

## English Abstracts

### **The Jewish Physicians – Between al-Andalus and Christian Spain**

**Yael Weiss**

This article examines the degree to which Jewish communities were integrated in medieval Christian and Muslim societies by comparing the status of Jewish physicians living under Muslim rule in al-Andalus to the status of those living in the Christian kingdoms of Spain. The article first describes the prescriptions of religious and didactic sources regarding the ‘desirable’ status of Jewish physicians, and then moves on to examine restrictions on the training and ordination of Jewish students in medicine. Finally, the article examines the political, economical and social power of Jewish physicians working for royal families. It argues that there was a considerable gap between anti-Jewish rhetoric, and the relatively high social status of Jewish physicians under both Muslim and Christian rule.

### **The Pharmacist in the Eyes of his Customers in the Mamluk period**

**Leigh Chipman**

This paper aims to examine the image of pharmacists in the eyes of their customers, as represented in an array of legal, historical and literary sources of the Mamluk period (1260-1516). Those show that customers feared being swindled by pharmacists, and seem to have regarded pharmacy as a profession that ought to be controlled by external bodies. Possibly, this image of the druggist as trickster was formed against the specific historical circumstances of the period; namely the rising prices of raw materials and the need to adopt various expedients in order to lower the prices of the production of medicines and spices.

## **Where is ‘the Crescent’ in ‘the Meeting of the Cross and the Crescent’? – the Place of Islam in Western Historiography of the Crusades, 1950-2007**

**Barak Rubenstein**

For centuries, western intellectuals regarded the Crusades to the Levant (late 11th – late 13th centuries) as a part of the history of western Christianity. Most of the scholarly literature written in the West in modern times analyzes the Crusader-Muslim encounter mainly, or solely, from the perspective of the Crusaders. Since World War II, however, western historiography has dedicated more attention to the Middle Eastern contexts of the Crusaders’ activities, and to developments among the Crusaders’ local Muslim rivals. This article demonstrates this change through a comparative analysis of several studies, spanning Steven Runciman’s monumental work of the 1950’s to textbooks of recent years. According to the interpretation suggested here, the change in scholarly discourse is an outcome of certain political and social currents, changing intellectual trends, and the personal, professional and ideological inclinations of scholars.

## **‘Benevolent Supremacy’: The Biblical Epic at the Dawn of the American Century, 1947-1960**

**Melanie McAlister**

This article suggests that both the foreign policy positions of the United States during the Cold War Era, and the biblical epics produced in Hollywood at that same time, were part of the same political and cultural discourse constructing the nature of U.S. power in the Middle East in the postwar period. The author exposes the intricate connections between the representation of American ‘benevolent supremacy’ in world affairs in National Security Council document 68 (1950), and the anti-totalitarian, anti-colonial narratives of biblical epics as **Quo Vadis** (1952) and **The Ten Commandments** (1956). The article demonstrates how foreign policy documents and popular cultural texts

constructed the Cold War as a global contest of values, with U.S.-dominated liberty as the key to freedom from slavery and sexual subordination, and to the proper domestic order.

## **The Middle East between Two Eras of Globalization: a Comparative Perspective**

**Relli Shechter**

This short essay offers a new perspective on the past and present of the Middle East based on a comparison between two eras of globalization; the first ending during World War I, and the second one of the present day. In both periods, the region integrated rapidly into the world economy. The comparison thus allows for an analysis of the different contexts, both local and international, in which globalization took place.