslims are under the age of 25, as opposed to 32 percent among the majority community). Her paper examines the nature of these groups and the needs they appear to be fulfilling, as well as the issues of identity, ideology, generational conflict, and the significance of such groups in the wider Islamic community in the United Kingdom.