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THE EDITOR'S DESK

One of the greatest difficulties faced by scholars seeking to study the institutions, society, and government of the Middle East has been the tendency of non-Muslims to disparage the ability of Muslims to accomplish almost anything with efficiency and in good faith, and the assumption of western scholars that it often was sufficient to study the Middle East after the fourteenth century on the basis of reports left by western visitors, without recourse to the original Arabic, Persian, and Turkish source materials. Thus it was for almost a half century that, largely as a result of the reports of Venetial consuls stationed in Istanbul, western scholars maintained the false assumption that the Ottoman Empire was created and maintained because of the services of a class of Christian slaves, and that it declined because of the entry of Muslims into the ruling system. This theory, so satisfying to western sensibilities, has in recent years been shown to lack substance and reality. Yet most scholars have continued to nourish the idea, reflecting Victorian prejudices, that the Ottoman efforts to reform the Empire during the nineteenth century were conceived solely to deceive the West, without any real intention to achieve anything of consequence, and that in any case all such reforms were doomed to failure because they were undertaken by Muslims. In fact, major changes were undertaken *and accomplished*, but they were ignored by Westerners in the Middle East, and in consequence by their readers elsewhere. It has been only very recently that scholars have begun to overcome the prejudices inherited from the past and to examine Ottoman development in Ottoman terms, on the basis of Ottoman sources. Some of the best results of this sort of research have appeared in the pages of *IJMES* during the past three years, written by scholars such as Şerif Mardin, Ercümend Kuran, Avigdor Levy, Carter V. Findley, and others. Now Dr Findley, once again on the basis of extensive research into the Istanbul archives, presents a second study, tracing the reforms introduced into the Ottoman bureaucracy under sultans Selim III (1789–1807) and Mahmud II (1808–1839), analyzing the obstacles which they faced as well as the problems which resulted from modernizing such a tradition-based class.

While Middle Eastern source materials are important and must form the basis for any real study of the development of the area, the techniques of analysis offered by the modern social sciences should not be overlooked as a vital means of analyzing and understanding the information which the sources offer. A perceptive example of this type of analysis is provided by Professor James A. Bill, of the University of Texas at Austin, in his study of 'Class Analysis and the Dialectics of Modernization in the Middle East'.

Dr Bill shows how relationships among classes in the Middle East have 'been characterized by hierarchically uneven but strongly reciprocal power patterns',

with class relationships themselves being embedded in a 'system-preserving balance of tension'. Perhaps most important of all, he expresses the flexibility of the Middle East class system, which has enabled it to survive countless states and empires over the centuries.

Turning from the system in general to one group in particular, Dr Lawrence Rosen, of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey, examines the position of the Jews in the one Arab country where they still maintain a relatively large population, Morocco. Dr Rosen begins by analyzing the elements of Muslim social organization which are of particular importance in understanding Muslim–Jewish relations in a Muslim society. Here he stresses the importance of personal bonds between pairs of individuals and the need for reciprocity in such relationships. Turning then to the Jews, Dr Rosen shows how they stand between the Arab and Berber Muslims, and concludes that 'where impermeable boundaries, reinforced by discriminatory practices, have impeded totally free social intercourse between Muslims and Jews, such boundaries have also contributed to the relative security as social and economic middlemen that the Jews have enjoyed between various individuals and segments of the Muslim population'.

We then turn to different periods and areas of Middle Eastern history. Dr Martin Hinds, of Cambridge University, continues his study of Islamic politics in the period of the Orthodox Caliphate (for his first article see vol. II (1971), pp. 346–67 of *IJMES*) with an examination of the political and social background to 'the Murder of the Caliph 'Uthmân' in A.D. 656. Dr Hinds concludes that the main conflict at this time 'was not so much between the Meccans and "tribesmen"... as between interests rooted in traditional patterns of leadership and privilege and interests rooted in a new and different pattern of leadership and privilege which had emerged in the time of Muḥammad, Abû Bekr, and 'Umar'. Professor Bradford G. Martin, of Indiana University, examines the relationships between the West African state of Bornu and the Ottomans in the late sixteenth century, in 'Maî Idrîs of Bornu and the Ottoman Turks, 1576–78', and Professor Ivar Spector, of the University of Washington, presents a note illustrating the role of the famous Turkish general and first ambassador to the Soviet Union, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, in the revolt of the Red sailors which took place at the Kronstadt naval base in 1921, by securing the collaboration of certain Tatar Muslim troops in the successful effort to suppress the revolt.

A few of the articles which will appear in volume IV of *IJMES* are: Thomas Philipp, 'Language, History, and Arab National Consciousness in the thought of Jurjî Zaidân (1861–1914)'; Melvin Albaum and Christopher S. Davies, 'The Spatial Structure of Socio-Economic Attributes to Turkish Provinces'; Nicholas Z. Ajay Jr., 'Political Intrigue and Suppression in Lebanon during World War I'; Peter C. Dodd, 'Family Honor and the Forces of Change in Arab Society'; John P. Entelis, 'Belief-System and Ideology Formation in the Lebanese Katâ'ib Party'; Emanuel Marx, 'Circumcision Feasts among the Negev

Bedouin'; Fuad Said Haddad, 'An Early Arab Theory of Instruction'; Mohammad Ali Jazayery, 'Aḥmad Kasravî and the Controversy over Persian Poetry'; Walter G. Andrews, 'A Critical-Interpretive Approach to the Ottoman Turkish Gazel'; Hussein M. Fahim, 'Change in Religion in a Resettled Nubian Community, Upper Egypt'; Douglas Ashford, 'Succession and Social Change in Tunisia'; Jere L. Bacharach, 'The Dinar versus the Ducat'; Donald P. Little, 'The Historical and Historiographical Significance of the Detention of Ibn Taymiyya'; Leland Bowie, 'An Aspect of Muslim–Jewish Relations in Late Nineteenth-Century Morocco: A European Diplomatic View'; Khaldun S. Husry, 'The Assyrian Affair'; David G. Edens, 'The Anatomy of the Saudi Revolution'; Rouhollah K. Ramazani, 'Iran's "White Revolution": A Study in Political Development'; Andrew Hess, 'The Ottoman Conquest of Egypt (1517) and the Beginning of the Sixteenth-Century World War'; Suraiya Faroghi, 'Social Mobility among the Ottoman 'Ulemâ in the Late Sixteenth Century'; M. T. Ozelli, 'The Evolution of the Formal Education System and its Relation to Economic Growth Policies in the First Turkish Republic'.

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