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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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Editorial Notes

*Khaliq Ahmad*¹

This special issue of *Al-Shajarah* consists of papers presented at the international conference on **Renewal and Reform of Islamic Thought & Civilisation** (ICRITC'24). The main objective of the conference was to engage with diverse ideas to *enrich Islamic discourse for global civilisational relevance*. The conference was organised by the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC-IIUM), with papers presented by both international and local experts. This issue includes selected titles extensively revised by those respective authors, which is the basis for publication.

The first article, '*Prospects of Reviving Islamic Civilisation Through Public Spaces: Muslim Civility at the 2022 FIFA World Cup*' explains how Qatar demonstrated Muslim civility through fostering intercultural encounters in well-designed public spaces, contributing to the broader process of Islamic revivalism. Qatar's emphasis on hospitality, inclusivity, and respect for guests highlighted key Islamic values such as compassion and mercy, adapted to a modern sports setting. The article paper explores how public spaces promote Muslim civility and contribute to the revival of Islamic civilisation, with a focus on the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. The central question is, if, and how do public spaces, structured around Muslim civility, support the revival (*tajdīd*) of Islamic thought? Through the World Cup, Qatar created environments where diverse individuals engaged and shared experiences, fostering understanding across cultural, ethnic, class, and religious lines. These spaces go beyond mere consumption, serving as platforms for dialogue, interaction, and even civilisational exchange. Islamic public ethics – hospitality, compassion, and justice – were showcased in these cosmopolitan settings, demonstrating how such open, inclusive spaces are essential for Islamic revival. They allow Muslims to reinterpret traditional principles in addressing

¹ Khaliq Ahmad, Professor at ISTAC, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Guest Editor, Special Issue *Al-Shajarah*

contemporary issues like Islamophobia and secularism. By encouraging inter-civilisational encounters, these spaces hold the potential to showcase and make meaningful Islamic ethical principles in contemporary world by highlighting the significance of public spaces in this *long durée* revival process.

‘Modern Reforms in Islamic Thought with Reference to Science: A Study in the Context of the Indian Subcontinent’ is an interesting read that gives due importance to education within the traditional Islamic framework. This paper attempts deal with challenges within Muslim societies, specifically that of the Indian sub-continent where reform was much needed. It does not help at all that orientalist scholarship in Western academic literature has portrayed Islam as ignorant, backward, and anti-science. However, there has been a paradigm shift in this monolithic approach to the academic study of Islam due to the diligent initiatives of social reformers. The modern interpretation of Islam supports science and shows the face of Islam as being in harmony with Western practices and procedures. In the paper, the new representation of Islam and its relationship with other structures (social and political) is further categorised into ‘friends and foes’. The discussion by the authors indicates that both Islamist (also understood as ‘traditionalist’) and modernist perspectives address the same issue – the incompatibility between Islam and modern science – but propose opposing solutions. From the Islamist point of view, there is a complete rejection of modern science, with the need for its replacement by what is conceived as Islamic science. On the other hand, the modernists try to harmonise Islam and modern science by reinterpreting Islamic texts, believing that any contradiction comes from misinterpretation. Instead of accepting or rejecting either viewpoint, the paper concludes by proposing a selective approach that critically assesses the issue, endorsing the positive aspects of both while avoiding their negative sides.

The next paper compares ethical philosophies. The authors’ focus of discussion is comparative in nature which is captured in the title; *‘Islamic and Christian Work Ethics: An Analysis.’* Ethics and value systems in general have been a point to ponder for scholars across the centuries. However, most of this pondering has been done

within the context of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and its attendant contribution to Western societies. Due to being either misunderstood or not understood at all, the Islamic view of work ethics needs to be given consideration. Therefore, this article explores the notion of Islamic work ethics, and is compared to Christian work ethics. Findings revealed that contemporary notions of work ethics are specifically related to work only, and is not observed as related to other domains of life. However, Islamic work ethics go beyond this apparent divide, as work is also seen as *ibadah* or worship. The authors concluded that actions accepted as norms, and not contrary to Islamic rules, can be called 'ethics'. Islamic work ethics encompass values like honesty, justice, and responsibility, and ought to be modelled by leaders and managers in the workplace for workers.

The fourth article entitled, '*The Concept of Al-Istikhlaf and its Significance in the Islamic Worldview: Reclaiming Man as Khalifah on Earth*' examines the importance of the notion of *al-Istikhlaf* and its place in the Islamic worldview. One fundamental principle in Islamic philosophy of life is the role and purpose of man as the *khalifah* (vicegerent of God) on earth. In the Islamic worldview, *al-Istikhlaf* or vicegerency refers to the honorable responsibility and purpose that mankind willingly undertook. Being the *khalifah* on earth entails assuming responsibility for governing and overseeing the life of man and other creations of God. As vicegerent or *khalifah*, improving civilisation, and development on earth in accordance with God's guidance and commands, remain the direct responsibility of the man who will be answerable to Him in the life hereafter.

This paper, therefore, seeks to elucidate the need to regain the notion of *al-istikhlaf* and employing it as a conceptual framework for the restoration and reconstruction of our vicegerent roles and responsibilities on earth. The paper uses textual analysis to examine various viewpoints and theories related to constructing the *al-Istikhlaf* narrative and re-introduction into daily life. The authors concluded that *al-Istikhlaf*, is an essential concept in Islam, and has the potential to be expanded into an all-encompassing framework for analysing the challenges and problems encountered by a man on earth. It seeks to revisit the all-encompassing nature and attributes of man as *khalifah* and not as a mere human animal. Hence the

article proposes the ongoing research on the *al-Istikhlaf* framework and its promotion among scholars and researchers. The framework of *al-Istikhlaf* helps us understand and articulate issues facing contemporary man in a more integrated and ethically driven way.

The following article entitled, '*Reimagining Islamic Discourse: Towards a Global Ethical Framework for Contemporary Leadership*' lays the importance of Islamic discourse in relation to many civilisations as an agenda for discussion and analysis. This study explores the necessity of enhancing Islamic dialogue to promote stronger connections and involvement with worldwide cultures. This research explores how ethical leadership in Islamic thinking might help create a more inclusive, compassionate, and morally grounded global society. There is also an analysis of the fundamental principles of ethical leadership in Islam by combining classical Islamic sources, modern scholarship, and real-world case studies. It stresses the significance of adapting Islamic ideas to modern contexts while maintaining their ethical core and universal nature. It promotes communication, collaboration, and mutual understanding among civilisations, while recognising the richness and diversity of human experiences and viewpoints. Authors urge academics, Muslim leaders, and communities to adopt ethical leadership as a fundamental aspect of Islamic discussions that could drive beneficial change. Scholars must engage in comprehensive study and facilitate the comprehension of ethical leadership paradigms in Islamic thinking, and its applicability to modern situations. This will help advance the collective goal of creating a fair, peaceful, and prosperous world, free from violence and hatred among the followers of the faiths. Leaders must exemplify honesty, justice, and compassion through their behaviours and decisions. Communities are essential for promoting ethical leadership and creating circumstances that support individuals in flourishing and making positive contributions to society.

'*The Artistic Composition of an Arabic Calligraphy in the Kiswah of the Holy Kaaba: A Descriptive and Analytical Study*' is an article that emphasises the value of artistic composition and Islamic calligraphy. The Kiswah of the *Kaaba* is one of the holiest and most precious fabrics on earth, as it covers the Sacred House of Allah

SWT, and carries sublime meaning. According to authors, it embodies Qur'anic verses, expressions of monotheism, and some of the most beautiful names of Almighty God, which adds to the honourable covering as it is. Throughout this article, what was presented is the noble splendour of Arabic calligraph. The study concluded that the design of Arabic calligraphy and linear formations embodied in the covering of the Holy Kaaba has creative and aesthetic aspects, and an element of spirituality that cannot be overlooked.

The article on Islamisation and integration touches upon the issue pertinent to Islamic universities today. The title of the paper, '*Reconciliation and Islamisation - A Roadmap for An Islamic Intellectual Revival*' discusses the effort to bring about a global Islamic Revivalism that has been a much sought after project for Muslim intellectuals worldwide. This paper studies the core principles that were instrumental in building the Islamic Intellectual Revolution (8th-18th Century CE). These core principles identified include the centrality of the Qur'ān in all intellectual discourse, a broad epistemological landscape, and the unity of the sacred and secular sciences. This paper explores how returning to the same, proven methodology can lead to an Islamic intellectual revival. The Qur'ān identifies eight valid epistemic sources apart from itself while declaring itself as the Furqan (Criterion) to judge their validity. These include the *Sunnah*, human intellect and analogy ('*Aql and Qiyas*'), *Ijma*' (consensus), *Basira* (intuition), the physical universe, history and certain knowledge from other civilisations.

The paper entitled, '*Techno-Jahiliyyah: Examining Transhumanism Through the Islamic Lens*' explores the philosophical underpinnings of transhumanism through the lens of the Islamic concept of *Jahiliyyah*. By examining the metanarratives of modernity that shape the transhumanist worldview, the author argues that transhumanism – far from being a purely rational and scientific movement – represents a form of '*techno-jahiliyyah*' that embodies the core tendencies of modernity. It is argued that Islamic thought has long critiqued such a situation. By applying the Qutbian framework of *Jahiliyyah*, the paper has revealed how transhumanism functions as a secular based approach in response to the crisis of

nihilism in the modern world. Nevertheless, an Islamic critique of transhumanism offered in this paper provides valuable insights for both Islamic scholarship and the broader discourse on human enhancement technologies. For Islamic thought, it demonstrates the continued relevance and applicability of concepts like *Jahiliyyah* to contemporary philosophical and technological movements. For the broader discourse on transhumanism, this Islamic perspective introduces a novel critique that goes beyond typical secular objections, highlighting the spiritual and existential dimensions often overlooked in debates focused solely on ethics or practicality.

After the so-called revolution during the seventies, the paper ‘70 Iranian Cinema and Islamic Revivalism (1970-1990): the *Entwined Tapestry*’ explores the connection between Iranian cinema and the Islamic Revival movement. The article investigates how the 1979 Iranian Revolution transformed the country’s cinematic landscape, shifting its focus from Western-influenced melodramas to Islam-inspired narratives. It examines how Iranian filmmakers skilfully utilised cinematic techniques to communicate religious values, concepts and ethos that promote contemplation. This paper showcases the complex relationship between religion, culture, and modernity in Iranian films, illustrating their distinct cultural value biased to their religious thoughts and deeper regional significance. It discusses the works of acclaimed filmmakers such as Abbas Kiarostami, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Dariush Mehrjui, and Bahram Beizai, whose works represent an equilibrium between innovation and religious devotion. By examining cinematic techniques such as symbolism, *mise-en-scène* and reflective editing, the study offers insights into how these directors contributed to the evolution of Iranian cinema during a period of significant cultural and ideological change. The study underscores the role of cinema in reflecting and shaping Iran’s national identity and ideology, offering a nuanced perspective on the interplay between religion, politics, and artistic expression. These dynamics, according to authors of the article, sheds light on the regional as well as global resonance of Iranian cinema and its capacity to transcend national boundaries, reflecting broader themes of revivalism and cultural evolution.

Next, the study entitled ‘*Ibn Sina’s Contributions to*

Modernity: Integrating Medieval Philosophy, Neurophilosophy and Educational Reform in Islamic Thought and Civilisation explores the enduring legacy of Ibn Sīnā, a seminal figure in Islamic medieval philosophy, focusing on his theory of the soul and its implications for modern neurophilosophy, educational reform, and the renewal of Islamic thought and civilisation. By bridging the intellectual heritage of Ibn Sīnā with contemporary discussions in neurophilosophy, this paper highlights his contributions to understanding the nature of consciousness, perception, and the human mind. Furthermore, it examines how Ibn Sīnā's insights can inform modern educational practices, advocating for an integration of classical wisdom and scientific advancements within the curriculum of Islamic studies. This integration not only pays homage to the rich intellectual tradition of Islamic civilisation but also fosters a dialogue between the medieval and the modern, contributing to the ongoing process of renewal and reform in Islamic thought. By applying Ibn Sīnā's philosophical principles to contemporary challenges in education and society, Ibn Sīnā stands as a monumental figure in the annals of Islamic philosophy and medicine, is a conclusion drawn by the authors.

Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (Hamka) who is also known as *'Hamzah Fansuri of the modern era'* is an established name within the Nusantara (now framed as Southeast Asia) region due to his efforts in creating social change. The compelling article, *'Early Ideas on Reform and Renewal through Journalism in the Malay Archipelago: Hamka's Accounts in Ayahku (1950)'* dwells on Hamka's writings – especially his views on journalism and modernist reform in the Malay world. It significantly adds another angle to the understanding of Islamic reform and renewal and the role of media, particularly in Southeast Asia. The examination of Hamka's context and his father's influence adds depth to the paper, and situates this work within a significant historical framework. The literature review is extensive enough, providing an in-depth examination of the existing literature on Hamka, Islamic reform, and the role of the press in the Malay context. This situates the article well within contemporary scholarly debates on this issue of reform and renewal. The author maintains a formal and scholarly tone throughout; the

language is precise with the arguments well-articulated. It presents a compelling exploration of Hamka's contributions to modernist thought and journalism in the Malay world.

'Inter-Civilizational Issues and the Factors Affecting Interfaith Relationships: A Study of Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions' discusses interesting issues related to the theme of civilisational encounters. This helps in matters for linking the past with the future. One's exposure to different civilisations will allow for him to have broader horizons, and to develop his personality further. Such a person who has had such exposure is Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, a scholar who is known for his contributions to inter and intra civilisational dialogue. This paper explores the factors influencing interfaith relationships with a specific focus on the contributions of the aforesaid thinker. In an era of globalisation, multicultural and multi-religious societies are increasingly common. Dr. Hamidullah, having spent a significant portion of his life interacting with followers of various religions, provides valuable insights into fostering inter-civilisational harmony. His scholarly work and personal interactions highlight how different faiths can coexist peacefully within the same society. This study investigates the factors that either promotes or hinder interfaith relationships and discusses the societal consequences of interfaith harmony. The research is framed around Dr. Hamidullah's experiences and contributions, particularly during his time in France, where he engaged with people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. By examining his approach to interfaith dialogue and understanding, the paper aims to provide guidance on improving interfaith relations in contemporary society. This study employs a qualitative and narrative research methodology. It focuses on identifying and analysing the factors affecting interfaith harmony by interpreting the teachings and actions of Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah. The narrative approach is used to present real-life examples from his experiences, highlighting the challenges and opportunities in interfaith dialogues. The research is grounded in a detailed analysis of Dr. Hamidullah's scholarly contributions and personal interactions with people of different faiths, emphasising practical solutions to improve interfaith relationships in today's globalised world.

The paper entitled, '*Mastery-Humility Model: From Convergence to Integration*' deals with the perpetuation of dualism within the field of engineering, resulting in professional outputs not synced with personal life. The absence of a spiritual value system persists in the curriculum, which relies on pragmatism, positivism, constructivism, and relativism. This highlights the pressing need for the integration of spiritual values within such a field of study. This two-step process develops a convergent mastery-humility model using a sequential exploratory design approach. The construct validity, a key aspect of this research, achieved validating the model's reliability. Upon verifying the measurement model, SEM then confirmed the theoretical proposition that mastery and humility form the converging variable. The converging platform is at the state of Al-Adl, the correct position of knowledge is mastery where all things should be, and for man, the proper position is in the 'sujud' position, as 'Abd'. The Islamisation of Knowledge (IOK) takes place when any theoretical development, derivations of formulation, and application is based on the governing concept of Bil-Mizan (balance, equilibrium, justice) towards the state of Al-Adl and then Al-Khaliq. The next step involves this cognisance of meaning. The latter concerns the meaning of our existence with the humility of an Abd who must respect the truth. Hence, cognisance is required to seek the truth and differentiate between the Creator and the created. Thus, integration occurs at the same phase, though, in cognitive and affective domains. In conclusion, for this two-part process, the IOK is given a more defined form preceding the integration in the thought process, invigorating the spiritual dimension in the engineering curriculum for the sake of real education and knowledge development.

The final paper discusses about Fazlur Rahman, who is known as one of the Islamic reformist thinkers. He has strong opinion for an idea of *ijtihad* and has called for the gates of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) to be opened again. On the point of reform within Islam, the idea of renewal espoused by Rahman should be deliberated on, and weighed on its own merits.

Overall, the articles captured in this special issue of *Al-Shajarah* dig deeper into the need for civilisational renewal,

especially from the Islamic paradigm. Readers will find a diverse range of ideas pertinent to the growth of the *Ummah*. It is hoped that this special issue will be a catalyst for further insightful discussions, which could potentially lead to policy implementation in the near future.

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