philosophers, one finds al-Ghazālī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ibn Rushd sharing the same space. Ibn Baṭṭūṭah sits next to Imām Shāfi‘ī. This vast divergence somewhat shadows the journey and dulls the benefits of the book for serious travellers. The differences in the personalities and spiritual and intellectual preferences of the quoted persona is so immense that if one were to place some of them in the same room, there would be great tumult and counter currents. The “Profiles of those quoted” (113–154) could have been much improved by further research and reflection. At present, some have been described with only one or two lines, others have a page or two, but the narratives are rather problematic for most seem to have been taken from secular sources and put together without much personal reflection on the actual thought and contributions of these illustrious individuals. An index would have been useful as well. The designs on the cover and inside the book are, likewise, stereotypical, a collection of flowers bearing little connection with the profound aphorisms and words of wisdom that the author has collected.

Muzaffar Iqbal


This book reveals the thirst to find solutions that would lead to the establishment of a Unified Islamic Calendar among the Muslims of the world. The book brings a summary of monumental work performed on the subject within a short time-span of twenty-five years (1974–2000). To some people, twenty-five years may not seem a short period of time, but to implement changes in calendrical practices usually takes a long time (even centuries) as evidenced by the delay in the acceptance of the Gregorian Calendar by different countries. This book basically highlights the efforts of the International Islamic Calendar Programme (IICP) based at the University of Science Malaysia.

The chapter on ‘Accomplishments’ highlights the seminars and conferences on the subject that took place between 1974 and 2000 in many countries like Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei,
Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UK, and USA. This means that the entire Muslim community has adopted or is tending to adopt the use of *imkān-i ru‘yah* basis of calculation. The difference lies in regard to the quantum of the criterion for visibility of the new crescent moon. The mathematical calculations and the details of the varying quantum (criteria) are not discussed in this book. A conscious effort for seeking convergence of varying quantum is necessary and it is considered to be relatively easier and scientifically justifiable.

Progress is being made, with a lot of scientific work from 2000 onwards, on the astronomy of new moon’s visibility, or on the selection of a criterion for the Unified Islamic Calendar. These efforts are in process in many countries like Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Guinea, UK, and USA. These efforts will help achieve a convergence of the varying quantum of the criterion for Unified Islamic Calendar.

The book rightfully acknowledges that the remaining task is to focus on the implementation of a correct *imkān-i ru‘yah* criterion as a basis for the Unified Islamic Calendar. This book outlines a step by step procedure to solve this issue and suggests collaboration between scientists and *Shari‘ah* scholars to be followed by serious effort by the authorities in every country to implement the decisions at which they arrive.

To sum up, this book is a valuable road map for solving and implementing the much needed Unified Islamic Calendar, without going into scientific discussions and research for the criterion of *Imkān-i Ru‘yah*.

Khalid Shaukat

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In the wake of the 9/11 events there has been a tremendous influx of questions revolving around the future of the West-Islam relationship. Though such questions did exist before, they took on a new meaning and urgency after September 11, 2001. Gilles Kepel in his book, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam*