

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Judith E. Tucker*

With this issue, I say a bittersweet goodbye to my life as *IJMES* editor. It has been a privilege to serve the Middle East studies community and to enjoy a front-row seat on the accomplishments and dynamism of our field. *IJMES* has long been an inclusive journal; scholars of different disciplines, origins, ranks, and theoretical persuasions submit their work. I have enjoyed reading it all and have been much encouraged by the originality, erudition, and overall quality of scholarship in our field. At a time when information, analysis, and understanding of the Middle East have been in short supply in many dimensions of public discourse, most scholars in our field have not wavered in their commitment to the high standards and intellectual honesty that must inform scholarly endeavors if they are to merit the name.

I have many thanks to offer. I am grateful to MESA for entrusting me with the editorship these past five years and thank the MESA executive director, Amy Newhall, for all of her support. The success of the journal during that period depended above all on the commitment and talents of the managing editors, Tara Dankel, for the first two years, and Sylvia Whitman, for the past three. I acknowledge Sylvia in particular for her contribution to the development of our Quick Studies front section, a feature apparently much appreciated by *IJMES* readers. Shady Hakim did a fine job coordinating the book review section; and the demanding tasks of checking transliteration and translating abstracts were put in the competent and learned hands of Sara Scalenghe, Zeinab Abul-Magd, Elcin Abaci, Dina Hussein, Mostafa Hefny, Minoos Razavi, Jennifer Hill, and others.

I learned over time—as all the editors before me, no doubt—that the quality of scholarship in Middle East studies is sustained by the willingness of a group of scholars to act selflessly and anonymously in their service to the field. The referees who read *IJMES* submissions have only the satisfaction of an important job well done as their compensation, but they perform this task as though the world were watching, offering carefully considered and superbly informed evaluations of their peers' work. I am so very grateful to the many colleagues who agreed to take on this role, not once but often a number of times during my editorship, purely out of a sense of collegiality and professional responsibility.

Much the same can be said of the book review editors and the members of the *IJMES* editorial board, who all serve in a voluntary capacity. The book review section rests entirely on the shoulders of the review editors, who made important judgments about assigning reviews. Members of the editorial board frequently acted as referees and also

provided me with much needed advice. This behind the scenes activity is what makes a journal like *IJMES* possible, and I cannot say enough about the generosity of these colleagues who give of their time, that most precious of academic goods. I feel fortunate indeed that I have been able to experience firsthand the extent to which scholars in our field—referees, editorial board members, and book review editors—do their work with great care and, may I add, considerable grace. They are the bedrock of any academic community, and their service to the field is what has made it possible to publish a journal that upholds the highest scholarly standards.

With this issue, I am passing *IJMES* along to Professor Beth Baron and her managing editor, Sara Pursley. I feel sure that *IJMES* will be in excellent hands, and I wish them a multitude of excellent submissions, a minimum of disgruntled authors, and all the joys of the journal.