

# Editorial Note

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This issue of the *American Journal of Islam and Society* comprises three research articles that, taken together, explore the many ethical, historical, and conceptual resources through which Muslim thinkers and communities negotiate modernity, power, and knowledge across a wide range of diverse contexts. Whilst the articles differ in method and focus, ranging from decolonial philosophy and social history to political theology and metaphysical reflection, they are united by a shared concern with mediation: between spirit and politics, memory and archive, reform and tradition, and human and more-than-human worlds.

We begin with Achraf Guennouni Idrissi's article, "From Ego-Politics to Rūḥ-Politics: Abderrahmane Taha's Insurgent Ethics of Iz'āj as a Decolonial Imperative." In this contribution, Idrissi examines the Moroccan thinker Abderrahmane Taha's concept of *iz'āj* (ethical agitation or disturbance) as an Islamically grounded mode of decolonial critique. Reading Taha in conversation with decolonial theorists such as Walter D. Mignolo, the article argues that Taha advances a distinctive form of epistemic disobedience rooted in spiritual discipline, ethical responsibility, and the cultivation of the self. Rather than framing resistance solely in terms of political mobilization or identity, Idrissi shows how Taha reorients critique toward what he terms a *rūḥ-political* paradigm, in which inner moral transformation and outward social engagement are inseparable. The article thus offers an original contribution to ongoing discussions about the possibilities and limits of Islamic decolonial thought.

We then turn to Abdullah Martin Drury's historical study, "Faith and Loyalty: A Short History of the Muslims of Colonial New Zealand." Drury reconstructs the largely overlooked history of Muslim presence in

New Zealand from the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth century, drawing on fragmentary archival sources, census records, and newspaper accounts. By attending carefully to both documentary evidence and archival silences, the article challenges assumptions that Muslim history in New Zealand begins only with late-twentieth-century migration. Drury highlights the everyday lives, labour, and social negotiations of early Muslim settlers, situating them within broader imperial and transnational networks while also emphasizing their local embeddedness. In doing so, the article contributes to a growing body of scholarship that re-thinks dominant narratives of Muslim migration and minority formation.

As our third research article, we have Andi Herawati's "The Grove of Imagination': Re-reading Ibn 'Arabi's *Barzakh* as a Spiritual Ecology." In this rich and innovative study, Herawati revisits Ibn 'Arabi's treatment of the *barzakh*, arguing that it functions as a dynamic, growth-oriented realm integral to spiritual and ethical development. Drawing on vegetal metaphors in Ibn 'Arabi's writings and engaging contemporary ecological philosophy, the article considers the *barzakh* as a spiritual geography in important ways. By framing Ibn 'Arabi's metaphysics as a resource for rethinking anthropocentrism and environmental ethics, Herawati's contribution opens new avenues for engaging classical Sufi thought. Alongside these research articles, the issue also includes a wide-ranging selection of book reviews that include reviews of works discussing covenantal ethics in Islam, Islamic media and revolutionary subjectivities in Egypt, comparative theology and missionary encounters, and much more besides.

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