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THE EDITOR'S DESK

One of the most essential elements of classic Muslim Middle Eastern civilization was its toleration for the non-Muslim ethnic and religious minorities dwelling within its boundaries. Jews, Greeks, Armenians, Copts, and many smaller groups were left to live their own lives, follow their own religions, and preserve their own laws and customs with little interference from the states that ruled them. Yet within the Islamic community, the situation was quite different. The faith prescribed equality and brotherhood among all believers regardless of origin, so Muslims were largely brought and kept together as a single community within the framework of Islam.

When nationalism reared its head during the nineteenth century this situation created a peculiar problem. It was relatively easy for the non-Muslims to rise up to achieve their independence, for they had preserved their basic traditions and unity for centuries through their religion-oriented communities. But what of the Muslims? Shi'ism had provided the Persians with a religious as well as political means of expressing their identity, but Islam also continued to play a powerful role in keeping them close to their orthodox Muslim brothers. And while the Turks and the Arabs kept their own traditions and languages, they still believed that religion was most important, and continued to be united in the melting pot of Islam. For Muslims, then, how were the new national feelings to assert themselves along with those of religion? Were nationalism and Islam compatible in the modern world?

The solution has been to separate nationality and culture from religion. But the process by which this has been accomplished has taken different forms, and achieved different degrees of completeness, among the three great national groups that represent the Middle Eastern Islamic community. In our feature article this month, Mangol Bayat Philipp, of Pahlavi University, Shiraz, discusses the role of the nineteenth-century writer, Mîrzâ Âqâ Kirmânî, in developing Persian nationalism. Pointing out how Islamic intellectuals such as Jamâl ad-Dîn al-Afghânî sought to unite Islam as part of the process of modernization, she demonstrates how Kirmânî, in contrast, sought a more purely Persian approach, while denying those aspects of his religion which he felt prevented the acceptance of western science and philosophy. Among the Arabs, the development of a distinctly modern Arab secular literary tradition was vital. Matti Moosa, of Gannon College, Erie, Pennsylvania, discusses the role in this process of one of the giants of nineteenth-century Arab theater, Ya'qûb Sanû'. John Damis, of Portland State University, discusses one aspect of the problem of developing a system of modern Arab education in North Africa, the 'free schools', which have introduced European methods and values outside the structure of the official

state educational systems. And Thomas Bryson, of West Georgia College, Carrollton, Georgia, describes the efforts at modernization in Turkey, with particular emphasis on the role of the first American Ambassador to the Turkish Republic following World War I, Admiral Mark L. Bristol, whose sympathy and understanding erased much of the mutual ill-will resulting from centuries of distorted propaganda about the Turks, establishing a firm basis for Turkey's development as part of the Western world since that time.

In our more historical contributions, Byron David Cannon, of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, discusses the role of Great Britain in the modernization of Egypt's system of justice in the late nineteenth century. And Henry Toledano, of the City University of New York and Hunter College, discusses an early manual of Maliki legal doctrine and practice in Morocco, written in the eighteenth century by al-Sijilmâsî.

With this issue, *IJMES* completes its fifth year of publication. For whatever success it may have had, I would like to thank all our authors for their contributions, as well as for their patience and forbearance; the officers and directors of the Middle East Studies Association for their support and encouragement; in many ways most important of all, the directors and staff of the Cambridge University Press, whose devotion and skill have contributed in significant measure to much of the excellence of our efforts; and to the members of the Editorial Board and Book Review Board whose assistance has been invaluable. To all readers, contributors, publishers, colleagues and friends, I pledge a continued effort to make *IJMES* an even more significant part of the scholarly community in the years ahead.

On the occasion of our fifth anniversary, the Middle East Studies Association has appointed a special committee to consider *IJMES*'s format and role. I urge all readers to send their opinions about the journal to the Committee, care of Professor I. William Zartman, Middle East Studies Association, New York University, Washington Square, New York, N.Y. 10003., U.S.A. If you are satisfied with *IJMES*'s present coverage and format, please tell the committee so. If you feel that changes should be made, such information will be equally welcome. The important thing is for the Committee to base its conclusions on as wide a range of readers' comments as is possible.

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