Editorial

"*Ḥalāl*" and "*ṭayyib*" are Qurʾānic ethico-legal terms for quality assurance. *Ḥalāl* refers to what is lawful and permissible to consume, engage in or use in accordance with the Islamic law. When applied to minerals, plants or animals, the word refers to what is permissible to consume therein. *Ḥarām* is the opposite of *ḥalāl*, which refers to what is impermissible and unlawful for Muslims.

A key Qurʾānic axiological term, *ṭayyib* is often associated with *ḥalāl* to explicate *ḥalāl's* intrinsic quality. Thus, one Qurʾānic *āyah* simply defines *ḥalāl* as *ṭayyib*: "They will ask you (O Messenger) what is *ḥalāl* for them, Say, 'Lawful for you are *al-ṭayyibāt*'" (good and pure) (5:4). *Ṭayyib* signifies anything that is good and pure as opposed to *khabīth* that refers to anything that is bad or impure. When associated with *ḥalāl* food, *ṭayyib* would refer to food that is organically good, hygienically nutritious and environmentally friendly.

Ṭayyib is used in the Qurʾān generically, covering a wide array of good things. It is used to refer to chaste and pure men and women (24:26), good progeny (3:38), good land (7:58; 34:15), favourable wind (10:22), pure earning (2:267), good word (14:24; 22:24; 35:10), healthy tree (14:24), pure soil (4:43; 5:6), good greeting/salutation (24:61), good and pure foodstuff (2:168; 5:88; 16:114), good life (16:97), and good dwelling in Paradise (9:72; 61:12). *Ṭayyib* is so central to Islamic value system that it is considered a standard of what is acceptable in Islam. The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: "O people, Allah is good and He, therefore, accepts only that which is good. And Allah commanded the believers as He commanded the Messengers by saying: 'O Messengers, eat of the good things, and do good deeds; verily I am aware of what you do' (23:51)" (Muslim, 5:2214).

"*Ḥalālan ṭayyiban*" products and services are gaining global recognition as a new benchmark for safety and quality assurance. The annual value of the global *ḥalāl* food market was approximately

USD632 billion in 2009 (Adams, 2011) and USD661 billion in 2010 ("Global halal food market," 2011), with similar huge market value for *ḥalāl* pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and other products and services. Capitalizing on a growing *ḥalāl* industry, many emerging economies in the Muslim majority countries vie to lead the *ḥalāl* race as they introduce new products and services which comply with *ḥalāl* requirements. Malaysia, for example, aspires and invests heavily to be a premier hub for *ḥalāl* products and services, as outlined in its Third Industrial Master Plan (IMP3) (2010; HDC, 2013; "Halal Market" 2006). The Election Commission of Malaysia introduced "*ḥalāl* ink" in the recently concluded 13th election, in an attempt to give the voting instrument and indeed the whole election process an Islamic colouring. Based on a *fatwā* issued in 2012 by the Malaysian National Fatwa Council, the "indelible ink" is said to be pure and healthy, as it is made of herbal ingredients, and, if properly applied, it could absorb water, allowing the Muslims to perform their ablutions or prayers after casting their votes ("Malaysia GE13," 2013; Ahmad, 2012). Similarly, Iran has recently introduced "*ḥalāl* Internet" which, it is believed, could spread across the Muslim countries. The *ḥalāl* Internet is purportedly designed to "provide national cyber security and promote Islamic moral values" (Reardon, 2012; Ungerleider, 2013). For whatsoever reason, religious vocation, economic gain, political propaganda, and the like, *ḥalālan ṭayyiban* in all ramifications of life has increasingly attracted global interest.

This issue of *Intellectual Discourse* features five regular articles and one research note addressing *ḥalāl* and/or *ṭayyib* in one form or another, covering issues related to food and product, the Internet website, the elections, Sufism and the environment. The first article by Abdul Raufu Ambali and Ahmad Naqiyuddin Bakar examines the level of Muslims' awareness of *ḥalāl* food and products and the factors that contribute to their level of awareness. Exposure *to ḥalāl*, Islamic religious belief, health reason, as well as *ḥalāl* certification logo are hypothesised to be the factors leading to *halal* awareness. Through path analysis, the authors measure the level of *halal* awareness against their determinants. They call for the improvement of these factors in order to increase the Muslims' awareness of *ḥalāl*. They also stress the need to continue monitoring the processing stages after *ḥalāl* certification logo has been issued to a company.

In the second article, Mansur Aliyu, Murni Mahmud and Abu Osman Md Tap investigate Islamic features that attract Muslims to use Islamic websites. The Internet has become a mine of information and a viable platform where many Muslim individuals or organisations provide a variety of Islamic services, showcase their cultures and share their values with other world communities. Yet, just as there are genuine Islamic websites that promote Islamic values, there are pseudo-Islamic and even anti-Islamic websites. Aliyu et al. identify factors that distinguish the genuine from the fake Islamic websites and that often appeal to Muslim users. This depends on the extent to which the websites provide information related to Islamic belief, ethics, services, symbols, and values. They demonstrate that these Islam-related features significantly draw Muslim online users to visit Islamic websites for serveral Islamic activities.

The third and the fourth articles deal with elections in Malaysia and Iran respectively. M. Moniruzzaman studies the thirteenth Malaysian General Election held in May 2013. The author reviews the Malaysian political party system and the government, and then analyses the nomination and campaign, as well as the election results. With a record 84.5 per cent voter turnout, the ruling BN coalition returned to power but with less than its target of two-third majority and lesser than its 2008 parliamentary gains. This election, as the author observes, witnessed the contest between two equally strong coalitions. The Malays overwhelmingly voted for UMNO, a member of the ruling coalition, while the Chinese shifted to DAP within the opposition coalition. This has led the author to speculate that the Malaysian electoral politics might become more polarised along the ethnic lines. In the fourth article, Moghset Kamal analyses the ninth Iranian parliamentary elections held on March 2, 2012, following a disputed 2009 presidential election. He examines the Iranian electoral laws and procedures, the parties and candidates, the campaigns and voting as well as the election results. Despite all irregularities, the ninth *Majlis* election, according to the author, was a defeat of the Iranian conservative leadership as many of its high-profile figures lost seats to independent candidates.

In the fifth article, W. Mohd Azam Mohd Amin studies the reform of Sufism in the Malay world during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. This reform effort was initiated by Abd al-Ṣamad Tuan Tabal when he introduced Aḥmadiyyah Sufi order in Kelantan, Malaysia,

which later spread to other parts of the country. The reform process was continued by Tuan Tabal's son, Haji Wan Musa, and later by two of his grandsons, Nik Abdullah and Nik Muhammad Salleh. A Hybrid of Aḥmadiyyah order, Ibn ʿArabī's doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of existence,) and the teachings of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī, Tuan Tabal's adaptation tactically dropped the controversial doctrines of philosophical Sufism of Aḥmadiyyah and Ibn ʿArabī and, instead, employed terms and concepts meant for public consumption, acceptable to the mainstream Islamic Sufism and less objectionable to the Muslim jurists.

In the Research Note section, Rafiu Ibrahim Adebayo demonstrates how religion has been abused to the detriment of the natural environment. The author cites cases from Nigeria where religious activities have resulted in environmental pollution. According to him, excessive religious activities, conducted primarily for commercialisation rather than spiritualisation or in race for public space and conversion, particularly between Muslims and Christians, have adversely affected the environment.

Adebayo's study reminds us of the Qurʾānic concept of *wasaṭiyyah* (moderation), central to the Islamic worldview. Islam teaches moderation and forbids extremism in all its manifestations. The Qurʾān enjoins humans to enjoy God's provisions on earth but without *isrāf* (extravagance or wastefulness) (6:141; 7:31) or *fasād* (mischief) (2:205; 7:56), a wanton consumption attitude and behavioural inclination that could lead to societal erosion, environmental pollution or ecological degradation.

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