Book Reviews


Uptil fifties of the twentieth last century the literature on Islamic Economics was so limited that it could be counted on finger tips. The First International Islamic Economic Conference at Makkah Mukarrmah in the year 1976 gave a stimulus to professional Muslim economists to take interest in exploring the Islamic approach to a wide variety of economic issues. A number of books on the subject appeared and scores of articles were published in different journals. Specialized journals also began to appear. Many of the Western universities sponsored theses and dissertations on different subjects related to Islamic economic institutions. Thus the literature on the subject proliferated. When Nejatullah Siddiqi presented an exhaustive bibliography on Islamic economics at the First International Conference in 1976 it contained more or less 700 entries of books and articles written in Arabic, Urdu and English. These had appeared over a period of about 40 years, although some of them had appeared as far back as 1902, 1916, 1925, 1933 and 1936. I had also been trying to keep myself acquainted with the literature on Islamic economics published during the last 40 years but I feel that Siddiqi was able to identify almost the entire literature that had appeared in Urdu and English and Arabic. These seven hundred entries in three languages over forty years can be compared with about the same number in Urdu and English only during the six-year period (1982–88) as indexed by Akram Khan in his volume 2 of his annotated bibliography of Islamic Economics. Now we have its third volume with almost the same number of entries prouced during 1988–97.

A very important feature of these volumes is Akram Khan's annotation which provides scholars an opportunity to be selective. In volume 3 the author has changed his scheme of classification and indices from unwieldy library classification to page number references. This has made it convenient to locate an entry indexed under author and subject indices. This volume, like the previous ones, reflects Akram Khan's unending quest, diligence and stamina and provides to scholars most of the material on Islamic economics written in Urdu and English during the last ten years. He himself is a prolific writer but the preparation of annotated bibliography by far outweighs his writings. We have now bibliographies prepared by five different scholars: Akram Khan's (Urdu and English), Siddiqi's (Arabic, Urdu, English), I.D.B's (English), Sabahaddin Zaim's (Turkish) and Volker Nienhaus's (German and English). (I have not seen the last one).
All these works jumble up books and journal articles together. I feel these should be separated. Another point that can be mentioned here is the inclusion of unpublished articles in the bibliography. The purpose of a bibliography is to enable scholars to have an easy access to the relevant material on the subject. Unpublished articles are referable either to the author whose whereabouts are generally not known or to the seminar/conference organizers who are not supposed to take the follow-up responsibility after the end of the conference/seminar. Moreover, an unpublished paper undergoes many changes and amendments by the time it is finalized for publication. Ph.D. dissertations are a different matter. They undergo rigorous scrutiny before approval and thus qualify for inclusion.

Akram Khan has single-handedly done a work that would require a team. It is quite natural that a few sources might have been missed or were inaccessible to the author. This is evident from the fact that the present bibliography does not include a number of books that appeared during the period under consideration. Some of the examples are: Imran Ahsan Khan Niazi's *Islamic Law of Partnership* (1997), Mushtaq Ahmad's *Business Ethics in Islam* (1995), Umar Chapra's *Islam and Economic Development* (1993), review on Farhad Nomani's *Islam and Economic Systems*; Hasanuzzaman's *Economic Relevance of the Sharia Maxims*, and *Indexation of Financial Assets* (1993), Abdul Rahman Kilani's *Tijarat aur layn dayn kay masā'il* (Urdu, 1991), in addition to a number of journal articles. However, the non inclusion of a few sources does not detract from the fact that Akram Khan has performed a very valuable service to Islamic economics by preparing this work.

In the end there is a word of caution might be addressed to all those who love the cause of Islamic Economics: to Akram Khan and to all concerned scholars, but especially to the organizations like IDB, The Islamic Foundation (Leicester), Centre for Research in Islamic Economics, (Jeddah), to IIIE (Islamabad) and to IIU (Malaysia): More than 600 books and articles were written during the six years ending 1988. Why did the number not increase even during the next 10 years ending 1997?

S.M. Hasanuzzaman


Meir Bar-Asher's thorough analysis of early *Imāmī* *tafsīr* traditions sheds light on a subject that is still insufficiently understood within the field of Islamic studies. Unlike the Buwayhid period, in which there was a flurry of scholarly output, during the pre-Buwayhid period scholarship was less voluminous, systematic or doctrinally consistent. The pre-Buwayhid period was nevertheless a very important scholarly formative period for classical Shi‘ism. It was at this time that the foundations for the great classic works of such eminent scholars as al-Ṭūsī and al-Ṭabārānī were laid and appreciated. Equally