

FROM THE EDITOR

We are going through a period in which political and social unrest of Islamic world makes the renewal of Islamic sciences, with its all complexity, an undeniable problem. There has always been a distance between the scholars and the public which stems from the sensibility about discussing religious matters only among *'ulamā*. The distance is quickly decreasing, and this situation -contrary to expectations- leads to the results against the academy. While a group of people who would not accept even a classical scholar 'traditional' enough raise their voices as is expected from people thinking with slogans, the academics scared of being labelled as not traditional and pious enough gradually loses their role in the religious discourse and hence their standing in the society. Ironically, voices raised as a reaction to and to prevent modern debates both prove and strengthen the pervasive presence of modernity in our life. Always having positions in need of constant defence, we postpone discussing our problems on their terms as a defence mechanism, and the resulting void gives more space for modernity and secularism to operate. However, we are in an urgent need to find solutions to these problems *here and now*. We cannot afford the luxury of holding over our problems and demands for 'renewal', an unpopular word we are afraid to use, until better days come. Otherwise, we are destined to oscillate between those who find the classical scholars not traditional enough, and the secular Muslims who practice only rituals, and find their own way in other areas by departmentalizing their lives. All these developments point out that it is time to effectively use the possibilities provided by traditional paradigm, and to accept renewals when it is necessary. For this reason, it can be said that academic studies are the most important 'front' that can fight a successful battle against modernity instead of facilitating it.

In this issue of *Hadīth and Sīra Studies*, which supports academic studies and develops with them, we present you various articles, a thesis review and a research note also a Turkish translation of an article by Jonathan Brown, one of the most important hadīth scholars of our time. We are grateful to Prof. Brown and Brill for giving the permission to publish the translation. In "Research Notes" section, we wanted the results of a book on the *'Irāqī fuqahā*'s uses of *hadīth* to be summarized by its author himself. We hope that this will set an example and give a space to academics who wish to share the results of their new studies, the methods they follow, and even the difficulties they faced during the research. These types of writings could

give to the works described 'good' but because of various reasons such as the being voluminous, intricate in terms of subject and style not reviewed or criticized sufficiently the opportunity to be discussed in scholarly circles. On the other hand, many Turkish studies which can contribute to international debates on Islamic sciences cannot reach to the readers due to language barrier. With this realization, we are planning to give our authors translation support in upcoming issues.

We are waiting for your contributions to our journal by reminding that we can proceed with humble but confident steps on our journey of becoming an international journal, especially with the distinguished works of Turkish academia.

Fatma Kızıl