

FROM THE EDITORS

Greetings and welcome back to *Ilahiyat Studies*. The current issue of *IS* features three articles, two book reviews, and an obituary by Ali Yaşar Sarıbay that says farewell to the late professor Peter L. Berger.

In the first article, “A Critical Analysis of Existential Security Theory,” Akbarshah Ahmadi and Kemal Ataman present a compelling case against Pippa Norris’s and Ronald F. Inglehart’s theory of “existential security,” which attempts to invalidate the criticisms levelled against certain aspects of classical secularization theories by arguing that the principle catalyst for secularization is not rationalization and differentiation, but security of all sorts. Ahmadi and Ataman argue that the theory of existential security, in its current form and content, is nothing but a revised version of the classical secularization theory, for it too cannot account for the religious change, plurality, diversity, and the function of religion in our contemporary situation.

In the second article, “Perception of Islam in Zoroastrian Zand Literature,” Mehmet Alıcı presents a nuanced and informative analysis of the way Zoroastrians regard Islam and Muslims as presented in the Zand theological literature. According to Alıcı, Zoroastrian religious tradition developed a negative attitude towards Islam in general and the Muslim community in particular especially as the Muslim presence was intensified in the Zoroastrian regions; so much so that the Muslim conquest was seen as a sign that the end of this world was near. The purpose of this work, then, is to explain how Zoroastrians, who are treated as People of the Book and have *dhimmī* status in Islamic law, shaped their perception of Islam in their religious literature.

In his article, “Writings as a Form of Opposition: *Mathālib* Literature in the First Three Centuries AH,” Muhammed Enes Topgöl presents a detailed analysis of a certain genre, “mathālib”, developed in the first three centuries of the Muslim era. The *mathālib* is subdivided into two subgenres: *Mathālib al-‘Arab* and *mathālib al-ṣaḥābab*. The purpose of the article is to present the existence of this genre, to identify the authors of these works in the first three centuries AH, and to interpret

the available data about this genre with regard to ḥadīth history. Topgöl aims to achieve this goal by answering several vexing questions: What are the reasons behind the emergence of *mathālib* literature? How capable were these works of reflecting the opinions of the religious and social structure of the time? How did *mathālib* works influence the ḥadīth literature? According to Topgöl, it is impossible to give any satisfactory answer to any of the above questions without considering the political, ideological, and ethnic issues.

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

Editors

Kemal Ataman & Turgay Gündüz

ataman@uludag.edu.tr

tgunduz@uludag.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5107-8367>

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8019-4009>