



BOSTON COLLEGE
The Levantine Review



FROM THE EDITORS

We are pleased to put before you this second volume of *The Levantine Review*; Boston College's flagship Middle East Studies journal, published by the Department of Slavic and Eastern Languages and Literatures, and in conjunction with the Boston College Libraries.

The Levantine Review is dedicated to a critical study of the Levant and its contiguous Mediterranean realms, advancing a broad, diverse, and inclusive purview to the region, and bringing into focus the larger conceptual, geographic, social, linguistic, religious and cultural settings of the Levant and Near East.

As our Managing Editor Nina Bogdanovsky recently wrote in Volume 14, Number 3 of the [Boston College Libraries Newsletter](#), the state of *The Levantine Review* is indeed strong! We continue to attract a distinguished cohort of scholars to our pages (most recently from the University of Ottawa, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jagiellonian University, the University of Oxford, and the Naval Post-Graduate School in Monterrey among others.) The groundbreaking research and critical essays of our contributors this past year have been of crucial importance to those seeking to understand the eddies of a Middle East undergoing radical transformations. Our articles have been downloaded a total of 4000 times in 2012 (from May to December 2012,) and more than 1400 times in 2013 (from January to May 1, 2013,) and we have as recently as this past week been added to the global Directory of Open Access Journals.

Always dedicated to critical inquiry and ground-breaking readings of the Middle East, and carrying on with the pursuit of our ecumenical interdisciplinary analysis of the region, this first issue of the second volume of *The Levantine Review* features new research in a variety of Near Eastern Studies sub-fields and disciplines:

Francisco del Río Sánchez, a Semitist at the University of Barcelona-Spain, investigates the fascinating topic of *Karshuni*; a Syriac graphic system that the Maronites and other Near Eastern Christians use when writing their versions of "Christian Arabic."

Adam A.J. DeVille, a Historian and Theologian at the University of Saint Francis, writes topically on the challenges that academics face today when studying and teaching "encounters between Muslims and Eastern Christian" in the Middle East.

Tristan James Mabry, a Political Scientist and Sociolinguist at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, deals with yet another "hot-button" issue in a modern Middle East facing new transformational challenges; the question of language, identity, and nationalism, and the consequences of ethno-linguistic Arabism in a disordered region yearning for reform and order.

Robert G. Rabil, a Political Historian at Florida Atlantic University, explores the history of one of the ideologies of Sunni Islamism in Lebanon and its attempts at dislodging Maronite political hegemony over the state.

Shmuel Shepkaru, a scholar of Jewish history, Jewish mysticism, and Israeli culture at the University of Oklahoma, writes on Israeli-Arab relations and the contacts between Israeli-Arabs and Israeli-Jews through the lens of Israeli cinema.

Joseph S. Spoerl, a professor of Philosophy at Saint Anselm College, examines the history of anti-Semitism in the Muslim world, by exploring one particular component of Islamic tradition through the work of Muslim historian and hagiographer Ibn Ishaq (d. 767).

Going back to the modern era, and to the barometer of change in the Middle East, this issue of *The Levantine Review* features reviews of two new books on Lebanon; **William Harris's** *Lebanon, A History; 600-2011*, and **Are Knudsen & Michael Kerr's** *Lebanon After the Cedar Revolution*.

On behalf of our editorial staff, we wish to thank you for your continued support and faithful readership, and we hope that you will find this year's installments of *The Levantine Review* as informative, thought-provoking, and rewarding as those of last year's.

Franck Salameh
Senior Editor in Chief,
Boston College, May 2013.