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Editorial

We feel immense pleasure in bringing out the fifth issue of *Insight Islamicus*. Since the publication of its first issue in 2001, both our readership and the contributors to it have been considerably increasing. We receive perceptive responses and contributions from various academic quarters. Ours is, however, an effort to make the journal a forum of scholarly studies, new researches, intellectual discourses and academic debates in order to advance and disseminate knowledge for the good of mankind.

This issue begins with Prof. G.R. Malik's article on the relevance of Islamic values to the present age. It provides an original and comprehensive discourse on Islamic values which direct life in its 'spirituo-moral' and 'physico-technical' aspects. The former, as the author describes, is permanent and universal while the latter is changing yet has to be in agreement with the former. Prof. Malik delves into the main values of Islam like pleasure of Allah, sincerity, love, sympathy, social and economic security and focuses on their role in the building of an ideal individual in an ideal society which stands in direct contrast to the utilitarian ethics of the Western civilization.

Dr. Thameem Ushama's paper studies a vital issue of the Qur'anic science, *naskh* (abrogation). While illustrating the meaning, conditions, rationale and kinds of *naskh*, Dr. Ushama

treats minutely the contentions of its two groups – supporters and opponents – in the historical context and terms the former a major one. The author elucidates even the distinction between *naskh* and *takhsis* and finally recommends, in his study, a further specific discussion on the subject to reach a consensus (*ijma'*) and discourage the unpleasant divisions among the scholars.

Dr. Israr Ahmad Khan, in his important paper on Islamic paradigm of education, gives a critique of the existing system of religious and 'so called secular' educational institutions of the Muslim world and amplifies their various lacunae which prevent them from producing the desired results. Dr. Khan expounds cogently the objectives of Islamic paradigm of education and highlights its integrative, critical, rational and research based nature.

Another two papers interestingly deal with the political themes of Islam, freedom, human rights and democracy. Dr. Qorban Elimi treats analytically how freedom and human rights are deeply related to each other in Islam and emphasises upon their uniform application to both the believers as well as the non-believers. Dr. Fatih A. Abdel Salam studies the question of compatibility between Islam, democracy and secularism in the contemporary scenerio. The author enumerates two major attitudes of Muslim scholars and elites towards the issue – the proponents and the opponents – and analyses them in the light of their arguments. While examining the attempts of the Muslim scholars and reformists about exploring pluralistic and democratic

character of Islam and terming secularism as the colonial product that damages the continuity of the Islamic traditions, Dr. Fatih brings out the need of a very sound and healthy attempt to make a clear distinction between the values of the Western and Islamic political systems and then the former can be reproduced in the Islamic environs where Revelation acts as the ultimate frame of reference.

Dr. Naseem Ahmad Shah in his article on Volga-Tatars while tracing the geography and fertile natural resources of Volga region provides an overview of its transition to Islam in the context of historical developments of trade, literature and sufi orders. The author highlights substantively the ruler's attitude of Islamic tolerance towards Christians in the paper. It is followed by Dr. Obaidullah Fahad's article on Islamic culture wherein he expounds its basic features like freedom, discipline, peace and harmony and scientific awakening. Dr. Fahad seeks future prospects of the culture in redefining the future agenda of humanity that may reassert human dignity, women's dignity, religious tolerance and universal civilization.

The issue includes also the article of Dr. Abdur Rashid Bhat that addresses the problem of the prospects of mutual understanding between Islam and the West and gives a comprehensive and precise treatment of some common features of the two civilizations like religious consciousness, human values, scientific research, democratic spirit and socio-economic security. The other two articles are from Dr. Bashir Ahmad Khan and Dr. S. Sharfudeen. The former deals

with the literary contribution of Bhopal in the historical context and focuses on the role of Nawab Sidiq Hasan Khan, the outstanding Islamic scholar of the 19th century British-India. Whereas the latter's paper evaluates the status of the Muslims of Kerala in the light of the contemporary fast-going developments in the State.

We have also Prof. Sa'ad M. Latif Beigh's review of M. Watt's *Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman*, translated for us by Prof. S. Muhammad Yunus Gilani from its original Urdu version. The translator has also added an introduction of the reviewer and explanatory notes to it.

This issue ends with a list of research subjects pursued in this institute from 1988-2006.

We express our deep sorrow over Maulana (Dr.) Abdullah Abbas Nadvi's sad demise on 2nd Jan, 2006. The Maulana was genuinely an outstanding figure of the contemporary Muslim world whose educational, literary and academic contribution is well known. His services as a teacher at Nadwat al-Ulama, Lucknow and Umm al-Qura University, Makka and at World Muslim League, Makkah in the capacity of its member and the editor of its magazine have been widely recognized. His works particularly in the field of the Qur'anic sciences, Sirah, Arabic language and literature are highly distinguished and mark a genre themselves in academics. In his death the academia has suffered an immense loss. We pray Allah (SWT) to bless the soul of the deceased with His Mercy!

In the end we would like to express our sincere

gratitude to all those contributors whose articles are included in this issue. It is, however, our firm hope to welcome the scholarly contribution from academic quarters all over the world to continue the publication of this journal successfully.

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