

Editorial

We are pleased to introduce to our esteemed readers this special issue on the conference proceedings on **“Occidentalism in Contemporary Cognitive Deliberation: Toward Objective Scientific Vision for Exploring the Other”**. For decades Occidentalism has been receiving growing academic interest for its substantial importance in several domains. Dialog among civilizations and strategic relations between East and West is perhaps the most salient example. This Conference is the outcome of tireless work and close cooperation between Kuwait University, represented by the *Journal of Sharia and Islamic Studies*, and Qatar University College of Sharia, represented by the ISESCO Chair in Alliance of Civilizations. Scholars and researchers specializing in this field were invited to participate in the Conference. The Conference was held on ZOOM on 28/2/2021. This issue features the fruit of twinning between two well-established journals in the Arabian Gulf: *Journal of Sharia and Islamic Studies* at Kuwait University and *Journal of College of Sharia and Islamic Studies* at Qatar University. We are grateful to all those who contributed to this achievement and appreciate the efforts of the journal’s former editorial board. We thank the Almighty God for selecting our Journal for inclusion in the Arabic Citation Index (ARCI) on the Web of Science, this year.

The Conference culminated in serious, insightful and well-founded studies on occidentalism Conference papers covered different aspects in Occidentalism discourse, such as Dr. Zahia Smail Salhi’s “The Arab World and the Occident: Toward the Construction of an Occidentalist Discourse” and Dr. Youssef Ban El Mahdi’s “Contemporary Arab Discourse of Occidentalism: A Reading in the Paradigms, Introductions and Results”. Furthermore, the Conference touched on the criticism of the intellectual foundations and legitimacy, such as in “Foundational premises for objective research in Occidentalism,” by Dr. Azzeddine Mamiche.

The presence of Occidentalism in Eastern, Far-Eastern, and Latin experiences was also discussed in Dr. Mabrouk Mansouri’s “The Deliberation of Occidentalism in Contemporary Global Thought: A Comparative Study of Japanese and Western thoughts”. The theoretical underpinnings of the subject were also explored as in Dr. Hassan Azzouzi’s “The Need of Methodological Rules composing the Occidentalist Thought”. Moreover, Indian Occidentalism was present in “In Retrospect: Indian Occidentalism, Reference-corpus and Questions of Specificity” by Dr. Mohammad Sanallah AlNadawi. Finally, religious identities were also discussed in “The Jewish Community between Orientalism and Occidentalism” by Prof. Muhammad Khalifa Hasan.

From the findings of the Conference, select papers of which will be featured in this exceptional issue of our journal, we can conclude that geographical diversity is an undisputed reality, and cultural diversity is inevitable (Had your Lord willed, He would have made mankind one nation, but they continue to have their differences) [Hud 11: 118]. East and West are different in nature, roots, motives and aims. The great principles and lofty values, as elaborated by the Islamic perspective, are the available and accessible means to build relations, including:

- Human Succession: Human beings are the successors of Allah on Earth. They have a religious obligation to fulfill the duties of succession, promote growth and prosperity on earth, spread justice, and avoid injustice, aggression, and bloodletting.
- Human Unity: Humanity has one origin, and all human beings descend from a single common ancestor. Hence, there should be no inequality between races or repugnant racism. The criteria for excellence and preference shall be righteousness, good deeds and working for the common good (The noblest of you

before Allah is the most righteous of you) [al-Hujurat 49: 13]. The difference is one of the main objectives of creation. It shall entail coming to know and cooperate with one another, rather than rivalry, antagonism, and arrogance.

- Dialog and Coming to Common Terms: Dialog with the other is a civil imperative to build a compassionate human model. This is the premise for cultural exchange and cross-fertilization, the exchange of useful experiences serving the humanity of humans, and coming together to promote growth and prosperity on earth. Humanity has much in common regarding what could serve upright conduct and promote human welfare and prosperity on earth.
- Utilizing the Islamic experience in knowing and building fair normal relations with other this could be found in the writings of religious scholars, comparative religion scholars, Muslim geographers and travelers. These writings have yielded a wide network of ties with the East and West and these efforts have contributed to the establishment of the just and prosperous Islamic civilization, as Muslims depended on the overriding Qur’anic rule (God does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with anyone who has not fought you for your faith or driven you out of your homes: God loves the just. However, God forbids you to take as allies those who have fought against you for your faith, driven you out of your homes, and helped others to drive you out: any of you who take them as allies will truly be wrongdoers) [Al-Mumtahinah 60: 8-9].

Let us not prejudice the reader, as the cited studies are thorough and sufficient. The published papers encourage researchers to make their contributions, criticisms, questioning and additions, which will benefit all.

It is worth noting that while this JCSIS special issue on “*Occidental Thought in Contemporary Intellectual Discourse*” is being published, Qatar University Press is preparing to publish the first parts of the “*Encyclopedia of Occidentalism*”; which is the first of its kind largest intellectual encyclopedia in the Arab and Islamic world that studies and focuses on the West.

These encyclopedia’s entries have been written by more than eighty researchers from four continents (Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America). It is being issued in collaboration between a number of entities, including; the Qatari Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations (QCAC) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ISESCO Chair in Alliance of Civilizations, and the College of Sharia and Islamic Studies at Qatar University.

May Allah grant us success and guide us to the right path

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