

FROM THE EDITORS

Greetings and welcome back to *Ilahiyat Studies*.

This issue of *IS* features four articles and two book review essays. Norman K. Swazo's engaging article, "Jihadists Wrong Themselves Morally: An Islamic-Aristotelian Interpretation," evaluates the current status of the so called "radical Islamism" from an ethical perspective as articulated by George Hourani. According to the author, Hourani's work is important because of his philosophical grounding in both Western and Islamic thought and because of his effort to relate an Islamic interpretation to the moral philosophy of Aristotle. Swazo maintains that Hourani's interpretation provides a reasonably defensible account enabling a moral evaluation of jihadist actions. Swazo further articulates his theoretical account by considering a well-known police action in Bangladesh to prove the historical significance and contemporary relevance of this debate.

In the second article, "Finding al-Fārābī in *The Walking Dead*," Ebrar Akdeniz and Özgür Kavak present a thought-provoking analysis of the ways classical thinkers such as al-Fārābī, Ibn Khaldūn, Plato or Aristotle can help us understand the human situation in ever-changing contexts. To illustrate their case, the authors attempt to read the television series *The Walking Dead* (*TWD*) through al-Fārābī's political philosophy that shows convincingly why humans need to live together as social and political agents. Seen from this perspective, the authors seem to refuse to regard *TWD* simply as a zombie show, but a philosophical discourse. Therefore, their work argues that al-Fārābī's understanding of human nature and his identification of virtuous and unvirtuous communities can be read correspondingly with the survivors and communities in *TWD*.

In his article, "The Companions' Understanding of Sunnah: the Example of 'Abd Allāh Ibn Mas'ūd," Serkan Başaran addresses the question of how to understand the Sunnah of the Prophet of Islam in the academic studies. He argues that there are at least two approaches to the subject, which are both misleading, for they tend to focus only

on one aspect of the problem. According to the author, certain studies treat the Sunnah as consisting of narratives that offer only jurisprudential solutions for secondary problems; while others, which highlights behavior-centered aspect of the Sunnah, transform the latter into a sphere that can be experienced only at the imitative level, falling prey to reductionism. The article attempts to overcome this reductionism by revisiting ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Mas‘ūd’s understanding of Sunnah since he plays a central role in shaping the Classical Islamic Sciences, not least in the early Ḥadīth literature.

Tolga S. Altınel’s article, “An Evaluation of the Identity of *Sāmirī* in the Qur’ān,” is a fine criticism leveled against the infamous Orientalist claim that the Prophet of Islam copied several stories narrated in the Qur’ān from the Bible. According to the author, this understanding is based upon a biased conviction that the Bible is the authentic source of these stories while the Qur’ān is not because there are both similarities and differences among those stories as they were narrated in both of these sacred Scriptures. Against this conviction the author invites us to consider the possibility that the incidents depicted in certain stories such as Golden Calf and the identity of *Sāmirī* might have happened in a different way from what is described in the Bible, thereby considering the Qur’ān an authentic source. He tries to present his case by comparing and contrasting the stories as they were narrated in the Bible and in the Qur’ān.

There are some minor changes in our editorial team that we would like to share with our readers and contributors. We are grateful to Ümmügül Betül Kanburoğlu Ergün for her meticulous work as an assistant editor thus far; we wish her well. On the other hand, we would like to welcome Muhammed Tarakçı, professor of History of Religions, as an associate editor, and Pınar Zararsız and Zeynep Sena Kaya as assistant editors.

As the editorial team, we are thankful to our authors, referees, and readers for their continued support and look forward to being with you in the next issues of *Ilahiyat Studies*.

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