

EDITORIAL

It is with a great sense of pride that we announce the quarterly publication of the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* with this issue. We started in 1984 with two issues a year, and in 1990 added a third. We are now glad to provide issues of *AJISS* corresponding to the four seasons of the year. We have been encouraged to increase our journal's frequency due to the overwhelming response and appreciation of its uniqueness on the part of individual scholars, institutions, contributors, and subscribers. May Allah bless our well-wishers and help us to further enhance the scholarly role of *AJISS*.

In this issue, Amriah Buang introduces a hitherto neglected subject to the Islamization of knowledge: human geography. Asserting that this field has reached an epistemological impasse, she describes the nature of the contending philosophies currently characterizing human geography and thereby highlights those difficult-to-reconcile epistemological points of contention. Buang briefly recounts the nature of structuration theory, which is proposed by some geographers as a solution to the present impasse, and then subjects it to a preliminary Islamic evaluation.

In an earlier issue (*AJISS* 8:2, September 1991), Fazal Khan proposed a theoretical perspective on the process of the Islamization of the entertainment video medium with special reference to Pakistan. In this issue, he explores some empirical basics of the Islamization of the enculturation model based on his study of youth viewers of Pakistani television.

Theodore Wright, Jr., critiques the concepts and value assumptions of existing literature in the field of comparative politics in order to bring out the built-in Eurocentric bias which it has acquired through its Judeo-Christian and secular-humanist orientation. He suggests a research agenda for Muslim and sympathetic non-Muslim specialists with the intent of recasting the perception of reality in terms which are objective and thus less biased than those currently found in the contemporary modern discourse of comparative and developmental politics. Wright's concerns are well appreciated and his agenda should be taken seriously by Muslim researchers, but dependence on empirical data alone is not going to solve the problem. Muslim social scientists must participate in advancing Islamic positions on current issues based on the Qur'an, the hadith literature, and the insights gained from their expertise. For example, while an unbiased study of the preponderance of

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military rule in Muslim countries would be welcome, it should not be presented as a characteristic of Islam. Many present-day problems and institutions in the Muslim world do not have their origin in Islamic teachings, although they may have historically become associated with Muslim society.

Iftikhar Malik, a historian, deals with identity formation in the Muslim world. He discusses how Islam is the basis of Muslim identity and how the present debate is mainly one of seeking a synthesis within a number of young political (national and ethnic) and old sociocultural identities. Focusing his attention on ethnonational movements in South and Central Asia, he shows how they interact with Islam's supraethnonational role. Malik is concerned about the West's perception of these movements and how it misconstrues them. It is his contention that mutual religious and ethnic sensibilities demand a better appreciation and a more humane understanding of the developments in the Muslim regions for several reasons: we are living in an interdependent world, Muslim regions are very close to the West, and Islam is emerging as the second major religion in a multiethnic North America and Europe.

Mohamed H. El-Badawi and Sultan M. Al-Sultan have investigated the feasibility of using the net working capital approach and the owner's net equity approach to determine the zakatable amount of trade assets. In addition to showing the relationship between the two approaches, they introduce the principles and conditions of zakah accounting for business and then discuss the net working capital approach. This is followed by an analysis of how to determine the growing capital as the basis for ascertaining the zakatable amount through an examination of the elements of working capital and the financial transactions during the year. An analysis of the owner's equity approach is then used to determine the zakatable amount, and both approaches are applied to a numerical example in order to contrast the growing capital with the zakatable amount.

Mona Abul-Fadl reflects on American foreign policy in the Middle East. She shows how misplaced apprehensions about Islam as a disruptive force in the modern world order lay at the basis of American policy. It is her contention that these apprehensions serve to justify a politics of unmitigated greed and moral duplicity which continue to hinder the possibilities of justice for the majority of the region's people. Abul-Fadl limits her discussion to retracing the impediments and pointing to the possibilities for aligning American foreign policy in the Middle East more closely with the requirements of an ethical approach. This approach, in her opinion, would be more in tune with the ground realities and the aspirations that inspire the public conscience both in America as well as in the Middle East.

Mumtaz Ahmad has written a review article on three recent publications related to the resurgence of Muslim ethnic minorities: *Liberalism and the Quest for Islamic Identity in the Philippines*; *Ethnicity, Pluralism and the*

State in the Middle East; and *Ethno-National Movements of Pakistan*. The article provides a rich critique of the explanations given for communal and ethnonational resurgence and separatism.

We have a book review of *Islamic Spain* by M'hammad Benaboud. This fits in well with the first 1992 issue of *AJISS*, the year in which to remind our readers of the fall of Grenada and the end of the Islamic presence of Spain exactly five hundred years ago. We hope to publish some more researches on this important topic during this year. 'AbdulḤamīd AbūSulaymān's book *The Islamic Theory of International Relations*, which deals with how the Islamic world relates to the rest of the international community, has been reviewed by Glenn E. Perry.

The conferences covered in this issue are the 20th Annual Conference of the AMSS, which was held in Detroit, MI, during October 1991, and the joint AMSS-Hamdard University conference held in Karachi, Pakistan, during January 1992. We have also included the inaugural address of Ṭāhā J. al 'Alwānī given at the Pakistan conference. The conference papers will be published by the Hamdard Foundation of Pakistan.

Sayyid M. Syeed.