

Preface / Vorwort

Bülent Ucar*

Dear readers,

The current issue of *Hikma* once again presents a series of articles on various themes. This time however they are not exclusively – as in the past issue – devoted to Islamic religious education but also touch on jurisprudence (*fiqh*). In the first article Jörg Ballnus investigates the importance of denominational religious education in preparing school pupils for harmonious coexistence in a pluralistic society. Ballnus presents the possibilities of cooperation with both denominational and non-denominational formats of religious education on the one hand, while also examining options for interreligious learning and skills acquisition within Islamic religion classes. Religious education in schools is also the topic broached by Jan Woppowa. He focuses on two declarations on religious education from a Christian perspective, both published in December 2016: that issued by the German Catholic Bishops' Conference and a position paper by representatives involved in Catholic and Protestant religious education and didactics at German tertiary institutions. Although both declarations reflect Christian perspectives – from the standpoints of the official Church and academia – on the discipline and its dual contexts of theology and religious education, they are nevertheless extremely relevant for further developing Islamic religious education with respect to the conceptual possibilities of cooperating with Catholic and Protestant religious classes. Mahmud El-Wereny explores the theoretical foundations for the facilitation of law in practicing the faith, focusing on Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī (b. 1926), one of the most influential and renowned contemporary Sunni scholars. Qaradāwī is regarded as advocating a notion of facilitated Islamic law (*taysīr al-fiqh*) and this characterizes a number of his copious writings and public statements. Referring to a selection of Qaradāwī's writings, El-Wereny examines the methods and principles underpinning his concept of *taysīr al-fiqh*, while at the same time pursuing the question to what extent Qaradāwī draws on classical or premodern positions to legitimate his standpoint.

The miscellanea contain a detailed review by Bacem Dziri of Steven C. Judd's work on religious scholarship during the Umayyad dynasty. In the process, Dziri draws a connection between current fears about “state Islam” in the context of

* Prof. Dr. Bülent Ucar, editor of the *Hikma*, is Professor for Islamic Studies and Religious Education at Osnabrück University, where he is also the Director of the Institute of Islamic Theology (IIT).

establishing Islamic theology in Germany and notions about the specific relationship scholars had to the Umayyad rulers. Approaching the issue from Steven C. Judd's revision of widespread assumptions about Umayyad scholars, for example that an areligious political leadership of Umayyad rulers confronted scholars covering a spectrum of positions from quietist through to outright opposition, Dziri traces the distinctive arguments put forward by Judd to comment on them in the context of contemporary issues. The connection between contemporary and diverse historical issues is also the subject of an in-depth interview Bacem Dziri conducted with the Syrian-born American theologian Muhammad al-Ninowy, which rounds off the present issue.

For this issue's translation section we are presenting excerpts from Ibrahim Edhem's (d. 1925) Ottoman treatise *Hayatı Beşer İslamiyette Ahlak ve Kadınlarda Tesettür* (Human Life. Ethics in Islam and the Dressing of Women), which Samet Er has rendered into German. Ibrahim Edhem was generally regarded as a reactionary thinker upholding religious tradition and thus vehemently opposed to the political and social changes taking place in Turkey after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, demanding a return to traditional Islamic values. The translated excerpts clearly reveal the tension between the actors of the time, namely those who advocated the conservation of tradition as the means to achieving the general welfare of society and those who sought freedom and progress by doing away with traditional structures. Current political and social developments in Turkey and other countries in the Muslim World show that this tension remains volatile down to the present day.

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Bülent Ucar