

Editor's Note:

A New Bridge in the Study of the Arab World

We are delighted to welcome our readers to the first issue of the electronic journal *the International Journal for Arab Studies* (IJAS). As a co-founding editor I am honoured to introduce the first editorial note with enthusiasm. We begin this new e-journal by asking a question, why IJAS now? We believe this e-journal will bring a unique academic alternative approach to existing journals, electronic or print, contributing to an ongoing dialogue among scholars from the Arab World and the West.

For a century now we've seen a great number of journals, both in Arabic and English languages, published in different parts of the world whose focus is the Arab world or the Middle East in general. These journals cover wide range of subjects, including, politics, sociology, history, literature, anthropology, etc.; while some journals are specialized in particular subjects, there are generic journals. IJAS, however, encourages not only specialists but also new trends in interdisciplinary research. We welcome research that can bridge between different fields involving Arab studies. The multi-disciplinary nature of our journal includes the following fields: politics and International Relations, security, sociology, history, gender studies, linguistics, literature and anthropology. IJAS will bring fresh ideas into the twenty first century through the service of outstanding scholars on our Board of Editors, as well as young scholars who are passionate to engage in this millennium, to bring new ideas and contribute to the development of their particular fields of studies.

The timing of IJAS' publication is very significant. Across the Arab world changes are taking place, shaping societies and relations beyond regional borders. In the political sphere, one notices the relative change and development in the stability of the region. The past decade, in particular, witnessed major events; the implications of the 9/11 attacks, invasion of Iraq in 2003, rise in influence of Shia groups, Israel-Hezbollah War 2007, and Israel's return to the Gaza Strip (2008/9) etc. Such events remind us that the region remains in turmoil. This has attracted more scholarly attention toward Arab states, not only addressing political developments in the region, but also in the study of areas like culture, religion, literature, linguistics. In addition, the focus on the region reflects interest in the slow economic and social progress throughout the region. IJAS believes that it is clear that scientific research today is shaping the new Arab Middle East.

Although most journals tend to publish in one language, IJAS seeks to publish most articles and book reviews in English and select up to 2 articles and 1-2 book reviews in Arabic. This approach will be introduced starting with our issue for the second year of this journal. We aim to encourage scholars and research-based students from within the region to present their ideas and engage in this dialogue with other scholars beyond regional borders. Our purpose is to bridge the debate between Arabic speaking scholars and non-Arabic speakers.

Our primary purpose is to treat new ideas as ways of solving actual problems in reality, providing a forum for the study of the Arab world beyond established standards. This is not to take or accept ideas only from Western scholars, rather encourage young researchers from Arab countries to engage and interact in the new wave of emerging scholars specialists around the world. There are young scholars from all over the world who are interested in providing new insights to the issues shaping the region and eager to share their own experiences.

IJAS is not affiliated with any state or academic institution. Although the founders are young doctors and PhD candidates from the University of Exeter in the UK, we are determined, as a team of young scholars, to have IJAS join the ranks of highly respected established journals in the study of the Arab world. The Editorial Board consists of scholars drawn from various universities in Europe, the US and the Middle East. We strive to learn from those scholars and introduce new agendas that would meet current and future scholarly needs. Now we open this new platform for debate.

Editor-in-Chief