

**R. Stephen Humphreys**

## FROM THE EDITOR

This will be the fourth number of *IJMES* to be issued under my editorship, and while it is far too early to take stock of what has been achieved—and equally to the point, what has not—it is certainly appropriate to make a few general comments. First of all, I must thank my coworkers in the editorial office for their enormous efforts in getting us through an exhausting and long-drawn-out transition. Gunilla Rohdin-Bibby has been the editorial assistant of one's dreams: superbly organized, clear-headed, patient and tactful, good-humored, a bit stern (but nicely) when that is required. That we are at last on an even keel, or nearly so, is very largely her achievement. Since January, Dr. James Lindsay has worked with me in the time-consuming tasks of assigning new manuscripts to readers, drafting correspondence with authors, deciding on the revisions to be sought, and so on. I have known him for many years, but I have come to respect his scholarly judgment and businesslike efficiency more than ever. Gerald Carpenter has been extremely helpful in copyediting the book reviews (with discreet revisions for idiom, style, and clarity where needed). Finally, two graduate students in Islamic studies, Jon Armajani and Rachel Howes, have been essential in the unglamorous but essential work of photocopying, proof-reading, and mailing. To all of them I owe more than I can say.

Second, the members of the Editorial Board have been asked to shoulder an extraordinary burden of manuscripts as we struggled to dispose of the logjam that piled up during the summer and fall of 1994. They have done this with much efficiency and little complaint. All of us in the editorial office are deeply grateful to them.

Third, there is at least a trace of design in the articles chosen for this issue, for the first three all discuss the problem of political identity and the various discourses (both verbal and visual) through which membership in, or exclusion from, a particular community is articulated. In a long article which violates all of our usual page limits (this will not become a *sunna!*), Paul Dresch and Bernard Haykel give us an unusually intimate look at the dynamics of political identity in contemporary Yemen. Palmira Brummett shows how Ottoman cartoonists used their art to define and defend the cultural values and political integrity of the empire against the many-layered threat represented by Europe in the early Young Turk period. Finally, Raphael Cohen-Almagor reviews the ideology of assimilation used by the first generation of Israeli leaders to create a new nation in a very specific mold. Kenneth Cuno's contribution on joint family households in 19th-century Egypt represents a return to hardcore social history on one level; but on another, it fits the issue's larger theme by demonstrating how Egyptian notables manipulated a rapidly

changing legal framework to ensure the continuation of an important (and ideologically loaded) institution.

Finally, an editor's life is filled with embarrassments. Many of these can discreetly be disposed of, but occasionally one must go public. Due to a breakdown in oversight procedures at the *IJMES* editorial office, a review of Mangol Bayat's book, *Iran's First Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 1991), was published both in the *MESA Bulletin* (December 1994) and *IJMES* (August 1994). The review had been solicited by the *MESA Bulletin* and somehow fell into our hands as well, without our realizing what had happened. Obviously, this dual publication violates Prof. Bayat's expectation that her book would receive independent reviews in the two journals. We offer our sincere apologies both to her and to the *Bulletin*. Because Prof. Bayat has suffered a substantial wrong in this matter, we have departed from *IJMES* policy by soliciting a second review of her book. This review will be printed at the earliest opportunity.