The aim of this study is to highlight the economic views of Ibn Taimiyah, the well-known Islamic thinker of the early Muslim period 1263-1328 A.D., to relate them to his times and to underscore their relevance to economic thought in particular and Islamic thought in general.

Ibn Taimiyah was deeply involved in public life, his views regarding many social problems of his age bore a practical orientation and for these reasons his impact on the generation that came after him was very profound.

His book al Siyasah al Shariqah fi Ihlal al Ra'i wa'l Ra'i (Public and Private Laws in Islam. English Tr. by Farrukh Omer; French Tr. by Henri Laoust) provided the inspiration for reforms carried out by Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun the Sultan of Egypt and Syria. This book dealt especially with government revenue and expenditure. Another book al- Hisbah wa Mas'liah al Hukumah al Islamiyah (Supervision of Economic and Social Activities and the Role of the Islamic State) discussed market mechanism and the state's interference in economic life. Besides these two books Ibn Taimiyah's economic view are scattered in his Fatwa (legal rulings) and the vast body of literature produced by him.

In order to provide a proper understanding of Ibn Taimiyah's economic views, we have taken note of the period in which he lived and his own personality (Chapter I, II). This is a significant part of the study because economic ideas generally reflect the conditions of the time and society to which they relate.

As regards his economic views, we have discussed Ibn Taimiyah's understanding of just price, market mechanism and his prescription of a price regulation policy for the state (Chapter III). This may be considered as one of the most profound contributions in the history of economic thought.
We have also taken into account Ibn Taimiyah's views on the concept of property in Islam (Chapter IV), in which he placed great emphasis on the social good, while at the same time advocating a balanced stance in sharp contrast to the extreme positions taken by capitalist and socialist thinkers in our time.

Ibn Taimiyah was opposed to the dichotomy that is reflected in the writings of scholastic (western) thinkers concerning interest. He carefully analysed the economic and moral reasons for the prohibition of interest, and made some brief but significant reflections on the nature and functions of money (Chapter V).

Given the prohibition of interest, questions concerning joint ventures, different forms of legitimate economic organizations, and the requirements of justice in partnership have been discussed in Chapter VI.

Ibn Taimiyah was very emphatic on the need of a properly established political entity. He charged Islamic state with specific economic duties and argued in favour of wide ranging powers for the state for regulating the economy (Chapter VII).

His contribution in the field of Public Finance was also considerable. As against many other economists he paid more attention to the question of public expenditure (Chapter VIII).

To Objectively evaluate Ibn Taimiyah's economic views we have endeavoured to analyse the doctrinal base of his ideas and that of some earlier thinkers of that period. We have also made a comparable study of some of his predecessors and contemporaries - both Islamic and Scholastic. Towards the end, a brief comparison of the views of Ibn Taimiyah and those of Ibn Khaldûn - the most distinguished thinker who came after him - has been made. Ibn Taimiyah's impact has been examined on some modern writers and thinkers as well. (Chapter IX).
We hope our study will make a significant contribution to the history of economic thought. It is noteworthy that adequate attention has not been paid to the contribution of Muslim thinkers in this field. Our study will, we hope, contribute towards filling this gap. We may also note that existing studies of the life and works of Ibn Taimiyah have failed to adequately focus on his economic views. We have tried in this study to respond to this need.

The present work is basically a study in the history of economic thought but we hope it will provide some insights to those economists and thinkers who are engaged in the study of the problems relating to the establishment of a just economic system of Islam.

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For rendering Arabic terms and words into the Roman script I have followed the transliteration system used by the Library of Congress, except a few very common words like Shariah and Arabiah instead of Shariyyah and Arabiyyah. All dates, unless otherwise specified, are mentioned in gregorian calender.

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