

FROM THE EDITORS

The new issue of *Ilahiyat Studies* is here! The current issue contains four articles, three book reviews, and an obituary for the late professor Fuat Sezgin.

In her thought-provoking article “Defining a Christian Virtue in the Islamic Context: the Concept of Gratitude in Elias of Nisibis’ *Kitāb daf‘ al-hamm*,” Ayşe İ öz provides the reader with an in-depth analysis of the unstudied second division of *Daf‘ al-hamm* of Elias of Nisibis. The purpose of the article is to examine how the notion of gratitude, *shukr*, is defined and promoted in the text and the ways in which the author engaged with the then dominant Islamic culture. According to İ öz, a careful analysis of the content, structure, and the language of this chapter reveals that, Elias did not hesitate to use material from traditional Islamic sources to encourage his Christian audience to attain gratitude, which indicates that, Elias was influenced greatly by the surrounding Islamic culture so much so that he was able to involve actively in the Christian-Muslim polemics of his time.

Zuhâl Ađılıkaya-Şahin’s article, “Bridging Pastoral Psychology and Positive Psychology,” attempts to show how these two seemingly separate disciplines can benefit from the findings, theories, and terminologies of each other, without necessarily excluding one another, in their respective fields of practice. This was not possible, argues the author, when science was done from a purely nineteenth century positivistic social science and humanities perspective, which did not allow any religious or metaphysical topic to be part of the so-called “scientific endeavor.” The author seems to be arguing that religion and psychology rediscovered each other in a new scientific paradigm in the near past. This is a timely article in that, it addresses some of the vexing issues regarding the relationship between psychology and religion/theology not only in the academic and

religious circles in the West but also in our own society as exemplified in the initiatives of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) and some of the leading universities and NGOs.

“A Ḥadīth and Its Indication Problem within the Context of Relationship between Faith and Deeds,” co-authored by Hüseyin Kahraman & Hacer Şahin, is a technical and detailed analysis of a certain saying of the Prophet of Islam with regard to prayer, *ṣalāb*. There has been a great debate about how to determine the “authentic” meaning of this ḥadīth. The authors argue and conclude that the argument that “the status of abandoners of is left to the will of Allah” contradicts the Qur’ānic verses and ḥadīths, where the punishments foreseen for the unexcused abandoning of *ṣalāb* are explained; and therefore this argument cannot be sustained, for the Qur’ān and the Sunnah point to the insistence on the commandment of *ṣalāb* and how great a sin it is to abandon it. Based on these data and various other interpretations, according to the authors, the deliberate abandoners of *ṣalāb* will be losers in the Hereafter. Therefore, these Qur’ānic verses and ḥadīths do not in any way state that abandoners of *ṣalāb* will be *definitely* left to Allah’s will; but that they will be severely punished, rejecting the opposite interpretation, which argues that the status of the mentioned abandoners is left to Allah, and thus forgiveness is possible.

The final article, “Reflection of Qāḍizādelis-Khalwatīs Tension on the Islamic Heresiography: Muṣṭafā ibn Ibrāhīm and His Alphabetical Classification of Sects,” by Mehmet Kalaycı and Muhammet Emin Eren, analyzes a treatise within the late Muslim heresiographical literature: *al-Madhbhab al-ḥaqq wa-l-madbāb al-bāṭilab* written by Muṣṭafā ibn Ibrāhīm. According to the authors, the treatise is remarkable in that, it attempts to create an alphabetical script. Given that there has been no previous attempt of this sort and that the classification forms of different traditions made on the basis of the polemical ḥadīth of seventy-three sects still maintain their influence, the text is original and deserves to be regarded as a welcome contribution to the heresiographical literature. The purpose of this article, then, is to analyze the treatise, which has reached our time in the Balıkesir Library of Manuscripts, in terms of its author, the period in which it was composed, and its content.

On behalf of the editorial team, we wish to extend words of thanks to all those involved in the production of this new volume of *IS*. We are grateful for the support and feedback we received from you, the readers, in the past nine years and we assure you that *IS* will continue

to publish high-quality research articles, book reviews, review articles, and the like. Enjoy reading!

We wish you all the best for the coming year.

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