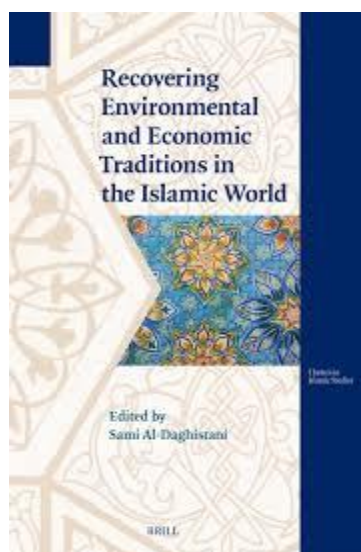


Book Reviews

Sami Al-Daghistani, ed. *Recovering Environmental and Economic Traditions in the Islamic World*. Leiden: Brill, 2024. Pp xvii+209. ISBN: 978-90-04-68102-6.

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In this edited volume, which is a part of Brill's themes in Islamic studies, Islamic medieval contributions to ecological and economic understanding are well restudied with regard to some modern and contemporary approaches to climate sustainability. Containing six chapters, one big introduction by the editor, and a foreword statement by Maria Dakake, this volume identifies where we can have a permanent solution to the present ecological crisis. By exploring the traditional understanding of the environment and economics, which was especially perceived by medieval Muslims as an example, this book has done a praiseworthy work in reminding us about the ecological and economic sustainability that had prevailed in the medieval Islamic world.



According to Islam, nature (*ṭabīʿah*) is regarded as a blessing for humans, and humans are identified as stewards (*khulafāʾ*) on earth for protecting the beautiful natural world with which they are entrusted (*amānah*) by God. This implies humans are trustees of the property of God, and humans should properly maintain this trusteeship. As all ingredients of economics (*iqtiṣād*) come from nature (*ṭabīʿah*), in no way can economic thoughts and activities be performed that are not suitable with the natural environment. For putting all these Islamic principles in practice, humans need the purification of hearts (*tazkiyat al-naḥs*) in terms of individual self and economic functions. Without a purified soul, no one can forward to work accordingly.

Islam provides a holistic and integrated view of nature in line with the theocentric approach and anthropo-cosmic vision; it should be brought back to sustain a viable economic system that is in line with the environment. In Islam, every part of nature is a bounty for humans from God, for which humans should be grateful to God. A grateful person cannot misuse, abuse, or be extravagant with what Allah grants them to survive. For existence, air, water, and soil are essential for all living forms on earth. All these essentials, among others, should not be polluted by human activities; otherwise, they must be blamed by God for breaking their responsibilities as *khulafāʾ*. If modern humans are taught and convinced with such Islamic guidelines and prescriptions, they can be convinced to rectify and reform their ongoing economic activities that are already based on the Western utilitarian and materialistic perceptions and perspectives. Zanzibar's example makes us optimistic to see the future of the Muslim world with some ecologically friendly projects for sustainable use of natural resources.

In this book, one contributor rightly compares a luxurious lifestyle with *ribā* (usury) by arguing that this sort of lifestyle extracts and breaks the rights of future generations just as usury extracts people's money by imposing a strict rule in lending their money to them. Arguably true, the consumeristic lifestyle consumes more resources, depriving future generations of their due rights of sustainable living. Commonly, both consumerism and *ribā* extract people and deprive them of their essential substances. Keeping this common target in hand, *ribā* is extended to the exploitation of nature. This is a very much appreciated argument, which can help prevent Muslims from the dreadful sin of this newly interpreted *ribā* by discouraging a consumeristic lifestyle.

Apart from these, the volume synthesizes traditional understanding of nature and the present green technological projects for sustaining ecology and economics. The Islamic world is focused as a case study by connecting Islamic moral guidelines with state policies of economics and the environment. The contributors advocate a reasonable bridge between the past and the present. It is true that if we can bring back some guiding sources from the eternal traditions and then connect them with our energy-efficient technologies and renewable energy sources, we can restore a balanced human-nature relationship.

To some extent, the contributors and the editor himself prolonged unnecessarily descriptions of some terms, *iqtiṣād* (economics), for example, which may irritate readers while reading the discussions. Such an explanation should be precise and contextualized. The book follows a descriptive, explorative analysis. However, it should also follow a critical analysis to some extent.

Despite some limitations, this edited work seems a timely needed study of the glorious past of the Muslim world, covering both economic and ecological affairs. This praiseworthy study proves that economics and ecology can go hand in hand if modern people can take lessons from the past and bring some changes in their views of nature and work accordingly. This is a wonderful contribution to the field of economic and ecological sustainability.

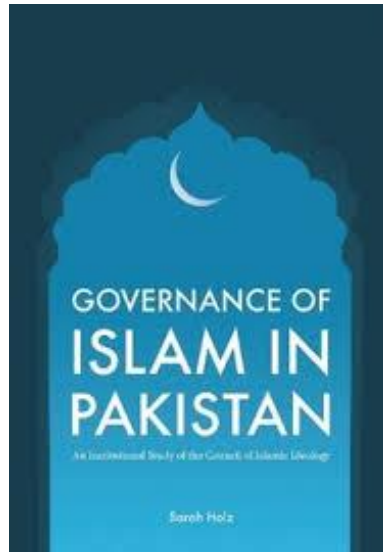
Md. Abu Sayem*

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Sarah Holz. *Governance of Islam in Pakistan: An Institutional Study of the Council of Islamic Ideology*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2023. Pp. xvi+246. Paperback. ISBN: 978-1-78976-166-5.

Book review doi: <https://doi.org/10.52541/isiri.v64i2.7188>

The book is a historical study of the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) and the erstwhile Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology (1962). Besides an introduction (pp. 1-21), a conclusion (pp. 159- 167), and other formal parts required for a book, it is divided into two parts. Part 1 discusses the institutions that work with reference to Islam in Pakistan, whereas Part 2, the main body of the book, deals with the institutional development of the CII, founded in February 1974.



While discussing the historical background of Islam's role and status in Pakistan's state and society, Holz used governance as a conceptual lens and aimed to provide a systematic account of how interaction between multiple public and private bodies directs the regulation and standardization of Islam in Pakistan. Focusing on the CII, she examines how a constitutional but advisory body is formed and functions to fulfil its constitutional duties, i.e., issuing advice to the parliament about the compatibility of existing laws with Islamic teachings.

It is a serious topic of debate among academia and the general masses whether Pakistan is an Islamic state or a Muslim-nation state. The answer to this question will justify the title of the book. Unfortunately, the reader could not find much regarding this question.

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