

## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

This issue starts with a section on modern Morocco, in anticipation of the upcoming *IJMES* special issue on Maghribi histories in the modern era. Our call for papers for the special issue was released in December 2010, just before the events of the “Arab Spring” accelerated what was likely the already growing importance of Maghrib scholarship within the broader field of Middle East studies.

The first article in this issue, by Eric Calderwood, engages eloquently with recent scholarship on conceptions of time, historiography, translation, and modernity in a close reading of two late 19th- and early 20th-century texts that can be seen as artifacts of the colonial encounter between Morocco and Spain: a well-known history of the Hispano–Moroccan War of 1859–60 written by the Moroccan historian Ahmad b. Khalid al-Nasiri and an annotated translation of that work by the Spaniard Clemente Cerdeira. Weaving an analysis of the original text into a discussion of Cerdeira’s translations, omissions, and annotations, Calderwood shows how the Spanish text—in stark contrast to the Arabic one—worked to construct Morocco as a timeless space while ultimately betraying a startling reversal of the expected spatial mapping of temporal change in relation to the colonial encounter.

The second article, co-authored by Oren Kosansky and Aomar Boum, analyzes a different kind of Moroccan cultural artifact produced a century later: three recent films that reflect the “Jewish turn” in contemporary Moroccan film. The article connects the new cinematic visibility of Jewish characters and narratives to the state’s liberalization project and in particular to the reimagining of the Moroccan nation–state as both a “longstanding moral entity and a postcolonial framework of social affiliation.” Like Calderwood in the previous article, the authors are sensitive to how conceptions of Moroccan historical time shape the cultural productions under analysis and the larger political field in which they are located, showing, for example, how all three films “relegate Jews to the Moroccan past, where they can be safely ensconced in an aura of nostalgia, memory, and loss.”

Charis Boutieri’s article likewise explores moments of “the negotiation of Morocco as a ‘postcolonial’ and ‘modernized’ country.” Proposing that schools have been crucial spaces for that negotiation, the article engages in an ethnographic analysis of public education and linguistic pluralism in contemporary Morocco. Boutieri explores the affiliation between science and French on the one hand and humanities and Arabic on the other, drawing on previous scholars who have shown how the Arabization of education has in practice served to reinforce social hierarchies, but focusing in particular on the “symbiotic relationship between French and science as the specific mechanism through which social hierarchy is generated along linguistic lines.” Invoking other themes that resonate with those of the first two articles, Boutieri looks at the effects of globalization on recent education discourse in Morocco while arguing that there

are important pedagogical continuities with the French colonial state that might be understood as “persistence through transformation.”

The next two articles focus on modern Lebanon. Samer Frangie explores the Marxist intellectual project of Mahdi ‘Amil, a leading theoretician of the Lebanese Communist Party in the 1970s and 1980s. Drawing on various analytical frameworks to capture the “situated-ness” of an intellectual working on the “periphery,” Frangie joins other recent scholars seeking to avoid “flattening the distinctions between fields of intellectual production under the assumption of perennial questions to which answers are to be provided.” The article carefully situates ‘Amil’s thought within its own political and intellectual fields, both Lebanese and Western, while exploring how ‘Amil himself grappled with questions related to the differences and homologies among those fields. Thus, ‘Amil criticized various late 20th-century Euro-American intellectual movements, such as structuralism and postmodernism, for focusing on moments of social formation and reproduction to the exclusion of moments of rupture and attributed this focus to the fact that such movements were situated within “a social formation that is successfully reproducing itself.” This explication of ‘Amil’s thought echoes suggestively with Calderwood’s juxtaposition, in the article discussed previously, of the Moroccan historian’s “modernity” with his translator’s construction of “Spanish timelessness.”

The second article on Lebanon, by Daniel Corstange, explores what one Lebanese election official has called the country’s “national sport”: the buying and selling of votes. Corstange tackles the challenges of researching a sensitive issue on which there is “a lot of talk” but rarely much evidence, by conducting a survey of voters in the 2009 Lebanese election based on the “list experiment method,” which “has emerged as a promising technique to elicit truthful answers to sensitive questions by providing people with anonymity in their responses.” Corstange’s analysis of the survey results suggests that there is good reason for the general perception of an “epidemic” of vote trafficking in Lebanon but that the accusations of a disproportionate tendency among Sunnis to sell their votes is unfounded. Members of all sectarian communities sell their votes in more or less equal proportions, though the results indicate that some are more willing to admit to it.

Farzin Vejdani’s article on interwar Iran returns us to intellectual history, a recurring theme in this issue. Exploring the emergence of folklore studies and ethnography in the early Pahlavi era, the article traces the life trajectories and writings of six pioneering intellectuals in these fields. Vejdani shows how most of these thinkers moved from an engagement in political activism and journalism during the constitutionalist era into culturalist nation-building projects after the collapse of constitutionalism, often with the aim of representing, homogenizing, and speaking for Iran’s heterogeneous popular strata. The article also explores various institutionalizations of folklore studies and ethnography by the early Pahlavi regime, such as the establishment of an ethnographic museum, which was “meant to simulate the experience of walking backwards through time in order to visit objects out of sync with the modern.” Such projects both reinforced and were sometimes in tension with the state’s efforts to suppress rural uprisings and homogenize diverse regional communities within the nation’s borders.

This issue features a roundtable on the state of Middle Eastern/Islamic economic history, organized and introduced by Boğaç Ergene. The discussion gives a sense of the debates animating leading scholars in the economic history of the region from medieval

to modern times. The contributors weigh in on sources and trends, the strengths and weaknesses of different theoretical and methodological approaches, the relationship of economic history to the social sciences and humanities, and the current challenges and promises of the field. One key focus of the conversation is around some of the influential and controversial ideas proposed by Timur Kuran (a contributor to the roundtable) in several articles and his 2011 monograph, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East*.

This issue's review article, by Fatma Müge Göçek, examines the state of postcolonial analysis in Ottoman studies. Commenting that the Ottoman Empire presents a rich historical field in which to apply postcolonial frameworks and methodologies, because "its temporal and spatial life destabilizes the inherent privileging of Western hegemony," Göçek explores eight recent studies that she identifies as employing a "postcolonial approach." In addition to evaluating the books individually, the article proposes some general tendencies, strengths, and weaknesses of the current turn in Ottoman scholarship.

With this issue, Sara Pursley assumes the position of associate editor. The title celebrates her new PhD status and more accurately reflects her contributions to the making of the journal.

Beth Baron and Sara Pursley