

INSIGHT ISLAMICUS

An Annual Journal of Studies and Research in Islam

ISSN: 0975-6590

Vol. 1

2001

No. 1

Shah-i-Hamadan Institute of Islamic Studies

University of Kashmir, Srinagar, 190006

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The Director,
S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies,
University of Kashmir,
Srinagar-190006.

Published by:

Director, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies,
University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006, (India)

Computer Layout and Design: Zamir Ahmad
Printed at: Makhdoomi Printers, Srinagar, Phone: 455860

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. G.R. Malik	Professor, Department of English, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Dr. S.M. Yunus Gilani	Professor, S.H. Institute Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Dr. Naseem Ahmad Shah	Reader, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi	Reader, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Dr. Badruddin Bhat	Reader, Islamia College of Science and Commerce, Srinagar, Kashmir.
Dr. Abdur Rashid Bhat	Senior Lecturer, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Dr. Bashir Ahmad Khan	Reader, Department of History, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Dr. G.N. Khaki	Senior Lecturer (Islamic Studies) Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Manzoor Ahmad Bhat	Lecturer, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Afroz Ahmad Bisati	Research Scholar, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Sheikh Jameil Ali	Research Scholar, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.
Miss. Mubeena Ramzan	Research Assistant, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar-190006.

CONTENTS

S.No	Article	Author	Page No.
	Vice Chancellor's Message		
	Editorial		i
1.	Two Kinds of Knowledge: A Seminal Quranic Distinction	Prof. G.R. Malik	1
2.	The Socio-Political Role of a University: A Study of Jami'ah al-Azhar	Prof. S.M. Yunus Gilani	11
3.	Some Aspects of the Origin of the Turks: Their Penetration into Central Asia and Its Impact	Dr. Naseem Ahmad Shah	29
4.	Approaches to Religion: An Overview	Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi	43
5.	Islam and Social Change: A Theoretical Perspective	Dr. Abdur Rashid Bhat	63
6.	The British Imperialism in India and "Ahl-i-Hadith" Response	Dr. Bashir Ahmad Khan	77
7.	Arab History Writing: A Study of Methodology	Dr. G.N. Khaki	97

S.No.	Article	Author	Page No.
8.	Shaykh Ya'qub Sarfi: (1521-95)	Manzoor Ahmad Bhat	121
9.	Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi's Concept of the Shari'ah	Afroz Ahmad Bisati	131
10.	Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani's "Refutation of the Materialists: An Approach	Sheikh Jameil Ali	1143
11.	The Etymology of <i>Khilafah</i>	Dr. Gulam Nabi	157
12.	The Meaning of <i>Ijma'</i>	Mubeena Ramzan	167
13.	Book Review	Dr. Baddrudin Bhat	173

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to bring out the first issue of *Insight Islamicus*, 2001. *Insight Islamicus* is the Institute's annual journal aiming at the study of academic issues relating to history of Islamic civilization, religious sciences, philosophy, *ilm al-kalam*, *Tasawwuf*, Islamic social sciences, modern Muslim thought, comparative religion and area studies. It has been our long felt aspiration that the scholarly papers and intellectual discourses on various aspects of Islamic studies need to be published for as wide a readership as possible. We express our thanks to the university authorities particularly to Prof. Abdul Wahid who, as Vice-chancellor, paid serious attention to this need of the Institute and approved the grant for the purpose.

This issue begins with Prof. G.R. Malik's article on knowledge which he broadly classifies in two kinds—'controlled' (seeking directions from the Supreme Creator) and 'uncontrolled' (ignoring Divine directions)—finding its basis in the Qur'anic verses. Hence he terms it a 'seminal Qur'anic distinction'. The discourse is highly intellectual and brings out the purposefulness of guided knowledge as opposed to the harmfulness of 'directionless' human knowledge.

Prof. S.M. Yunus Gilani makes a critical analysis of Jami'ah Al-Azhar of Egypt, the oldest university in the world and highlights its role in disseminating the Shari'ah sciences and stabilising socio-political set up of the Muslims right from its foundation (10th century), in spite of Egypt witnessing many ups and downs in its history. This is followed by Dr. Naseem Ahmad Shah's paper, "Some Aspects of the Origin of the Turks, Their Penetration into Central Asia and Its Impact" and Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi's "Approaches to Religions: An Overview". The former provides a historical analysis of Turks in Central Asia and presents a significant information about their origin and role in this region known for its nomadic civilizations, with documentary evidence, and the latter studies the approaches to religion and emphasises the need of a balanced approach to this important subject of history.

Dr. Abdur Rashid Bhat's paper "Islam and Social Change: A Theoretical Perspective" addresses the complex problem of adaptability of Islam in the changing times and analyses the theoretical perspective of Islam in socio-historical context. Dr. G.N. Khaki studies the approaches of early Muslim historiography and highlights the methodological aspects of pioneering historians like al-Tabri. Dr. Bashir Ahmad Khan's article discusses the various stages of the 'Ahl-i-Hadith' response to the British Imperialism in India.

In the last part we have the articles of the budding researchers of the Institute which treat some significant aspects of the contributions of some charismatic personalities of Islamic history. The career and works of Shaykh Ya'qub Sarfi, the leading Islamic scholar of medieval Kashmir, is comprehensive analysed in Manzoor Ahmad Bhat's paper. Afroz Ahmad Bisati treats *tasawwuf* of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, the revivalist thinker of pre-modern India. Sheikh Jameil Ali approaches Sayyid Jamal ud-Din Afghani's reaction to the Western culture in the context of his famous work *The Refutation of Materialists*. It is followed by Dr. Ghulam Nabi's article which attempts at the description of etymology of 'khilafah' in the Qur'anic context and Mubeena Ramzan attempts at the description of the meaning of *ijma'*.

The issue closes with a book review of Dr. Badruddin Bhat.

In the end we wish to thank the present Vice-chancellor, Prof. Jalees Ahmad Khan Tareen for sending his stimulating 'Message' and taking keen interest in the all-round development of the Institute. We are grateful to our contributors with whose valuable articles the publication of this first issue of *Insight Islamicus* became possible and expect their co-operation in future as well.

Editors