

BACKGROUND OF KIIC ESTABLISHMENT

1. Islam is a thoroughly misunderstood religion in Korea, mainly caused by the pro-western education and bad influence of mass-media based on western value system and ideology.
2. The importance given to education in Korea is too great. More than 98% of total population of South Korea is literate and 75% is graduates from higher education.
3. As a homogeneous people, Koreans still insist to adhere to their tradition and culture.
4. In these circumstances, to correct wrong information and distorted knowledge on Islam; to give objective research materials on Islam to academic circle, mass-media and business circle; to find the most effective Da'wah methodology in Korea, certain Muslim scholars have decided to establish KIIC under full sponsorship of the Korea Muslim Federation.
5. This idea is fully supported by the eminent Muslim scholars and leaders who attended the international seminar on <Islam in East Asia: History and Cultural Harmony> in Seoul, organized by Korea Muslim Federation to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Islam in Korea between August 22-24, 1997.
6. KIIC is pure academic institute to perform a wide range of research on Islam and Islamic affairs based on objective methodologies and point of view.

OBJECTIVES

1. Systemic and total research performance on Muslim World with 1.2 billion population and 52 states.
2. Supply of well-designed information on Islam and Muslim communities to academic circle, mass-media and business circles, etc.
3. Promotion of Islamic understanding and correction of wrong-distorted knowledge on Islam.
4. Strengthening cultural exchange between Korea and Islamic world.
5. Supply of information and reference materials on Korean culture to Islamic world.

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K.M.F.

Mr. Chang Jun-Hee

Ph. D. Candidate in Islamic Culture

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Korea Institute of Islamic Culture

732-21, Hannam-dong, Yongsan-ku, Seoul, Korea

Tel : (02)7936908/7947307 Fax : (02)7989782

E-mail : islamkor@soback.kornet.nm.kr

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Our Contributors

Dr. H. M. Bukhari Lubis

Associate Professor, Dept. of Arabic & Islamic Studies
Malaysia National University, Malaysia

Mr. Sulaiman b. Ibrahim

Dept. of Da`wah & Leadership Studies
Malaysia National University, Malaysia

Dr. Je, Dae-Sik (Abdul Haq)

Asst. Prof., Dept. of Malay-Indonesian Area & Trade
Sunghim College of Foreign Languages, Korea

Dr. Lee, Hee-Soo (Jamil)

Associate Professor, Dept. of Cultural Anthropology
Hanyang University, Korea

Dr. Lee, Won-Sam (Ismail)

Lecturer, Division of Missiology
Sunmoon University, Korea

Dr. Lee, Jong-Hwa

Lecturer, Dept. of Arabic Language & Literature
Myung Ji University, Korea

Dr. Yeon, Kyoo-Seok

Lecturer, Dept. of Turkish
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea

Dr. Choi, Jin-Young

Lecturer, Dept. of Arabic
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea

EDITORIAL

Since its establishment in August 1997, Korea Institute of Islamic Culture have received many praise or critic from various Islamic organizations and scholars in and out Korea.

Taking this opportunities, I would express my profound thanks to all of them whomever showed more practical way or gave valuable ideas for the desirable direction.

In particular, H.E. Dr. Abdo Yamani, President of Jeddah-based **Iqraa Charitable Society** gave full support and cooperation to implement academic and educational fuctions of KIIC. On behalf of KIIC and Korea Muslim Federation, I would extend my deepest appreciation to H.E.Dr.Yamani for his special concern and cooperation for Muslim minority community in Korea.

Of course, it was not easy in Korea to do Islamic studies under negative academic circumstances and under still strong prejudice against Islam among ordinary peoples. At the same time, however, we found a great possibility in our research activities. Many Korean intellectuals in the field of academic and journalistic circles, paid extraordinary attention on KIIC and requested further objective materials on Islam and Muslim world. To carter these demands, we invited two Ph.D. holders as new research fellows in Arabic Linguistics and Islamic Economics.

KIIC's main activities of 1997-1998 are monthly seminar and conference on Islam; workshop on teaching methodology in Islamic and Middle-Eastern subjects; the translation of Islamic booklets published by IPC-Kuwait; preparing a comprehensive book on Pakistan; assistance of translating and editing Weekly Newsletter published by Korea Muslim Federation; opening the classes of Arabic and Qur'an for Muslim children as well as non-Muslim Koreans. We will expand our activities to regular Islamic lecture and education in the KIIC Madrasa in 1998-1999 years.

In this issue, two Malaysian scholars kindly contributes articles for the special issue on "Malaysian Culture and Literature". Other 6 Korean scholars contributed for this issue with valuable articles in English, Arabic, Turkish and Malay Languages. We have decided to accept articles in case of being written any Muslim languages together with local Korean language from next issue.

Looking forward to your further advice or guidance for KIIC, we wish many Koreans will benefit from KIIC Islamic activities and will increase their knowledge and understanding on Islam through the second issue of the Korea Journal of Islamic Culture.

Prof. Dr. *Jamil Lee, Hee-Soo*

KIIC / Director

특집

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