

EDITORIAL FOREWORD

It is with deep sorrow that we open this issue with the announcement that *IJMES* editorial board member Barbara Harlow has passed away. We mourn the unexpected loss of our dear colleague, one of the most brilliant and accomplished scholars in Middle East studies. In addition to her influential work, Barbara was known for her keen mind, generous spirit, and gentle sense of humor, coupled with an unabiding sense of justice. She will be sorely missed by the *IJMES* and Middle East and North Africa studies families. We encourage you to read Tarek al-Ariss's moving tribute to Barbara published at the end of this issue.

The six articles in this issue deal—in one way or another—with the intersection of faith and politics. The first section focuses on “Piety.” In “Singing Heaven on Earth: Coptic Counterpublics and Popular Song at Egyptian *mūlid* Festivals,” Carolyn M. Ramzy writes about Coptic performances of piety in Egypt as a way for the Coptic Church to discipline the faithful. Echoing the Egyptian state's efforts to transform Muslim *mūlids*—long viewed as a threat to state order—into sites for cultivating “modern” respectability, the Coptic Church has sought to instill normative forms and practices of Christianity. In this effort, it has relied on urban middle-class choirs that travel long distances to perform popular religious songs (*taratīl*) intended to “reform and develop poorer Christian pilgrims into modern, pious, and more audible ‘citizens of heaven.’” However, as Ramzy shows through a focus on the Cairo-based choir Kural al-‘Ai’la al-Muqadasa, the efforts of these choirs disrupt Coptic Church hegemony as much as they reinforce it. As the church leadership has severely curtailed the ability of lay Copts to independently negotiate their sense of belonging and citizenship within Egypt, these audible performances of piety have served as assertions of new forms of Christian identity in a counter-public space.

With Dunya D. Cakir's article “The Social Life of Academic Discourse: Reflections on the Analysis of Piety Politics,” we move from popular religion in Egypt to prominent Islamist women intellectuals in Turkey, including Fatma Barbarosoğlu, Cihan Aktaş, Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, and Nazife Şisman. Cakir argues that these Islamist thinkers have engaged and contested social science analysis of their discourse and subjectivities. As she points out, they “critique scholarly research methods, generalizing categories . . . and sociological frameworks for studying piety politics,” as well as the gender lens with which scholars have tended to study Islamist women. Against flattening accounts of their subjectivities, these intellectuals depict their *İslamcılık* (Islamism) as an “ontologically grounded process of transcendental development and enlightenment through submission to God's will.” This reflexivity imbricates Islamic activism and scholarly discourse in a dynamic interactive process, revealing “the political effects of categories in the social worlds we study” and disrupting notions of Islamism as a “self-enclosed world of meaning.”

The second section focuses on “Islam and Politics” from different angles. In his article “Salafi Thought in Turkish Public Discourse since 1980,” Andrew Hammond argues

that, contrary to scholarly assumptions about the absence of Salafism from Turkey as a local and transnational phenomenon, Salafist thought has been part of Turkish Islam since the emergence of the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis in the 1980s. This development, he contends, facilitated closer ties with Saudi Arabia at a time when the Saudis sought to disseminate Wahhabism. To support this observation, Hammond traces Salafism's pathways in Turkish-language discourse, principally among self-styled preachers such as Abdullah Yolcu. Ultimately, he finds the "production of a wide range of understandings of what the term [Salafism] denoted, the internalization of some Salafi ideas, and the evolution of a quietist Turkish Salafism bearing a rejectionist approach to the wider Islamic culture supporting it."

Shifting our attention to Egypt, Aaron Rock-Singer sheds light on the Mubarak regime's efforts to shape Islam within the public sphere. In his article, "Censoring the Kishkophone: State Power and Religion in Mubarak's Egypt," Rock-Singer focuses on attempts by state organizations to censor one of the most popular antiregime preachers in Egypt, Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid Kishk (d. 1999). By comparing Kishk's censored published sermons with his original recorded speeches, Rock-Singer seeks to map the contours of what the state—through the Ministry of Culture and the Islamic Research Academy—allowed as useful for its project of shaping public Islam and what it saw as transgressive and dangerous. In one instance, "the MOC [Ministry of Culture] transformed Kishk's indictment of 'Abd al-Nasir's statist policies and al-Sadat's *infitāh*—and, by extension, Mubarak's continuation of the latter's policies—into a model of individual pious responsibility consistent with the move away from a welfare state and towards trade liberalization spearheaded by al-Sadat." Rock-Singer concludes that, contrary to prior studies on Islam and state power, "just as Islamists incorporate key assumptions of the state modernization project, so too do state functionaries and scholars draw on the central themes and concerns of the Islamist opposition."

In "Cleansing the Nation of the 'Dogs of Hell': 'Ali Jum'a's Nationalist Legal Reasoning in Support of the 2013 Egyptian Coup and Its Bloody Aftermath," David Warren carries forward the theme of the relationship between state and religion by reassessing why elements of the Sunni establishment in Egypt supported the 2013 coup and the massacres that followed. Focusing on the grand mufti 'Ali Jum'a, Warren takes issue with Mohammed Fadel's argument placing Jum'a's support for the coup in the context of a traditionalist subtradition in Islam and Sufism's emphasis on hierarchical relationships that render it "more sympathetic to authoritarianism." Rather, Warren argues, Juma's support is rooted in "Egyptian nationalism and a discourse of the nation-state." He comes to this argument through a rereading of al-Tahtawi—who is central to Juma's intellectual and jurisprudential frame—as the "first link in a chain of Egyptian nationalist 'ulama' with authoritarian tendencies" who were concerned with the progress of the nation and the need to protect it.

Courtney Freer concludes this section with her article "Rentier Islamism in the Absence of Elections: The Political Role of Muslim Brotherhood Affiliates in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates." Filling a gap in the literature on political Islam, Freer examines Muslim Brotherhood affiliates in two archetypical rentier states in the Gulf—Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Arguing against the assumption of rentier theory that citizens in rentier states organize in opposition to the state only when they fear losing access to income, Freer shows that in these two countries "ideology rather than rent motivated the

formation of independent Islamist movements.” Instead of preventing the emergence of Islamist movements, the presence of rents shaped their tactics. In a context where few openings existed to compete in the provision of social welfare or participate in parliamentary politics, the Brotherhood had the flexibility to focus on ideological inspiration *through* rather than against the state. Freer concludes that in rentier environments “the multifaceted nature of the Muslim Brotherhood and appeal of its ideology become especially clear.”

In this issue’s roundtable, Eric Lob and Paola Rivetti lead an important discussion about the problems and possibilities of “Fieldwork in a Fractured Middle East.” The conversation is meant to guide and inform new scholars formulating the parameters of their work as well as more experienced scholars in the midst of research or planning new projects. As space is being reconfigured in the Middle East on multiple scales through conflict, Sarah El-Kazaz contributes a review article discussing five recent works that in different ways seek to center space in the study of the region. Titled “Thinking in Four Dimensions: New Directions in Spatial Analysis of the Middle East,” El-Kazaz’s essay contends that these books “stand out for pushing the boundaries of how we conceptualize the production of space and mobilize it as a methodological intervention.”

Akram Khater and Jeffrey Culang