Title
JMEWS at UCLA: Nancy Gallagher and Sondra Hale are now Co-Editors of the Journal of Middle East Women's Studies

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HAVING moved into its new home at the UCLA Center for the Study of Women in July 2006, the Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies celebrated its arrival with a two-day conference on Gender and the Transnational Middle East. The conference program announced a visionary agenda, inviting research informed by transnational feminist, cultural, and modern historical studies, new forms of ethnography, and the emerging intersections of science and philosophy.

JMEWS was launched in 2005 as the official journal of the Association for Middle East Women’s Studies (AMEWS), an international multidisciplinary organization founded in 1984 by anthropologist Suad Joseph of UC Davis. AMEWS started the

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Middle East Women’s Studies Review in 1988 and continued to produce the newsletter over the next sixteen years as the organization and its affiliated scholars developed the ideas, the networks, the determination, and the funding to support the thrice-yearly research journal now published by Indiana University Press.

The journal’s first home was the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies at the University of Michigan. Its first editors were Professor Marcia Inhorn, director of CMENAS, and Professor Mary Layoun, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Wisconsin–Madison. Professor Layoun stepped aside after the first year, and Inhorn and managing editor Alissa Surges saw the journal through its second year, and passed it on in good health to the new editors at UCLA.

Thanks to funding by the Office of the Dean, Social Sciences, and additional support from the Center for the Study of Women and the Center for Near Eastern Studies at UCLA, and the Middle Eastern Studies Program at the University of California, Santa Barbara, JMEWS has tripled its editorial team.

Co-editor Sondra Hale is Professor of Anthropology and Women’s Studies at UCLA. She formerly chaired Women’s Studies at three universities, including UCLA, coordinates UCLA’s Global South Gender Initiative, and co-facilitates the Migrating Epistemologies workshop series at CSW. Her research specializations are gender, cultural studies, politics, and social movements in the Middle East and Africa. She is the author of Gender Politics in Sudan: Islamism, Socialism, and the State, and is currently coediting a book project on “Sudan’s Killing Fields: Perspectives on Genocide.”

Co-editor Nancy Gallagher is Professor of History, Chair of the Middle East Studies Program, and Co-director of the Center for Middle East Studies at UC Santa Barbara, and president of AMEWS. Her book on Quakers in the Israel/Palestine Conflict is forthcoming in 2007, and she is working on a book entitled Women in Islam: Human Rights and Activism, to be published by Routledge.

Managing editor Diane James is a Research Associate at the UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies. Her interests include media, language, and performance in academia, theater, radio, and virtuality.

Book reviews editor Lara Deeb is a cultural anthropologist and Assistant Professor of Women’s Studies at the University of California at Irvine. She is the author of An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi’i Lebanon. Her current projects include an analysis of the intersection of public religiosities and understandings of temporality, and “interfaith intimacies” in relation to transnational discourses about sexuality and religion. She is also a member of the editorial board of the Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP).

Editorial assistant Rana Sharif is a first-year graduate student in the UCLA Women’s Studies program. A hybrid Palestinian-American with Latin American influences, she began her academic life as a molecular biology major, but found that her true passions lie in the humanities and social sciences. Her research interests include Palestinian gendered identities, women’s participation in irredentist social movements, law, Islamic feminisms, and racial and ethnic formations. She has traveled extensively in the Middle East and speaks Arabic and Spanish.

Editorial assistant Fiazuddin Shuayb is a Ph.D. student in the UCLA Islamic Studies program. A Trinidad-born journalist and writer and a Mellon-Mays Fellow, he earned a B.A. in Political Science/Anthropology at Queens Col-

The Winter 2007 issue, guest edited by Martina Rieker, director of the Cynthia Nelson Institute for Gender and Women’s Studies at the American University in Cairo, includes a history of the Tunisian women’s movement by a key scholar and activist; an examination of the “White Turk” discourse by a Turkish political scientist; a study of Kurdish women’s organizing in diaspora; an analysis of Palestinian camp women’s life stories; and a study of the translation of “gender” into Arabic.
lege, New York. He is fluent in Classical and Modern Standard Arabic and is studying Persian and French. His research interests include Islamic political thought, gender discourse in Islam's sacred texts, Islamic sciences, and the historiography of Islamic law.

The JMEWS editorial team is supported by five associate editors, an editorial board of 28 scholars based at universities in the U.S. and the Middle East, and the Association for Middle East Women's Studies.

AMEWS developed its publication goals during a quarter-century that saw an explosion of research on Middle Eastern women's lives, identities, agency, and activism. There was tremendous institutional growth and disciplinary expansion in women's studies during this period as well, and feminist theory was greatly expanded and revised. The new scholarship has been deeply informed by scholars from the global South who have encouraged and contributed to the re-evaluation of Western feminist assumptions.

From a traditional area studies perspective, the Middle East stretches from North Africa through Iraq, and encompasses non-Arab Turkey, Israel, Iran, and Afghanistan, as well as sub-Saharan Sudan. But in the age of globalization and transnationalism, this geographically bound notion is too limiting. Middle Eastern peoples are living in diasporic communities around the globe, and thus the Middle East also exists “abroad.”

There are other ways of mapping the Middle East. Islam transcends the region, connecting Muslims in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Central, South, and Southeast Asia. These considerations give JMEWS an expansive conception of its field of inquiry. Not limited by borders, neither does it limit its attention to women. JMEWS is committed to an inclusive gender studies perspective, welcoming research on men and masculinities, sex and sexualities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual communities in relation to the Middle East and Islam.

Since September 11, 2001, the Middle East has been in the global media spotlight. Not surprisingly, Middle Eastern women are being used symbolically to reinscribe negative images of Islam and culturally embedded patriarchy. There are far too many media pundits commenting on Middle Eastern women's lives without any first-hand knowledge of those lives. JMEWS aims to serve as a corrective and scholarly antidote in an era of pervasive misinformation.

JMEWS is reaching out to scholarly communities in several directions. The Winter 2007 issue, guest edited by Martina Rieker, director of the Cynthia Nelson Institute for Gender and Women's Studies at the American University in Cairo, includes a history of the Tunisian women's movement by a key scholar and activist; an examination of the “White Turk” discourse by a Turkish political scientist; a study of Kurdish women's organizing in diaspora; an analysis of Palestinian camp women's life stories; and a study of the translation of “gender” into Arabic.

To engage young scholars, JMEWS will announce this month a bi-annual open competition for the best graduate student research paper in Middle East women’s studies, and plans to publish the prize-winning entry in Winter 2008.

On April 5, JMEWS presents its first annual distinguished lecture, to be hosted by the UC Santa Barbara Center for Middle East Studies. Susan Slyomovics, Professor of Anthropology and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA, will lecture on “Mary’s Well in Nazareth: Photography, Gendered Space, and Water Law,” at 4 pm in the McCune Room, HSSB 6th floor. The event is free and open to the public (for more information, visit http://www.cmes.ucsb.edu/, or telephone 805-893-4245).

On April 27th to 28th, JMEWS, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill will co-sponsor a workshop at Duke on Marketing Muslim Women. Organized by Miriam Cooke and Ellen Mclarney at Duke and Banu Gokariksel at UNc-CH, the workshop will consider works in progress by local (east coast) scholars and lay the groundwork for an international conference co-sponsored by JMEWS, AMEWS, Duke and UNC-CH, to be held at Duke University in March 2008.

**Diane James is the Managing Editor of JMEWS.**