

# Bonner Querschnitte

## Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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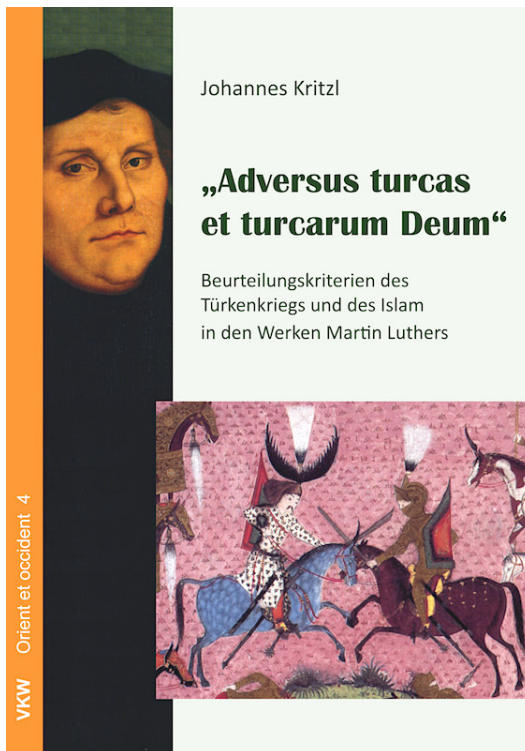
### Book on Luther and Islam downloadable for free to mark the Anniversary of the Reformation

(Bonn, 26.06.2017) As a contribution to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, Culture and Science Publishing (Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft) is making the book by Johannes Kritzl on Luther's assessment of the Turkish wars available for download free of charge.

According to Thomas Schirrmacher, the publishing house owner, what we have to thank Luther for with respect to Islam is often overlooked. As much as one has to reject how Luther spoke about Muslims, and as much as one has to take into account that his contemporaries did not have an opportunity to inform themselves truly about Islam, Luther contended for a translation of the Koran which in the end appeared with his foreword and thus prescribed that one should learn about other religions from what they say about themselves and not from hearsay.

More important still is the fact that, according to Schirrmacher, Luther had overcome the concept of crusades. Indeed, Schirrmacher holds, this is visible in the 95 Theses and then repeatedly in Luther's ever new writings and statements he made throughout his life. The church, and along with that the pope, had no authority to wage war against the Turks. The emperor alone would have to, and would be allowed to, lead a war against Turkey, and that should only be allowed in the case of defense. In the process, the emperor would be defending all of his citizens, not only Christians.

In addition, from the very beginning Luther had incessantly emphasized that Christians are first of all self-critical and have to repent before they can judge others. As severely as Luther was able to speak about Turks, what he said about Christians exceeded that. According to Schirrmacher, it is Christian, Biblical, and very relevant nowadays to exercise self-criticism prior to any opinions of superiority.



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[www.islaminstitute.net](http://www.islaminstitute.net)

International Institute for Religious Freedom of the World Evangelical Alliance  
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Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance  
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In the volume entitled *Adversus turcas et turcarum Deum*, Dr. Johannes Kitzl, an Austrian Catholic theologian and historian, addresses the question of which evaluation criteria Martin Luther applied to the Turkish wars and Islam, which of these criteria we should reject as purely culturally conditioned, and which continue to be helpful and important. He clearly differentiates between the everyday political opinions Luther had and those principles arising out of his theology which can also be more helpful than ever for non-Lutheran Christians today. Where did Luther see the main differences between the truths he discovered and a religion which appeared to threaten Christianity in its beliefs and the Holy Roman Empire militarily?

According to Kitzl, there are indeed positions Luther held which are today still highly relevant in the Christian-Islamic dialog and which can be differentiated from Luther's opinions that arose from a lack of knowledge or from the polemic contemporary at that time.

Dr. Johannes Kitzl studied theology and history in Salzburg, Florence, and Vienna. His primary area of research is in the area of the religious transformation processes of the denominational epoch as well as the disciplining of clergymen and their formation through denominations which arose at that time. Of particular interest to him is the interaction between the apparent monolithic contemporary religious parties. In addition, Johannes Kitzl is involved as a cultural manager in various projects relating to cultural education.

### *Bibliographical information:*

- Johannes Kitzl. *Adversus turcas et turcarum Deum: Beurteilungskriterien des Türkenkriegs und des Islam in der Werken Martin Luthers*. 2008. 114 pp. € 12.00. ISBN 978-3-938116-50-0.

### *Downloads and Links:*

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