

EDITOR'S NOTE

does not necessarily represent the reality more authentically than, say, fiction literature. Our goal is to make *Jama'a* an interdisciplinary journal, which brings into light the increasing converging points among the various disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities, including Middle Eastern studies.

Avi Rubin

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

A STORY FROM *THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS* IN FIVE VERSIONS: THE SEXUAL AND SOCIAL DISCOURSE IN COMPARATIVE CONTEX

Daphna Poremba

This study examines the sexual discourse of a literary text in a comparative perspective. It focuses on one particular story from *The Thousand and One Nights*, "The Story of the Third Slave", and the variations inherent in this discourse as they unfold in the process of translation. The study focuses on five versions of the story published in four languages – Arabic, English, French and Hebrew – in seemingly two divergent, mutually exclusive cultures, Eastern and Western. Yet, a comparison of the sexual discourse(s) does not seem to serve, and in fact undermines, the conventional dichotomy between East and West. Indeed, the similarities of the discourse(s) are at least as potent as their differences. Moreover, the attitude toward sexuality is determined by the specific social and cultural milieu of each and every writer-translator, and not by any civilizational blocks. Finally, there is a clear masculine mentality toward sexuality which permeates all of the story's versions, Eastern and Western alike.

JEWISH ATTEMPTS TO PURCHASE WAQF PROPERTIES IN THE WESTERN WALL AREA IN THE LATE OTTOMAN PERIOD, 1887–1916

Gabi Cramer

The expansion of Jewish emigration to Palestine in the late Ottoman period brought about an increase in the efforts of Jewish-Zionist intermediaries to purchase properties in their name. These transactions, carried out in the framework of the Ottoman state, were dictated according to Ottoman laws. Due to the special status of endowments (*awqaf*) in Islamic law, their existence in the properties which were of Jewish interest influenced the negotiations with the Ottomans. This study examines the Jewish-Zionist efforts to purchase endowments in

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

the Western Wall zone and demonstrates the complexities of the efforts in the light of Ottoman legislation. A discussion of the character of these endowments complements the study.

OTTOMAN ALGIERS IN THE 18th CENTURY: LOCALIZATION AND OTTOMANIZATION – OR “TURKISH” IDEOLOGY

Tal Shuval

In a recent article, Professor Ehud Toledano proposed a thesis aiming at the explanation of the broad framework in which 18th century Ottoman history should be examined, especially the relationship between the imperial Ottoman center and the Arabic-speaking provinces. Toledano points to a dual process of localization of the Ottoman elites and of ottomanization of local elites, leading to the creation of Ottoman-local elites. This proposition seems logical and converges with the historical trends in most Arabic-speaking regions of the Empire. The Algerian province, however, stands to a large extent as a different case, not conforming with Toledano's explanation. The article aims at highlighting the difference of the *vilayet* and suggests that it had to do with the Algerian Ottoman elite's ideology that prevented the integration of the local elite into the former. The article traces the formation of that ideology, and points at the various fields of its articulation: recruitment to the Algerian *ocak*, marriage among Janissaries and local women, the elite's attitude towards the offspring of such marriages and the impact of the ideology on the settlement of the elite's members in the city of Algiers.

ORIENTALISM AND ITS CRITICS

Fred Halliday

Fred Halliday examines the controversial debate triggered by Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Adopting a somewhat detached position toward the various approaches in the debate, Halliday introduces the mainstays of Said's work along with its various critiques. Halliday traces what he views as the roots of the debate: how should one evaluate writing on

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

Middle Eastern societies in particular and the methodology in social analysis in general. On the methodological level, Halliday defines the options of social analysis: a traditional, linguistically, and culturally-based approach derived from classical studies on the one hand, and a critical approach to writing and discourse derived from post-modernism on the other.