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With the publication of volume 10 (1989) of *al-Karmil — Studies in Arabic Language and Literature*, the Journal celebrates its tenth anniversary. To mark the event, we have added an alphabetical index (pp. 187–192) of the articles and reviews published in volumes 1–10.

This volume contains seven articles and a book review section. In the first article, Ami Elad discusses the development of characters in the novels and short stories of the Sudanese writer al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ. Assuming that al-Ṣāliḥ's entire narrative work constitutes one harmonious whole, Elad traces the main features of the central characters as they appear in various works of the author, and examines some specific themes which recur in more than one work. For instance, special treatment is given to the villagers' reaction to the social, technological and administrative changes that have taken place in recent decades. Similarly, Elad examines the important role played by the narrator in many of al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ's works. He shows that both the narrator and Muṣṭafā Sa'īd, the hero of *Mawsim al-Hijra* have much in common with the author himself.

Shimon Ballas's 'The Realistic Orientation in Shalom Darwīsh's Stories' is one of two articles in the present volume devoted to the literary activities in Arabic of Iraqi Jews in the twentieth century. The article offers a literary analysis and an appraisal of Shalom Darwīsh's short stories gathered in his three collections *Aḥrār wa- 'Abīd* (Baghdad 1941), *Ba'd al-Nās* (Baghdad 1948) and *Bayḍat al-Dīk* (Jerusalem 1976). According to Ballas, these stories are populated by ordinary men and women whom the author knows and meets in daily life. As a rule, Darwīsh depicts the main characters outwardly, using a spicy style mingled with an ever-present sense of humor. In a number of stories, the simple content has a symbolic dimension which may be detected in a different garb in other stories of the same author. Most of the characters are marginal, frustrated individuals, unable to fight society in order to reach satisfying self-realization.

In the third article of this volume, 'The Problem of Abortion in Twentieth-Century *Fatwās*,' Vardit Rispler examines the attitudes of the religious institution in Egypt toward the problem of abortion, in the light of recent

progress in the field of medicine. She analyzes the answers given by various religious authorities to such questions as the circumstances in which abortion is permitted or prohibited according to Muslim law, and the responsibility undertaken by doctors who prescribe or execute abortion. Generally speaking, most of the *shuyukh* tend to allow abortion only when there is a real danger to the life of the pregnant woman, and especially within the period of four months from the beginning of pregnancy.

Next comes Sasson Somekh's article 'The Language of Arabic Literary Criticism a Century Ago,' in which he analyzes the terminology used in an article that appeared in 1898 in the Egyptian periodical *al-Latā'if*. Although that article deals with the life and literary career of Sir Walter Scott, its author uses the traditional Arabic literary terminology throughout. There is a confusion in rendering several major literary terms relating to European literature, such as 'novel,' 'novelist,' 'play,' and 'critic.' An Arabic term for literature in its 'European' sense (i.e., the body of writings valued as works of art) was still missing, and the author of the 1898 article resorts mainly to the word *inshā'* (but also to *kitāba*, *ta'lif* and *taṣnīf*) in rendering that term. The word *adab*, which in subsequent years was to become the accepted Arabic equivalent of 'literature,' is not used in this sense by that author.

The fifth article is 'Mīr Baṣrī and the Resurgence of Modern Iraqi Literature' by David Semah. This is the second article in the present volume dealing with literary works in Arabic written by Iraqi Jews. It has as its subject the literary output of Mīr Baṣrī, a writer and poet. Baṣrī, who began publishing poems in Iraqi newspapers and literary magazines sixty years ago, has established himself as a well-known poet occupying a prominent place in the Iraqi literary scene. He also published a collection of short stories in 1955. As recently as 1987 he published in London — where he has been living since 1974 — a book on famous political leaders in modern Iraq. Semah's article provides a critical survey of Baṣrī's works, and of his poetry in particular, which is considered by Baṣrī himself as his main contribution. The various features of his poetic art are analyzed in some detail.

In the sixth article of the volume, Sadok Masliyah discusses the polarity existing in the Arabic and the Hebrew numerals 3–10 and the numbered nouns. Numbers 3–10, which have a feminine marker (*tā marbūṭa* in Arabic, *hei* in Hebrew), precede masculine nouns rather than feminine nouns as one may expect. These numbers without the marker precede, however, feminine nouns. Masliyah examines the various theories advanced to explain this unique linguistic phenomenon including those proposed by Arab medieval grammarians and those of the nineteenth-century orientalists, as well as Hetzron's recent study. Hetzron's theory is based on the assumption that in one stage of the Proto-

Semitic language the plurals of masculine nouns were considered feminine and *vice versa*. After giving his own critical remarks, Sadok Masliyah says that more evidence is needed to enhance this theory.

The last article in this volume of *al-Karmil* deals with the poetry of 'Alqama, one of the poets of the pre-Islamic period. Luṭfī Maṣṣūr collects all available information on the poet's life from early Arabic sources. 'Alqama's poetry has reached us with the commentary of al-A'lam al-Shantamarī. It includes three long poems as well as three short pieces. Maṣṣūr provides a thematic analysis of the poems coupled with remarks on style and form.

In the book review section, Rubin Snir writes on Shmuel Moreh's *Studies in Modern Arabic Prose and Poetry* (Leiden 1988) while Elias 'Atallah contributes two reviews, one dealing with George Kanazi's edition of *Kitāb Iṣlāḥ Mā Ghalīṭa Fīhī Abū 'Abdallah al-Namirī* (Haifa 1988), and the other with Fahid Abū Khaḍra's book *Dirāsāt fī al-Shi'r wa'l-'Arūd* (Kufr Yasif 1989).