

Preface / Vorwort

Editor / Herausgeber*

Dear readers,

As this edition of the *Hikma* marks its 10th issue, I would like to commence by sincerely thanking you, our faithful readership, for your continued interest in our journal. Even though we are still a relatively new journal, this event suggests that the *Hikma* has managed to establish itself amongst other journals of note, giving us a promising outlook for the future. As has come to be the trademark of the *Hikma*, this issue seeks to explore topics of Islamic Theology which cover diverse angles of perspective towards the discipline, be it either from the inside or more from the outside, its relation to the other Abrahamic religions, its challenges in the face of modernity, leading to re-evaluation of methodological approaches, religious identity and gender roles – often with a particular reference to the circumstance of living in the diaspora and its attributed effects – as well as the field of Islamic Education and its practice in schools today. The insights our authors gain both by accessing the theological groundwork and/or by scrutinising current developments show that these may well qualify to tackle some of the difficulties or clashes of opinion palpable in our modern time.

Leading into this *Hikma* with her article entitled “*In Pursuit of a Common Paradigm: Islamic and Western Ḥadīth Studies*”, Fatma Kızıl provides a detailed analysis of the differences in scientific ḥadīth research according to the scientific background of its scholars, i.e. either classical Islamic or Western/Orientalist, and how scholars’ perspective on religion, either as an insider or outsider, is key to their classification and attained results. Besides the classification of Orientalists as either “skeptical” or “revisionist”, there has been evidence for a third, middle-ground, position, which is held for instance by renowned scholars such as Harald Motzki, whose results are reviewed in detail. The study attempts to identify the different premises that differentiate the scholars and discusses whether a common paradigm between the two main groups exists.

In the subsequent article, included as a piece of miscellanea and composed on the basis of a guest lecture held at a conference on al-Ġazālī at Osnabrück University entitled *The Autobiography of Two Mystics. A Comparison between Muḥammad al-Ġazālī and al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmidī*, Bernd Radtke sheds light on the differences between these two great scholars, who were both drawn to Sufism, however on completely different terms. Whereas al-Ġazālī maintains an intellectual perspective towards mysticism throughout his studies, although his turn to mysticism seems induced by his increasing frustration with intellectualism, at-Tirmidī, who is the main focus of Radtke’s reflections, pursues Sufism as a personal path to God, revealing itself to him through his dreams and disclosing that he is the Seal of Friendship with God (*ḥatm al-wilāya*), a concept absorbed and developed by Ibn al-‘Arabī and later mystics. As the author effectively sets out, indeed, both autobiographies are relevant to the intellectual development of the Islamic World.

These two articles are then followed by a translation of the didactic poem *Bad’u l-‘amālī* by ‘Alī b. ‘Oṭmān al-‘Ūṣī (d. 569/1173 or 575/1180). The translator Hüseyin Uçan

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provides an introduction to the poem, in which he underlines the significance of the work, which was widely studied and exercised throughout the centuries in the Islamic world, reflecting Māturīdī's thought of orthodox *kalām* tradition. In the classical period of Islam scholars attempted to "crown" the objectives and insights of classical works by composing these in poetic diction capable to caress the soul and a blessing themselves. The poem was taught to the translator at school, where he learned to recite it by heart.

Current topics in the field of Islamic Theology and Islamic Education were at the heart of a number of conferences, which are reviewed in this third category of our journal. The three conferences heading this category, *Muslims in Europe: Challenges of Pluralism*, *Horizons of Islamic Theology* and *Maqāṣid al-Sharīah: The Objectives of Sharia and Contemporary Challenges*, which are reviewed by Eva Kepplinger, Bacem Dziri and Martin Kellner, Eva Kepplinger and Wolfgang Bauer respectively and took place at the universities in Sarajevo, Frankfurt and Paderborn last year, discuss topics such as the challenges the discipline of Islamic Theology and its followers face in the 21st century, the plurality of Islam – or Islams – and Muslims, and the tension between an inside and an outside perspective on discipline and faith. A conclusion drawn at the latter of the three conferences was that the maqāṣid may in fact be a means to a reform of a new Islamic Law in agreement with a modern understanding of justice. The issue of interreligious dialogue was broached at the 26th *International Seminar of the Society for Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counseling – SIPCC*, which was held in Mennorode, Netherlands, and at the annual conference of the German Section of the European Society of Women in Theological Research, which took place in Münster. As Helmut Weiß recounts from the first-mentioned conference, its key topic was to perceive religion or spiritual belief as a blessing – both the own and those of the others – and to benefit from these differences. Sonja Strube and Monika Konigorski report from the latter conference with a focus on the concept of "vulnerability", which was discussed by Christian and Muslim women theologians alike, observing that it is at the core of the Christian belief of divine incarnation, but is also evident – albeit in a different shade – in accounts of the Prophet, who was moved by the fate of human beings, and in descriptions of God as the Most Merciful. Current political issues were debated during the 70th *German Jurists' Day*, which took place in Hannover last year. A key finding of this conference was, as Ertan Öztürk puts forth, to promote comparative law analysis since reciprocity shapes the structures of legal systems worldwide. Subsequently, Najla Al-Amin and Esnaf Begić give an account of *The Shī'a*, a conference that was organised by the Institute of Islamic Theology of Osnabrück University and took place in September last year. The conference provided an overview of Shī'ite faith and, as the "other Shī'a", Alevi faith and self-concept. The following two conferences focussing on Islamic Education, *My Religion, Your Religion, No Religion – About the Perspectives of a Didactic of Difference Concerning the Subject Group Religious Education/Ethics/Norms and Values*, hosted conjointly by the IIT Osnabrück and ZIT Münster, and *Discovering Synergies – Exploring Differences. A German-Turkish Workshop on Islamic Religious Education*, organised by the University of Tübingen, were held at the beginning of December 2014 and January 2015 respectively. As a participant of the first-mentioned event, Michael Kiefer emphasises that the school of today pools a plurality of faiths due to migration processes, a circumstance which poses a challenge for Religious Education, too. The conference presented both the theoretical backdrop as well as current

practical concepts. The latter conference, which was attended by Ismail H. Yavuzcan and Melahat Kişi, considered all aspects of teaching Islamic Education, in particular its didactic concepts and education of teachers. To the end of this category, S. Fritz Forkel, Diaaeldin Hassanein, Charlotte Schmidt and Noura Boussitou give an account from a Teachers' workshop conducted in Osnabrück in March this year, bringing together teachers and tutors of Arabic languages at German universities in order to discuss relevant topics and issues.

Moving on to the category of reviews of current publications, Peter Antes commences by discussing *Das koranische Motiv der Schriftverfälschung (Tahrīf) durch Juden und Christen. Islamische Deutungen und christliche Reaktionen (The Qur'ānic Motif of Scriptural Falsification [Tahrīf] by Jews and Christians. Islamic Interpretations and Christian Reactions)*, a work edited by Timo Güzelmansur. Based on their convictions, Muslim scholars annul from Christianity its Christology and from Judaism the Oral Torah. Amongst other questions, it is discussed whether a re-evaluation of the differing religion's concept might alter the scholar's interior perspective of the other, too. This is then followed by a review of Mahmoud Abdallah, who shares his insights into Hassan Hanafi's second volume of *Min an-naql ʾila al- ʾaql (From Transmission to Reason)*, a work of ḥadīth science, in which he observes a shift in focus towards matn. Subsequently, Michael Kiefer critically appraises Tuba Isik's publication *Die Bedeutung des Gesandten Muḥammad für den islamischen Religionsunterricht. Systematische und historische Reflexionen in religionspädagogischer Absicht (The Meaning of the Prophet Muḥammad for Islamic Religious Education. Systematic and Historical Reflections for a Religious Pedagogical Purpose)*, which explores how the life and deeds of the Prophet offers children an approach to Muslim faith, relating to both their experiences and daily life. In the penultimate review, Martin Kellner sheds light on the publication *Die Sunna leben. Zur Dynamik islamischer Religionspraxis in Deutschland (Living the Sunna. Examining the Dynamics of Islamic Religious Practice in Germany)*, edited by Paula Schroder and Udo Simon, in which the authors discuss Islamic orthopraxy, as for instance the ritual of daily prayer or purity practices, and how these, in reference to Foucault, might act as a technology of society to establish equivalence and difference or as a technology of self to turn within. The final review is contributed by Murat Karacan, who critically assesses Recep Şentürk's publication *Açık Medeniyet (The Open Civilisation)*. In light of its Islamic tradition, the author describes the Islamic civilisation as an "open civilisation" with a multi-layered and multiplex structure, set in contrast to the clash of civilisations thesis.

As in earlier editions of the journal, the *Hikma* concludes with an interview that Bettina Kruse-Schröder conducted with four Muslim women, scholars on the topic of "Women and Mosques", flanked by an introduction by Melahat Kişi. Özlem Nas, Pinar Çetin, Melahat Kişi and Dua Zeitun avidly discuss the different aspects of this topic, where the conditions encountered in Mosques point to women's differentness in the culture of Muslims today. As they challenge concepts of gender that are connoted with religion, the women debate on how to change and improve current imbalances. The scholars appeal to women to actively engage in their mosques in order to build a mosque that fits both men and women, because, as they unanimously declare, together, we are much stronger.

At the end of this preface, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to both the authors who expertly contributed to this edition and to all members of the editorial office

for their immensely dedicated work. As the contributions to this *Hikma* suggest, the disciplines of Islamic Theology and Islamic Education are subject to a number of challenges, keenly discussed in current debates and publications, which often result from a tension between an inside or outside perspective on discipline, faith or concept, thus demonstrating, more than anything else, the plurality of Islam. In this journal it has been and will be our ongoing objective to map these struggles, to give room to diverse opinions, all of which will hopefully provide you, once again, with enlightening and horizon-broadening reading.

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Bülent Uçar