

WILFRIED HOFMANN, GERMAN SOCIAL SCIENTIST AND DIPLOMAT (PART 2 OF 2)

Rating: 4.6

Description: The story of how a German diplomat and ambassador to Algeria accepted Islam. Part 2.

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Published on: 16 Jan 2006

Last modified on: 31 Jul 2006

“I began to see Islam with its own eyes, as the unadulterated, pristine belief in the one and only, the true God, Who does not beget, and was not begotten, Whom nothing and nobody resembles ... In place of the qualified deism of a tribal God and the constructions of a divine Trinity, the Quran showed me the most lucid, most straightforward, the most abstract - thus historically most advanced – and least anthropomorphic concept of God.”

“The Quran’s ontological statements, as well as its ethical teachings, impressed me as profoundly plausible, “as good as gold,” so there was no room for even the slightest doubt about the authenticity of Muhammad’s prophetic mission. People who understand human nature cannot fail to appreciate the infinite wisdom of the “Dos and Don’ts” handed down from God to man in the form of the Quran.”

For his son’s upcoming 18th birthday in 1980, he prepared a 12-page manuscript containing the things that he considered unquestionably true from a philosophical perspective. He asked a Muslim Imam of Cologne named Muhammad Ahmad Rassoul to take a look at the work. After reading it, Rassoul remarked that if Dr. Hofmann believed in what he had written, then he was a Muslim! That indeed became the case a few days later when he declared “I bear witness that there is no divinity besides God, and I bear witness that Muhammad is God’s messenger.” That was September 25, 1980.

Dr. Hofmann continued his professional career as a German diplomat and NATO officer for fifteen years after he became Muslim. “I did not experience any discrimination in my professional life”, he said. In 1984, three and half years after his conversion, then German President Dr. Carl Carstens awarded him the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. The German government distributed his book “Diary of a German Muslim” to all German foreign missions in the Muslim countries as an analytical tool. Professional duties did not prevent him from practicing his religion.

Once very artistic about red wine, he would now politely refuse offers of alcohol. As a Foreign Service officer, he occasionally had to arrange working lunch for foreign guests. He would be participating in those luncheons with an empty plate in front of him during Ramadan. In 1995, he voluntarily resigned from the Foreign Service to dedicate himself to Islamic causes.

While discussing the evils caused by alcohol in individual and social life, Dr. Hofmann mentioned an incident in his own life caused by alcohol. During his college years in New York in 1951, he was once traveling from Atlanta to Mississippi. When he was in Holy Spring, Mississippi all on a sudden a vehicle, apparently driven by a drunken driver, appeared in front of his car. A serious accident followed, taking away nineteen of his teeth and disfiguring his mouth.

After undergoing surgery on his chin and lower lip, the hospital surgeon comforted him saying: "Under normal circumstances, no one survives an accident like that. God has something special in mind for you, my friend!" As he limped in Holy Spring after release from the hospital with his "arm in a sling, a bandaged knee, an iodine-discolored, stitched-up lower face", he wondered what could be the meaning of the surgeon's remark.

He came to know it one day, but much later. "Finally, thirty years later, on the very day I professed my faith in Islam, the true meaning of my survival became clear to me!"

A statement on his conversion:

"For some time now, striving for more and more precision and brevity, I have tried to put on paper in a systematic way, all philosophical truths, which, in my view, can be ascertained beyond reasonable doubt. In the course of this effort it dawned upon me that the typical attitude of an agnostic is not an intelligent one; that man simply cannot escape a decision to believe; that the createdness of what exists around us is obvious; that Islam undoubtedly finds itself in the greatest harmony with overall reality. Thus I realize, not without shock, that step by step, in spite of myself and almost unconsciously, in feeling and thinking I have grown into a Muslim. Only one last step remained to be taken : to formalize my conversion.

As of today I am a Muslim. I have arrived.

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