

## BOOKS RECEIVED

*Autochtone islamische Aufklärung im 18. Jahrhundert: Theoretische und filologische Bemerkungen. Fortführung einer Debatte* by Bernd Radtke. Utrecht: M.Th. Houtsma Stichting 2000. xi, 106 pp. ISBN 90-801040-5-1.

This is a work of polemics. It springs from a debate concerning the possible existence of an autonomous Islamic enlightenment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to be found among ‘neo-Sufis’ as well as among poets and intellectuals in Syria and elsewhere. This hypothesis, put forward by Reinhard Schulze in a series of articles, was sharply criticised among others by Bernd Radtke. A debate ensued, involving a number of scholars in Germany and elsewhere.

In this ‘continuation’ of the debate, Radtke sets out to destroy his opponent’s source basis. By studying the various texts and quotations that Schulze has used in his articles, Radtke shows how his opponent has misquoted, misread, mistranslated, misunderstood and misused each and every source that he quotes, partly, according to the author, by carelessness, partly by lack of linguistic competence, partly by twisting the words so that the quote should fit the desired context. In support of his accusations, Radtke presents each of the twenty-nine examples in the context it was written, in Schulze’s and his own transliteration, in his own, Schulze’s and any other available translation, and with philological and/or contextual commentary.

The tone is sharp and sarcastic, often veering towards the insulting, fuelled, the author says, by his fury at the level of academic dilettantry he finds in his opponent. The book is therefore primarily to be read in the context of this debate only. It does however also contain some more general

comments, thus surveys of the contents of ° Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī's *Īdāḥ al-dalālāt* (p. 15-24, primarily on music) and of al-Birkawī's *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥammadiya* (p. 43-50).

Most of the sources discussed are from the Arab east, but the debate itself also concerns the nineteenth-century Sufi movements, and thus have some indirect relation to Islam in Africa.

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