

FROM THE EDITOR

Since its inception *IJMES* has been a forum for research on the Middle East in all disciplines and involving all time periods from the seventh century to the present. It is the journal with the broadest range in the field and therefore has the unique opportunity of attracting scholarship from the widest possible pool. Given this breadth of scope, there is always the risk of a lack of focus, but this is to be understood and forgiven since we are also being rewarded by truly path-breaking pieces of work that revitalize thinking and research in a particular discipline, area or time period of the Middle East.

As of this year, I shall be the Journal's third editor, and it is appropriate to take this change at the helm as an opportunity to invite you, the readers from all disciplines, to submit your best work to *IJMES* so that its breadth continues to remain its strength. Obviously, I would like to have the top scholarship produced in the field, be it in the shape of visionary new models offering a fresh look at the existing facts; or of new facts given convincing significance and put forth with clarity and focus; or of a suggestive thesis confirmed with the help of persuasive details. Manuscripts from all disciplines are welcome, even beyond the dozen that are enumerated on the inside cover of the Journal. I want to extend a special invitation to authors in the various social sciences who have so many special journals to choose from that they might not think of the most competent, even if diversified, readership of *IJMES* as their possible audience. My hope is that authors in all the disciplines dealing with the Middle East will come to consider the Journal their first choice. Good scholarship should not merely appear, it should come out in *IJMES*.

For sixteen years the journal has been published at UCLA. Now it has moved on, slightly eastwards, to the University of Utah. All moves produce change, even if inadvertently, but I shall not turn *IJMES* upside down. Particularly during my first year, while I am responsible for the publication of manuscripts accepted by my predecessor, I will curb any urges to tinker with the format. Nevertheless, I have introduced one major change in procedures, that is, I shall rely on a system of multiple evaluations for each manuscript submitted. I am reading all manuscripts as they come in, of course, but in addition I am soliciting the advice, if necessary, of two or more specialists in the field, one from the board of editors and one from the field at large. I think this procedural change will increase the fairness of the selection process for all manuscripts submitted.

Beginning with volume 18 (1986) there will be a few format changes in the Journal, in order to provide for a sharper focus. First, some articles shall be accompanied by commissioned comments, if the topic or methodology of these articles suggest the presentation of divergent views. Second, from time to time an

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issue shall be devoted to a single theme of general interest, bringing together commissioned articles, comments and related book reviews. An announcement of the first theme can be found in the next issue. In the meantime I would like to invite all readers to submit proposals for themes, be they concerned with new or emerging topics or the revision of existing interpretations.

The move to Utah has been accompanied also by a few changes in personnel. While I note with regret the resignation of Professor Badawi, The Oriental Institute, Oxford, in July 1984 from the board of editors, I extend a most cordial welcome to Professors Janet Abu-Lughod, Northwestern University, Fedwa Malti-Douglas, University of Texas, Austin, and Robert Tignor, Princeton University, who have accepted my invitation, supported by the MESA board and Cambridge University Press, to become new members of the board of editors. I extend an equally warm welcome to Professor Nancy Gallagher, University of California, Santa Barbara, the new book review editor for history and Islamic studies, who has kindly taken over my previous position in Fall 1984, thus assuring the much needed continuity in book review editing. Professor Michael Suleiman is welcomed back from his sabbatical to the function of book review editor in the social sciences which I had added to my own in history and Islamic studies during most of 1984. Last but not least I want to thank the former editor, Professor Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot for the dedicated work she did for the Journal and her assistant Ms. Mary Arshagouni, both of whom most willingly helped me solve the multiple problems arising during the transfer of the Journal from UCLA to Utah.

As scholars whose best work I solicit and as potential evaluators on whom I might count for the examination of a manuscript, you, the readers, are responsible for keeping standards high at *IJMES*. I shall value any advice you want to give me and am bracing myself for five years of hard work in my editorial hot seat.

PETER VON SIVERS