

Preface / Vorwort

Editor / Herausgeber*

Dear readers,

a quick glance at the contents page of this edition of the *Hikma* suffices in order to see that in this issue, as in previous editions of the periodical, various aspects of different (Islamic) academic disciplines are addressed. This reflects firstly the diverse and dynamic nature of the current academic discourse on the Islamic religion and culture coupled with the political and education-based discussion about the religion's incorporation into European and international school systems. It is secondly also a consequence of the continuing academic productivity of scholars engaged in 'traditional' Islamic-theological areas of academic research.

In this context, the first article, written by Abdurrahim Kozalı, reviews central aspects of Mullah Hüsrev's commentary on one of the most important Hanafi uşul al-fiqh texts: *Şarḥu Uşūli l-Pazdawī* (commentary on the work entitled *Uşūlu l-Pazdawī*). The 17-page long manuscript is stored and can be viewed at the Beyazıt National Library in Istanbul. It was copied and transformed into a word file by the author, and has been reproduced in its entirety in this edition of the *Hikma*.

In the second article, entitled "*Functionalising Islam: The Schooling Experiences of Malay Muslims in Singapore*", Charlene Tan examines the extent to which different societal actors use or – put in another way – functionalise religion in the Singaporean school system in order to achieve their own aims. The article concentrates on two elements of the Islamic faith, the madrasah (in plural: madāris) and the Islamic headscarf.

Jens Bakker focuses on "*The Meaning of the Term Şarī'ah in the Classical Theology of Sunnite Islam*" in the subsequent text. The author provides an interpretation of standard works from different theological disciplines in order to show that *şarī'ah* is a systematical concept of classical Sunnite theology. In doing so, Bakker also draws attention to some imprecise notions of the term *şarī'ah* persistent in the field of Islamic studies and offers some corrections to these.

In the following article, entitled "*The Human Face According to Islamic Sources*" Enes Karić describes the differing depictions of the human face contained in the Qur'an and Hadith. The author considers these portrayals in the context of modern debates about the 'veiling' of women's faces, and of Muslim women's faces in particular, and comes to the conclusion "that the custom of covering the human face cannot be justified by making reference to the sources of Islam, the Qur'an and Hadith."

Wolf D. Ahmed Aries discusses in his article, entitled "*Some Considerations about the Convert*", the phenomenon of religious conversion and deconversion. He briefly sketches earlier developments of the Islamic religion in Germany and the influence of traditions in Islamic faith. The author also examines this issue from both a Christian and an Islamic perspective and describes the methods employed in both religions towards coming

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to terms with societal disappointments ensuing from unpredictable events (*Kontingenzbewältigung*).

The academic articles section concludes with Omar Hamdan's study into "*The Balance of Power in Baṣra during the Period of Umayyad Rule, with a Particular Emphasis on the Construction of Mosques*". The author shows, amongst other things, that the decision of the Umayyad rulers in Baṣra to construct mosques was motivated not just by the desire to create new places of worship, but also by the wish to portray a more positive image of the ruling regime to the population at large. The attempts by Umayyad rulers to use the newly-erected mosques to secure their own rule of the city prompted many of their opponents to turn to small mosques established in private homes.

The second section of the journal traditionally contains a number of conference reports. The first of these is written by Gamāl 'Abd al Naṣr and Christiane Paulus, and reviews the conference entitled *Enlightenment in Islamic Thoughts: Its Necessities and Dimensions* which took place at the University of Cairo in Egypt. This is followed by Kathrin Klausning's review of the *Expertmeeting on the Inholland Imam / Islamic Spiritual Worker Training Programme*, which took place at the Inholland University of applied sciences in Amsterdam, and by Stephanie Klein's report on the conference *Islamic Counselling Between its Beginnings and the Future: From the Theological Groundwork to the Everyday Practice in Germany* at the Centre for Intercultural Islamic Studies (ZIIS) of Osnabrück University. Davut Tekin and Andreas Gorzewski subsequently present the key findings of the international conference *Alevism in Germany – Investigating the Past, Structuring the Present* which was held at the academy of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Berlin. This part of the journal concludes with a report by Rüdiger Lohlker on the Summer School 2012, which was held in Granada (Spain). This event was a cooperation between Osnabrück University and the University of Tübingen, and was labelled *Andalusia as an Example for Islamic Scholarly Teaching on European Soil*.

The conference reports are followed by two 'miscellanea', a new category in this issue of the *Hikma* to which I would like to bring your attention. In this and in future editions of the periodical, smaller contributions concentrating on a range of different academic issues will appear in this section. These include, amongst other things, more detailed book reviews (i.e. as opposed to smaller reviews) and (research) papers reporting on recent developments at the various institutes for Islamic Theology in Germany and on research being carried out on other areas of Islamic studies in Germany and abroad. In addition, this section will offer space for responses to contributions made in previous editions of the *Hikma*. Authors contributing to this section of the journal are granted a greater degree of freedom as regards the shape and style of their articles: An essayistic style of writing, factual reports, reportages or interviews can all be accepted.

The first contribution to the 'miscellaneous' section of the journal is Stefan Wild's "*Comments on Some of the Recent Translations of the Koran into German and a Review of Mahmoud Haggag's Publication: The Translations of the Koran into German and Their Contribution to the Emergence of a Picture of Islam in the Minds of German Readers*". This contribution presents a critical and highly competent depiction of different translations of the Koran which is rounded off with a review of Haggag's work. At the very beginning the author stresses that in the controversial field of translating the Koran, the fol-

lowing must always be considered: “It is especially true for the Koran that each translation is to a great extent a question of interpretation and exegesis.”

The second contribution to the ‘miscellaneous’ section is provided by Bacem Dziri, and is entitled “*Insights and Prospects on the Horizon as Regards the Controversy Pertaining to the Moon Sighting Debate*”. Dziri provides details of his research and analyses the current debate regarding the differing provisions and regulations governing the beginning and the ending of Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting. In Dziri’s view, this debate is connected to a series of fundamental questions and deeper lying causes, which are in themselves in urgent need of solution.

The penultimate section of the *Hikma* contains as usual a number of literature reviews. The section commences with Silvia Horsch’s appraisal of a publication by R. Bernhardt and K. von Stosch (eds.) entitled *Komparative Theologie. Interreligiöse Vergleiche als Weg der Religionstheologie* (translation: *Comparative Theology. Interreligious Comparisons as the Path of Religious Theology*). This is followed by Florian Remien’s critique of: B. Idriz et al. (eds.) *Islam mit europäischem Gesicht: Perspektiven und Impulse* (translation: *Islam with a European Face: Perspectives and Impulses*). Kathrin Klausning then provides a double review on the following two publications: *Themenkonkordanz Koran* (translation: *The Concordance of Subjects in the Koran*) and *Lan Tabur – Themenregister des Al-Qur’ān Al-Karīm* (translation: *Lan Tabur – Subject Index of the Al-Qur’ān Al-Karīm*). These works were written by Adel Theodor Khoury (2009) and Muhammad Rasoul (1993) respectively. Thorsten Knauth subsequently provides a critical review of a volume entitled *Islamischer Religionsunterricht in Deutschland. Fachdidaktische Konzeptionen: Ausgangslage, Erwartungen und Ziele* (translation: *Islamic Religious Teaching in Germany. Didactic Conceptions: Starting Position, Expectations and Targets*) edited by B. Ucar and D. Bergmann. The final review is written by Elif Medeni on the school book: *Mein Islambuch. Grundschule 3* (translation: *My Book of Islam. Primary School 3*).

This edition of the journal concludes with an interview conducted by Bülent Ucar and Hakkı Arslan with Tayyar Altıkulaç – one of the most influential authorities in the institutional and functional sectors of Islamic Theology in Turkey. The interview focuses chiefly on biographic aspects and their influence on Altıkulaç’s career.

It remains for me to offer my most sincere thanks to the editorial team of the *Hikma* for their efforts and their perseverance, and to all authors for their contributions and their cooperation. On the part of the co-editors, I would like to wish everybody thought provoking and horizon-broadening reading.

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