

## Editorial

Saadah's writing on "some Principles of Islamic Civilisation" provides eight interesting characteristics of Islamic Civilisation, some of which are perhaps surprising and could be challenged by critical readers. Thus she would be inviting some criticisms on her two characterizations of Islamic Civilisation, namely "Creating an Industrial Country", and "Demonstrating the Superiority of Islam by Constructing Beautiful Buildings and Monuments". Other six characterizations of Islamic Civilisation proposed in this article are perhaps well known but her discussions together with some new data on each of them are certainly welcomed by readers.

Lopez's paper on "Shifts in cultural traditions and values in a global world dynamics of acceptance and contestation" is yet another look at the impact of globalization on underdeveloped and developing countries. The author emphasizes that the cultural and value changes in a country due to the external penetration or incursion, in particular with specific examples such as through mercantile capitalism and colonialism, are not new but with the present mode of globalism the rate at which these changes occur create a new situation which really challenge a nation. The author concludes that "fast-paced globalization, with its secular, consumerist mass-media messages" is really expanding a new age of consumerism and secularism; and the traditional role of individual in a community, in particular, is shifting toward a new idea of "rights and property of the individual as the overarching 'value'". The author still hopes that each nation concerned would still be able to make the right decision on capturing whatever values in the globalisation process and and harmonise these with her own values so that the resulting new order of culture and values are best suited for the nation.

Ahmad S. Yuki's paper is also interesting as it discusses the nature of the Japanese culture and their attitude towards Islam and Muslims in Japan itself. The reader is informed that the main

religions in Japan are Shinto and Buddhism, but at the same time most of them embrace secularism. Muslims in Japan are very small in number (at the most 70 thousand) and not more than 10% of them are native Japanese. The majority of them (slightly more than 50%) are Indonesian. Ancestor worship is almost indispensable as soon in Shintosm and the Christian Japanese (about 1% of the total populations), especially Catholics, are still practicing ancestor worship. The author presents his observations that Muslims in Japan almost do not interact with the Japanese society at large, so much so that the Japanese generally do not consider Islam or Muslim as part of their society and vice-versa. One of the reasons for this state of affairs is that the Japanese recognize the superiority of polytheism (a characteristic of their religions) compared to the monotheism of, for example Islam and this situation is in fact often articulated by their own religious scholars. They also believe that monotheism is responsible for many wars, intolerance and arrogance (and hence the destruction of the earth). Thus, the author believes that, at the moment, Japan can be considered as the last place suitable for Muslims to live in unless they are willing to assimilate into the Japanese culture, as have happened to the second generation of the Muslims in Japan who have them hence lost their original identities. To improve the situation, the author suggests that Muslims who intend to live in Japan should strive to syncretise Islam with the Japanese values and culture; and have open dialogues with the members of the Japanese society.