

FROM THE EDITORS

Greetings,

It has been exactly ten years since we launched the first issue of the *Ilahiyat Studies* with a vision to become an internationally accredited academic platform to disseminate knowledge accumulated by researchers in different fields of Islamic and religious studies. We are happy to see that the feedback we have received thus far has been extremely positive and encouraging. It is this sense of fulfillment that makes us as a team going.

This issue of *IS* features three articles and a book review. In their qualitative research “Formation and Consequences of the Conversion Process: A Qualitative Study of Adult Converts,” Ali Ayten, Hatice Kılınçer, Nuriman Ulu, Nihal İşbilen, and Hafize Albayrak focus on the intra-religious conversion process with its three-step stages: pre-conversion, during conversion, and post-conversion. The article discusses the various factors that influence the conversion process such as family values, religious education, and environmental variables like encountering role models and traumatic life events. The findings indicate that those participants who lacked religious education complained about bullying, feeling left out, and not understanding religiosity correctly. Whereas both female and male participants claimed that the intra-religious conversion process supported their personal, spiritual, and religious development and maturity, several female participants stated that they distanced themselves from religion due to the negative image of women in the religious-cultural context.

Mohammad Abu Shareea’s article, “How Could Early Christians Be Wrong? The Role of *Fahm al-Salaf* in the Biblical Hermeneutics of Ibn Taymiyyah and Michael Servetus,” presents a detailed analysis of the centrality of the argument about the early authorities’ understanding of scripture within the Biblical hermeneutics of Ibn

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Taymiyyah and Michael Servetus from a comparative perspective. The topics of this hermeneutics include linguistic analysis, scriptural usage and historical contexts of a term, scriptural harmony, and early authorities' understanding of the Scripture. The study concludes, first, that the logical conclusions of Servetus's hermeneutics should have led to Joseph Priestley's concept of God. Second, if Ibn Taymiyyah had access to the writings of the ante-Nicene fathers, then he would have argued for the Ebionites. Finally, a critical question could be presented by Christians to the Muslim audience regarding the divinity of Jesus is the argument from *tawātur ma'nawī*.

In his politically oriented article, "Understanding the Discourse of 'Alī Jum'ah on the Military Coup during the Arab Spring in Egypt," Muhamad Rofiq Muzakkir attempts to propose an alternative explanation to the existing scholarship about the factors behind the failure of Egypt to transform into a democratic country after having experienced the major moment of the Arab Spring. The main thesis of the article is that the theological discourse of the '*ulamā*' and their commitment to one of the currents of Islamic political thought in the premodern period contributed to the miscarriage of the Arab Spring. To prove his case, the author focuses on the discourse of the previous grand muftī of Egypt on the military coup against the democratically elected president, Muḥammad Mursī. He traces 'Alī Jum'ah's discourse on the coup through several medieval Muslim scholars' views on the usurpation of power, namely, al-Māwardī, al-Ghazālī, and Ibn Jamā'ah, concluding that the tendency to conform with tradition led 'Alī Jum'ah to formulate his undemocratic discourse.

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