

## English Abstracts

### **“What’s So Charitable about Ottoman Charity?”**

**Amy Singer**

Research into the phenomenon of Ottoman public kitchens (*imaret*) reveals that contrary to expectations and to the assumptions of earlier research, these institutions did not distribute food necessarily to the poor and hungry, but to a broad variety of people. Notwithstanding, they were widely considered a form of charity, first of all due to their establishment as (*vakıf/waqf*) (endowments), acts which entail divesting property for the sake of the public good and the benefit of the Muslim community. Also, as this article argues, charity is not only an act of giving from the strong to the weak in order to relieve hardship (sometimes characterized as *altruism*). It should be understood in a broader context of giving, as an act intended to benefit the giver as much (if not more than) as the recipient, and as means for establishing social ties: ties of superiority and inferiority, ties of patronage and obligation, mutual ties between family members and neighbors. Charity serves to define and strengthen the existing social order. Hence, the value accorded to charity in Muslim thought and practice derives not only from the teachings of the Qur’an and the *sunna*, but also from social phenomena found in human and even animal societies in general.

### **The Life of Fatima the Daughter of Muhammad as Described by Three Twentieth-Century Authors**

**Na’ama Zohar**

This paper examines three twentieth-century works about Fatima the daughter of Muhammad: *Fatima et les filles de Mahomet* (1912), by Henri Lammens, *Banat al-Nabi* (1956) by ‘Aysha ‘Abd al-Rahman, and *Loin de Medina: filles d’Ismael* (1982), by Asya Djébar. The thin description of Fatima in the classical sources leaves a wide space for interpretation. These three authors use it to the fullest and describe Fatima in accordance with their personal experience, their

ideology, their time, and their political goals. Their different interpretations are presented and compared in order to shed light on certain aspects of the modern discourse about the formative period of Islam.

## ***Hijra and Jihad in Classical Islam***

**Michael Ebstein**

Two types of hijra are discussed in early Islamic sources: the Prophet's emigration from Mecca to al-Medina in 622, and the emigration of Muslims to garrison towns during the conquests of the first century A.H. This article examines the relationship between the concept of hijra (in its double meaning) and the religious duty of jihad in Classical Islam. It aims to uncover the evolution of this relationship as reflected in the Qur'an, in hadith literature (regarded here as a product of the first two centuries of Islamic history), and in the discussions of Muslim jurists and hadith experts. Using this prism, the author reveals religious, political, and social processes of the first two centuries of Islamic history, such as the fluctuation in the social status of the nomadic Arabs.

## **A Glance at the 'Tales of the Prophets': the Story of Adam in the *Qisas al-Anbiya*' of Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Kisa'i (an Annotated Translation)**

**Aviva Schussman**

This paper acquaints the reader with the classical Arabic literary genre of *Qisas al-Anbiya* ("The Tales of the Prophets") via a Hebrew translation of a typical story from one of its collections: the tale of Adam and Eve's repentance after their expulsion from Paradise. The translation is preceded by an introduction, presenting the emergence of the genre under discussion, as well as its formation and development. The third part analyzes the story of Adam and Eve, pointing out its Islamic nature and the popular motifs underlying it, mainly the etiologic and anachronistic motifs current in folk-literature. Adam is described as the

first Muslim repentant, as the first prophet who related to the angel Gabriel similarly to Muhammad, as the builder of the Ka'ba and as the first man who performed the Hadjdj. He is also said to have foresight regarding Muhammad's future mission and message. Contrary to Adam, Eve's repentance is described in this story as shallow and imitative, being dependent on Adam's mercy. As a folktale based on a Biblical subject and bearing the strong imprint of Islamic religion, it exemplifies all other stories included in this genre.

## **A Kanun for the State, A Canon for the Arts: Conceptualizing the Classical Synthesis of Ottoman Art and Architecture**

**Gülru Necipoglu**

The classical synthesis of Ottoman imperial art and architecture had been formulated by the 1550's into a distinctive artistic canon of standardized forms, reflecting a new sense of self-identity and difference. Earlier receptiveness to foreign artistic models diminished. Growing religious orthodoxy affected a restraint in the use of gold and silver and in the representation of human figures. Great resources were invested in the manufacture of luxury textiles and innovative ceramics. The scale of patterns had grown bigger; architectural forms were magnified to produce unprecedented monumental effects.

Artistic production was integrated into the centralized administration of the state, based on the *devsirme* system, and concentrated in Istanbul. The visual culture that was formed at the capital spread to the provinces to cement Ottoman identity and unite the empire. At the same time it served to affirm the primacy of Istanbul, to differentiate the ruling elite from the rest of society, and to proclaim the social hierarchy within it.

# **Pipe Dreams: Israel and Iran as Euro-American Projects**

**Haggai Ram**

This short essay sheds new light on the special relationship between Israel and Iran under the Shah's regime, and provides an unconventional approach to the study of the Israeli discourse on the 'Iranian threat' after the 1979 Iranian revolution. The author draws attention to the reciprocal images of Iran and Israel before the revolution. He argues that these images enabled the two states to envision each other as analogous Euro-American, secular enclaves in the Arab-Muslim Orient. It is within the context of these imagined affinities that the Israeli discourse on Iran after the revolution, and its expulsion to the realm of radical alterity in Israeli collective imaginary, should be evaluated. Hegemonic conceptions of Iran are driven by hegemonic concerns over the nature of Israeli identity, and by processes taking place within Israeli society, no less than by a strategic rivalry between the two states.