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FROM THE EDITOR

With this issue we celebrate *IJMES*'s 25th volume. In the years since 1970 when the first volume was published, the Middle East has moved to the forefront of international news, and the scholarship devoted to it has multiplied. Much remains to be done, but over the last decades a large amount of excellent research and analysis has been published. Our journal is proud to have had its part in helping the discipline flourish.

The journal was originally founded at the University of California in Los Angeles to encourage original research and analysis and to serve as a forum for international scholarly exchanges. Almost a quarter of a century later, *IJMES* has become the leading journal of the field thanks to the dedication and achievements of its first three editors: Stanford J. Shaw, who edited its first ten volumes between 1970 and 1979; Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot, who oversaw the eleventh to sixteenth between 1980 and 1984; and Peter von Sivers, who was responsible for volumes seventeen to twenty-one between 1985 and 1989. The Middle East Studies Association and Cambridge University Press have continuously provided both professional and financial support to produce the journal; UCLA, the University of Utah, and Tufts University (including its Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy) have provided the stimulation of their academic environments and the space and funds to support and staff the journal's editorial offices.

All of the readers, evaluators of manuscripts, and authors of articles and book reviews have also helped shape the character of the journal. The disciplines they have selected, the areas of study they have covered—as well as those they have shied away from—determine to a large degree the areas of the journal's strengths and weaknesses.

Some 532 major articles were published in *IJMES* in its first twenty-four volumes; that number does not include review articles, and it also constitutes only a fraction of those submitted for publication. To see if there were any discernible trends in what the journal has published since its inception, we compared its volumes in sets of five. For our tabulation, if an article covered more than one category (be it discipline or topic), we tallied it in more than one category better to convey the subject matter represented.

Nearly three-quarters of the articles that have been published belong to the disciplines of history, political science, and economics, although within each discipline the subjects varied over time and the relation of numbers and the numbers themselves varied at different times. Articles in history account for almost a quarter of all published articles. However, in the first ten years historical articles consti-

2 Editorial

tuted more than 35 percent of those published; in the last ten years they have made up only about 18 percent. In contrast, the number of articles published in the field of economics has increased significantly, from 10 percent in the first five volumes to 23 percent in the last five volumes. In contrast to the increase in economic subjects and the decrease in historical ones, articles in political science have remained at a consistent 20 percent of the total.

The remainder of the published articles are scattered among eleven other disciplines. Languages and literature, sociology, and urban and demographic studies have been consistent at respectively 7, 6, and 5 percent of the total. Law and education remain a small but consistent 2 and 1 percent respectively. Articles on strategy and security studies, philosophy, anthropology, and architecture and art made up a very small proportion of articles in the first fifteen volumes of the journal, and that proportion has shrunk even further over the last ten years, with anthropology faring a little better than the others. Women's studies represent some 2.5 percent of the total of the articles, all of them published in the last twelve years.

Some 70 percent of the articles discuss specific areas; about 29 percent deal with cross-regional and national issues; and just over 2 percent with specific ethnic groups. In terms of geographical areas, most of the articles discuss individual countries, but a good number deal with regions in the Middle East as a whole. The Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey are the subject in 16 percent of these regional articles. In the first ten years of *IJMES* they made up almost a quarter of all articles published; in the last ten years they had dropped to about 10 percent. The most published countries are Egypt and Iran, which constitute respectively about 13 and 12 percent of the total, but while Egypt has remained consistently at about 13 percent Iran has had more dramatic swings. The proportion was never less than 9 percent in the first decade, but after the revolution in 1979 it rose significantly, especially in economics. Between 1 and 4 percent of the total were devoted to, in descending order, Syria, Morocco, Iraq, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Libya, Palestine, and Jordan. Less than 1 percent were devoted to Kuwait, Oman, Sudan, Yemen, and Algeria; Pakistan, Cyprus, East Africa, North Africa, and the Gulf Cooperation Council combined accounted for a little over 1 percent of the total.

Articles dealing with cross-regional or national Middle Eastern subjects include articles on national ideologies or issues, regional conflicts, religion (mostly Islam), languages and literature, the United States or Europe and the Middle East, Middle Easterners abroad, women, philosophy, and other topics. Those dealing with specific ethnic groups most often deal with the Armenians, but studies on groups such as the Baluchis and Bakhtiyaris have also been published.

In terms of chronology—pre-1600, early modern (1600–1918), modern (1918–70), current (1970s to the present), or survey (those that cover a subject over more than one period)—the vast majority of the articles dealt with the modern (24%) and early modern (27.7%) periods, the latter most often involved with aspects of Ottoman history. The pre-1600 period now constitutes only 6.5 percent of the total, much lower than the 11 percent this category held in the first years of *IJMES*. In contrast, articles dealing with the contemporary period rose from 3.8 percent in the first five years to about 28 percent in the last five years, for an average of almost 17 percent. Those articles that survey a subject over time have consistently made up about 25 percent of the published whole.

To ensure that *IJMES* publishes the best manuscripts it receives it relies extensively on peer review. This thorough review system does slow the process, but it undeniably improves the finished product. The quality of manuscripts received varies significantly by field. At present, the best manuscripts are in history and political science, and less often in anthropology and Islam. Sociological studies tend to be weak, and many in economics, however valuable in content, are often couched in terms too technical for even a scholarly multi-disciplinary readership to understand. A few contributions in languages and literature have been of high quality, but the majority have not, perhaps because scholars in those fields prefer to submit their work to their own specialized periodicals. *IJMES* also does not receive enough manuscripts on women's issues, art history, or on comparative and multi-disciplinary subjects. We continue to hope that submissions will improve and encourage you all to send manuscripts that will make our journal the best in the field.

The book review section of the journal prospers under its excellent editors. Two exceptionally large *IJMES* issues in August and November 1991 helped take care of a backlog so that reviews can be kept as current as possible with a book's publication. The editors are making a concerted effort to reach out to reviewers of quality, within and even beyond the field. After changes were made in the journal's instructions to discourage unsolicited reviews, they have been virtually eliminated.

With the support of the Middle East Studies Association and Cambridge University Press, two special projects have recently been completed: an index of the first twenty years of *IJMES*, which Judith and Peter von Sivers developed, and an international directory of Middle East and North Africa specialists, which Peter von Sivers and I compiled as a first step towards a survey of international experts in the field that extends beyond the MESA membership list.

After I became editor, a number of changes took place in personnel involved with the journal. *IJMES* is fortunate to continue to have Eleanor A. Cleary as its secretary and Margaret Ševčenko as editorial consultant. Thomas Dolan and Arthur Buehler have replaced Michael Hopper as language consultants. Graduate students at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy who have assisted the editorial office have included, at various times, Monica Eppinger, Lisa Randall, and Elizabeth Voulieris. Barbara Alarie from Tufts' computer services helped in the directory project and with many other undertakings. At Cambridge University Press, we are grateful to Anna Halász, who has replaced Beth Roberts as Journals Production Editor, as well as to James Alexander, Journals Manager, and the rest of the Journals staff at the Press, for their assistance.

In the past three years new appointments have been made on the Editorial Board and among the book review editors. Janet L. Abu-Lughod, Nazih N. Ayubi, Ulrich Haarman, Fedwa Malti-Douglas, Ibrahim M. Oweiss, and Robert L. Tignor all completed their terms; John Voll joined the board for a year and then left it when he was elected MESA President. Lucy Der Manuelian, Suraiya Faroqhi, Wolfhart Heinrichs, Albert Hourani, Charles Issawi, John L. Esposito, Abbas Kelidar, Abdul-Karim Rafeq, and Marilyn R. Waldman joined the board as new members. We lost Juan R. I. Cole as Book Review Editor for History and Islamic Studies and replaced him with two new editors: Bruce Masters for History and Islamic Studies and Afsaneh Najambadi as additional book review editor for Social Sciences.

May there be many more *IJMES* issues.