

THE EDITOR'S DESK

With this issue *IJMES* completes six years of existence. Subscriptions have just reached two thousand throughout the world, and the tremendous number of excellent articles that have been submitted for publication has resulted in a decision to expand the size of each issue from 128 to 144 pages in order to minimize the backlog.

The continued expansion and development of *IJMES* could not have been accomplished without the support and encouragement of the Middle East Studies Association and the Cambridge University Press, and I would like to express my gratitude to them. I am pleased to announce that this relationship will continue into a new contractual period and that starting with Volume VII the British Society for Middle East Studies will join in sponsoring the Journal. I am confident that this new arrangement will enhance the efforts of *IJMES* to present the best of Middle Eastern scholarship, and I warmly welcome the BRISMES members to the Editorial Board which collaborates with me in producing the journal. In addition, a Book Review Editor will be appointed to expand and systematize this important function within the pages of *IJMES*.

Perhaps one of the most interesting historical developments in Islam since classic times was the gradual separation of religion and state which culminated in the rise of the Ottoman sultans in the fourteenth century. It has long been assumed that this separation began as a product of the Caliphs' loss of power and of the rise of their military guards during the ninth and tenth centuries. Ira M. Lapidus, University of California, Berkeley, now shows that this development began much earlier, in the classical era of Islam. Rewriting history to fulfill current national objectives has been a mark of modern statesmanship in east and west. Jack Crabbs, Jr., California State University, Fullerton, discusses the efforts made in this direction by the régime of Gamal Abdul-Nasser and the fate of various Egyptian historians who accepted or resisted government-imposed interpretations. The traditional Ottoman tax system was based on rural produce, customs, and excise taxes, with little effort made to touch urban profits or salaries. In my own contribution an effort is made to describe the development of a modern tax system in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century reform periods of the Tanzimat (1839–76) and the reign of Abd ul-Hamid (1876–1908). A subsequent study will trace Ottoman state expenditures and budgetary policies during the same period. Ergun Özbudun, Faculty of Laws, Ankara University, and Frank Tachau, University of Illinois, Chicago, discuss the polarization of political forces in Turkey during and after the national elections of October, 1973. Arieh Loya, University of Texas, Austin, analyzes

the position of women in Arab society as reflected in the poems of Nizâr Qabbânî. And I. William Zartman, New York University, discusses a number of recent studies on 'The elites of the Maghreb'.

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