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Preface / Vorwort

Editor / Herausgeber*

Dear readers,

This edition of the *Hikma* – the sixth in total – contains articles examining Islamic theological subjects from the perspective of differing technical disciplines and contexts. These include legal theory, language philosophy, Qur’anic exegesis, (Islamic) teaching methodology, religious pedagogics and history. The topics examined in the articles once again testify to the fact that science, with its methods, instruments and theories is – and indeed must be – highly sensitive to context, multi-referential and complex in nature in order to generate results that are valid and can be made subject to an inter-subjective process of verification.

Hakkı Arslan is in this context able to show the linguistic-theological concepts of classical Hanafi works in his article “*Language-Games in the Classical Hanafī Uṣūl al-fiqh Works*” by examining the representative piece of work *Kanz al-wuṣūl ilā ma’rifati ‘ilmi l-uṣūl* written by Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Pazdawī (deceased 482/1089). In doing so, Arslan demonstrates how linguistic and philosophical elements came together in a communication theory developed by Hanafī scholars. The latter employed this theory in order to develop both argumentative guidelines and rules governing religious conduct, the main information for which was obtained from primary sources of knowledge.

Omar Hamdan examines a hadith from the *mawḍū’āt* literature in his article “*Hadith-Criticism: the Example of Literature Examining Mawḍū’āt*”. The author emphasizes that any form of scholarly analysis of a hadith should consider not just the *matn* and the *isnād*, but also the historical context in which it was written. In order to understand and do justice to hadiths and to fully grasp the true nature of life when they were written it is thus necessary to consider the historical constellations of power and the connected interpretations and deliberate misuses which were made of the relevant hadith(s).

The following article is written by Hüseyin İlker Çınar and entitled “*Who is a Muḡtahid? The Discussion over the Characteristics of a Muḡtahid in the Study of the Origins, Sources, and Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*”. The text briefly outlines some of the more controversial views found in the works of *uṣūl al-fiqh* regarding the personal characteristics and skills required to be able to occupy the position of a *muḡtahid*. The author sketches the various views which exist on the question about whether and to what extent a potential *muḡtahid* ought to possess knowledge in different areas of scientific understanding in order to be able to and / or be allowed to practice *iḡtihād*. One of the main issues outlined concerns the hierarchical classification of legal scholars into seven different groups depending on their legal qualifications and abilities. In addition, the text emphasizes another highly relevant issue: the notion of a ‘compartmentalization’ of *iḡtihād*. According to this concept, jurists can obtain the position of a *muḡtahid* in specific

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areas in which they possess special knowledge. Çınar considers the different views and opinions on these issues and subsequently gives his own considered opinion.

In the following article entitled “*Theology in Malaysia: Between the Mainstream and the Periphery*” Maszlee Malik highlights the dynamic and complex development of the differing Islamic-theological streams of thought in Malaysia and relates them to events which have taken place at a global level over the course of time. He explains how multi-causal, external factors and especially the ‘internet revolution’ of the 21st century have significantly shaped the “battle to define the official Islamic theology in Malaysia”. This conflict continues to take place between the different religious streams present in the country: traditional Aš‘arīs, reformists, people adhering to the Shiite theology and emerging (more) radical Salafi groups.

In the final article of the first section of the journal, entitled “*Competence-Oriented Islamic Religious Education*”, Musa Bağraç endeavors to find an adequate competence-oriented concept for Islamic religious education in Germany. The author suggests the development of a type of ‘Islamic religious didactics’ which, while being grounded in Islamic-theological views, is at the same time capable of incorporating multidisciplinary elements and concepts employed when teaching Christian religion in schools, such as the so-called ‘*Korrelationsdidaktik*’ (roughly translated as ‘correlation didactics’) and ‘*Elementarisierungsdidaktik*’ (roughly translated as ‘elementarisation / compartmentalization of teaching’). In this context, Bağraç regards the promotion and further instruction of religious competence as being especially appropriate for Islamic religious education.

The second section of the journal contains a number of conference reports. The first of these was written by Davut Tekin and Ibrahim Salama about the conference organized by the Centre for Islamic Theology of the Westphalian-Wilhelms University Münster, labelled *Theology of Mercifulness – Contemporary Questions and Answers of the Kalām*. This is followed by a report by Elif Medeni on the annual conference of the Association of Religious Education Scholars, this year called: *Christian and Islamic Religious Education Scholarship in Dialogue* in Berlin. The next report was written by Thomas Würtz on the Specialist Conference of the Research Colloquium ‘Christianity – Islam’ (Bad Schönbrunn, Switzerland), entitled *Holy Locations in Christianity and Islam and Changes in the Religious Centres of Interpretation*. Subsequently, Martina Blasberg-Kuhnke’s contribution *Adjournment* gives an insight into the *Opening of the Institute for Islamic Theology (IIT) of Osnabrück University and the Centre for Islamic Theology Münster / Osnabrück* on 30 October 2012, which is complemented by an excerpt from the speech held by Prof. Dr. Bülent Ucar on that special day.

In addition, this section also contains reports by Silvia Horsch on a specialist conference held in Berlin as part of the German Islamic Conference: *Muslimophobia. Phenomena and Counter-Strategies*, and by Ruggero Vimercati Sanseverino on the workshop at the IIT of Osnabrück University, labelled *Islamic Law in Theory and in the Practice*.

The miscellaneous section introduced in the previous edition of the *Hikma* commences with a report by Ibrahim Salama on the origin and further development of the “*Cooperation between the IIT of Osnabrück University and Al-Azhar-University, Cairo*” and the projects which are planned as part of this cooperation. This is followed by a brief contribution entitled “*Thoughts on the Academic Islam and on Concepts of Identity in Germany*” by Davut Tekin. In this article, the author calls for the existence of a form of

Muslim identity in Germany, the presence of which he believes to be clearly evident in today's German society, to be officially recognized. This identity, whose emergence the author attributes to a successful synthesization of specific Islamic-religious and German-national elements, can be regarded as being on the one hand beneficial for German society. On the other hand, its presence can also be seen as having a positive influence on both the academic and the more general societal discourse on Islam. The third article in this section is a guest contribution by Manfred Spieker, entitled "*Pope Benedict XVI. and the Interreligious Dialogue. Eleven Observations*". In this article, the author briefly outlines the Pope emeritus' "exceptional importance" for the intercultural dialogue with Islam from a Catholic perspective.

As always, this issue of the *Hikma* also contains a number of book reviews on publications examining issues relating to Islam and the Islamic religion.

The first book review is written by Stephan Guth on the title: *Der utopische Roman ‚Das Land der Bienen‘ von Ali Nar (The Utopian Novel: ‚The Land of the Bees‘ by Ali Nar)* edited by Bülent Ucar. This is followed by Angelika Neuwirth's review of Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann's work *Die Entstehung des Korans. Neue Erkenntnisse aus Sicht der historisch-kritischen Bibelwissenschaft (The Views of Historical Biblical Exegetics on New Findings concerning the Origin of the Koran)*. Bacem Dziri subsequently critically engages with Alexander Flores' book *Zivilisation oder Barbarei? Der Islam im historischen Kontext (Civilization or Barbary? Islam in a Historical Context)*. This is followed by a joint review of Rüdiger Lohlker's companion *Islamisches Recht (Islamic Law)* by Abdurrahim Kozalı and Hakkı Arslan. Finally, Johannes Twardella reviews Zita Bertenrath's work *Muslimische und christliche Gottesvorstellungen im Klassenraum. Eine qualitative Studie mit Schülerinnen und Schülern im islamischen und christlichen Religionsunterricht (Muslim and Christian Perceptions of God in the Classroom. A Qualitative Study with School Pupils Participating in Classes of Islamic and Christian Religious Education)*, and – last but not least – Michael Kiefer evaluates Aysun Yaşar's study *Die DITIB zwischen der Türkei und Deutschland. Untersuchungen zur Türkisch-Islamischen Union der Anstalt für Religion e.V. (The DITIB between Turkey and Germany. Studies on the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs)*.

This edition of the *Hikma* concludes with an *Interview with Professor Dato' Sri Dr. Zaleha Kamaruddin, Rector of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), about Islamic Theology in Malaysia and Germany.*

The chief editors, the editorial team and I hope you enjoy this edition of the journal and find it an interesting read. I am truly thankful to all authors for their contributions and to the editorial team of the *Hikma* for coordinating the activities and for proofreading the various articles. Their endeavors have once again enabled the publication of this edition of the *Hikma* in its current form.

Osnabrück, April 2013

Bülent Ucar