

EDITOR'S NOTE

attempt, through the reconstruction of the long-forgotten "story of the daughters of Quchan", to bring into light the contingency of Iranian modernity – that is, the human and tortuous ways in which modernity was historically constructed in Iran.

As in all previous issues of *Jama'a*, the present issue contains review articles and a short, "food-for-thought" essay.

Avi Rubin

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

THE COVERING AND ADORNING OF WOMEN'S FACES ACCORDING TO EARLY ISLAMIC SOURCES

Hadas Hirsh

What people use to clothe and adorn themselves with (dress, ornaments, tattooing, hairdressing and the like) reflects the cultural norms, moral values and family structures of a given society. This paper examines the dress codes of Muslim women, past and present, drawing on the authoritative-normative sources of the Qur'an and the Hadith. The study first introduces Qur'anic statements concerning women's head-covering and face adornment, which are then analyzed against the background of the social reality which prevailed in the first centuries of Islam. The strictest Qur'anic rules presumably concerned the prophet's wives and only later all Muslim women. They supplied the ideological-normative basis for the more comprehensive and detailed discussions we find in the Hadith literature and Qur'an exegeses which, so we assume, mirror common practices within and among early Muslim societies. It was, of course, men, not women, who formulated these rules. Restraining what men regarded as women's "unbridled" sexuality, they served to establish men's predominant status within the patriarchal-patrilineal family structure.

EGYPTIAN LIBERALISM REASSESSED: MUHAMMAD 'ABDALLAH 'INAN'S RESPONSE TO GERMAN NAZISM: 1933-1935

Israel Gershoni

Egyptian intellectual history between the two World Wars has been the focus of much scholarly work. The main thrust of many of the studies on the subject has been directed toward an understanding of what is known in the literature as "the crisis of orientation" in the intellectual discourse of the 1930s. Two hegemonic narratives constituted the basis for the different interpretations given the "crisis of the intellectuals". The first narrative saw the crisis as a testimony to the intellectuals' total

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withdrawal from Western liberal values. The second, revisionist narrative saw the intellectuals' shift to writing on Islamic subjects as a tactical maneuver aimed at neutralizing popular Islamic pressures on these intellectuals. This article attempts to deconstruct the two traditional narratives through a critical examination of the "crisis story". The article shows that the two narratives' usage of the *Islamiyyat* literature as an exclusive source for describing and understanding the "intellectual crisis" is both reductionist and simplistic. By examining a different textual corpus of the Egyptian intellectuals in the 1930s, the study claims that they did not withdraw from liberal positions and values but, on the contrary, substantiated and adhered to them. The anti-fascist and anti-Nazi texts by Muhammad 'Abdallah "Inan well represent Egyptian liberalism and its established status within the intellectual discourse.

THE IMAMATE OF OMAN:
IN SEARCH OF A FORGOTTEN AND LOST LEGACY

Uzi Rabbi

Historically the geography of Oman has exercised a strong influence on the development of the country. Broadly speaking, Omani history experienced two largely self-contained units: the coast and the interior. This division between the coast and the interior had tribal, religious as well as political elements best viewed in the emergence of two different legacies: the Imamate of interior Oman and the Sultanate of coastal Muscat. Interior Oman served as an Arab and Ibadī stronghold, mountainous and difficult of access, an area of fundamental tribal and religious loyalties that were based on generations of enduring tradition. The development of Ibadism as an integral part of the Omani culture was complemented by the imposition of the religious and political institution of the Imam upon the tribal component of Oman's society. Coastal Oman, by contrast, was relatively cosmopolitan and outward looking. Actually, between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries Oman had built one of the notable non-European empires, spanning both the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean. It is with the former tradition, largely ignored by the outside world and hence by historical research, that this article is concerned. It explores the nature of the

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tribal-cum-Imamate system, mainly the minimal state apparatus that tribes are able to develop in order to maintain some form of regional cohesiveness and thus permit the exploitation of their resources.

"IS OUR NAME REMEMBERED?":
WRITING THE HISTORY OF IRANIAN CONSTITUTIONALISM AS
IF WOMEN AND GENDER MATTERED

Afsaneh Najmabadi

Through the retrieval of the story of the daughters of Quchan, Afsaneh Najmabadi describes the project of modernity in early twentieth-century Iran as a continuous and a discursive one. This event which played a decisive role in the Constitutional Revolution was the starting point for a dynamic process that formulated modern judicial, political, constitutional, institutional and national practices and values. The Iranian project of modernity reinforced certain deeply embedded beliefs and practices about gender and the place of women in society. In this sense the modern discourse in the Iranian context emerges as a series of movements within the regime of pre-modernity. Through the story of the daughters of Quchan Najmabadi also points to the historiographical practices that excluded women from the Iranian collective memory and national narrative, even though this story was a formative one and of major importance in the history of the Constitutional Revolution. The study highlights the masculinity of the Iranian national narrative and suggests that the incorporation of both gendered and national discourses can bring out a more balanced representation of reality as well as an alternative to the history writing on modernity.