

İLAHİYAT STUDIES

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

Welcome back to the new issue of *Ilahiyat Studies*. Firstly, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to Prof. Dr. Muhammet Tarakçı, who is stepping down from his role as Editor-in-Chief — where he shoulder-borne the immense responsibility of our journal— and will continue to support us as Publisher Director. We are also delighted to welcome Asst. Prof. Recep Erkmen and Res. Asst. Büşra Tamaç as they join us as associate editors beginning with this issue, their contributions will strengthen our journal even further.

This issue of *IS* features seven research articles. In the first article, “An Overshadowed Akbarī Sufi in Fourteenth-Century Anatolia: Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Tustarī and His Intellectual Legacy”, Orhan Musahanlı offers a critical analysis that clarifies the persistent identity dilemma involving the two scholars from the same period who lived in the 14th century: Badr al-Dīn al-Tustarī and Shams al-Dīn al-Tustarī. Although the first scholar was widely studied, the latter has been little known owing to the mixing of manuscripts. Using a highly detailed comparative approach, the author manages to distinguish the scholars’ identities and create a portrait of Shams al-Dīn as a thinker. According to the findings, he represents a Sufi from Anatolia living in Konya and serving as the Mamlūk rulers and Eşrefoğlu family’s patron, whose contribution lies in his unique combination of Peripatetic philosophy and Akbarī Sufism.

In the second article, “Peripheral Fire: Once Upon a Time in Daskyleion and Western Anatolia”, Nevfel Akyar analyzes the existence and development of the Iranian religions like Zoroastrianism in the Western Anatolia under the reign of the Achaemenids, with particular attention to Daskyleion and Sardis. Using archaeological,

epigraphic, and textual sources, this work will look at the ways how key Zoroastrian beliefs and practices have survived as a result of their adaptation in the region rather than enforcement by the state. The author emphasizes the flexibility and plurality of the imperial environment where the overall tolerance of Persians has helped local cults develop alongside Iranian ones.

In the article “Multilingualism in Family Law According to Shāfi‘ī Madhhab”, Davut Eşit offers an extensive examination of the use of languages other than Arabic in family laws belonging to the Shāfi‘ī madhhab. Through analyzing disputes regarding the languages used in matters such as marriage (*nikāḥ*), divorce (*ṭalāq*), and imprecation (*li‘ān*), the author explores the way in which the jurists managed to reconcile the sanctity of Arabic with practical considerations arising from the social diversity of language use. Even though there was a group of scholars who stressed adherence to the principles of *naşş*, the main trend within the school was that of multilingualism – acceptance of the usage of the native tongue even by those familiar with Arabic.

The article, “Contemplation in Two Muslim Countries: A Comparative Qualitative Study in Türkiye and Bosnia-Herzegovina”, by Esra İrk, Ümran Erkorkmaz Çoban, Elif Çağlayan, and Armin Jasarevic, investigates the perception of contemplation (*tafakkur*) among Muslims in Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The study makes use of a semi-structured interview approach and content analysis and the results reveal that contemplation in both cultures is a multifaceted activity that adds to the psychological well-being and spiritual life of individuals. In addition, there are some unique cultural differences whereby the Turkish respondents consider contemplation associated with nature and positive feelings whereas the Bosnian respondents take part in metaphysical reflection regarding historical events and experience both positive and negative feelings.

The article entitled “Cyberspirituality: A New Way of Practicing Spirituality and Being in the Digital World” by Ali Ayten and Sebiha Yıldız has introduced a novel concept by presenting cyberspirituality as a way of explaining the conceptual uncertainties associated with religion and spirituality in the digital world. Using the literature review method, the research presents cyberspirituality as an independent sub-category of spirituality mediated through technology, which is different from both the conventional religions and the digital religion.

This research illustrates the way this emerging category helps include a wide range of spiritualities practiced by individuals as they make sense out of themselves through a number of processes carried out digitally.

In their article, “Transhumanism: A Religious Movement Opposing Religion in the Digi Age”, Ahmet Dağ and Ahamadou Sylla criticize transhumanism with regard to its scientific assumptions and theological essence. As a secular idea focused on physical improvement of people (Human 2.0), transhumanism demonstrates similarities with religious attempts of achieving eternal life. There is an interesting comparison of religion’s pursuit of spiritual ascension with the transhumanist pursuit of material perfection. Being based on statistics that demonstrate the connection between automation and weakening of religious beliefs, the paper discusses the way digitalization negatively impacts religious identities. In the end, the researchers provide a deep analysis of the way transhumanism challenges modern religions.

In the last article of this issue, “Cosmic Destruction and the Eschatological Threshold: A Comparative Analysis of the Apocalypse Motif in the Qur’ān, Mythology, and Turkish Folk Narratives”, by Kadir Gömbeyaz and Fatma Aygün, a comparative perspective of apocalyptic and cosmic destruction tales is given with the help of an anthropological approach to the idea of liminality. With the use of the Qur’ānic verses, classical myths, and Turkish tales, the author claims that such stories serve as the structure of transition between chaos and order, as opposed to just being accounts of destruction. This research shows that different concepts of time exist in various cultures: the Qur’ān suggests a linear irreversibility of the event with the divine intervention; mythological ideas imply a cyclic nature moving towards cosmic regeneration; Turkish folktales combine these two notions within their collective memory.

We, the editorial team, express gratitude to our authors, reviewers, and readers for their continued support and look forward to being with you in the next issues of *Ilahiyat Studies*.

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ARTICLES

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Orhan Musahanlı



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*Discussions on Cyberspirituality: A New Form of Spiritual Practice
and Existential Presence in the Digital Realm*

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