The Fifteenth Annual Wadie Jwaideh Memorial Lecture

__THE ABSENT SECULARISTS: ISLAM IN THE 2014 TUNISIAN CONSTITUTION__

Malika Zeghal

Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Professor in Contemporary Islamic Thought and Life,
Harvard University

Opening Remarks by

Stephen Katz
Chair and Professor
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
Indiana University

Thursday, November 10, 2016
7:00 PM
Federal Room

Indiana Memorial Union
Generously Funded by Donations to the Jwaideh Memorial Fund
Professor Wadie Elias Jwaideh had a long and distinguished career both within and outside of Indiana University. He received the degree of Licentiate in Law from the University of Baghdad in 1942. In 1960, he received his PhD from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. During this time, he also held a position as lecturer in Arabic at Johns Hopkins University.

His dissertation, titled *A History of the Kurdish Nationalist Movement*, is the most comprehensive study ever made of the Kurdish question. This work established him as one of the world’s leading experts on the Kurds. It was published posthumously by Syracuse University Press in 2006, as *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Its Origins and Development*.

Dr. Jwaideh joined the faculty of Indiana University in 1960 and became the founder and chairman of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literature and Professor of History until his retirement.

In 1972, Professor Jwaideh was given the Lieber Memorial Award for Distinguished Teaching. A number of his colleagues and former students contributed articles for a Festschrift in his honor. Dr. Robert Olsen edited this book, titled *Islamic and Middle Eastern Society* (Amana Books, 1987).

After his retirement from IU in 1985, Dr. Jwaideh accepted an appointment as Adjunct Professor of History at the University of California at San Diego, where he taught until 1990.
Malika Zeghal is the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Professor in Contemporary Islamic Thought and Life in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization at Harvard University. She is also an Affiliated Professor of Government in the Government Department, and a member of the Committee on the Study of Religion. Her research focuses on the interaction between Islam and politics in the modern Middle East. She is particularly interested in studying the formation of modern Muslim states and their religious institutions, as well as the intellectual and political genealogies of Islamist movements in the region. She also has an interest in modern Islamic intellectual history in the Middle East, Europe and North America.

An alumna of the Ecole Normale Supérieure de la Rue d’Ulm (Paris, France), Malika Zeghal holds a PhD in Political Science from the Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris (1994). Before joining Harvard University in 2010, she was Associate Professor of the Anthropology and Sociology of Religion at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

Malika Zeghal has published a study of the Egyptian ulama of al-Azhar since the 1950s and of their various forms of engagement with politics (Gardiens de l’Islam. Les oulémas d’al-- Azhar dans l’Égypte contemporaine [Presses de Sciences Po, 1996]). She has also published a volume on Islam and politics in contemporary Morocco (Islamism in Morocco: Religion, Authoritarianism, and Electoral Politics [Markus Wiener, 2008]). She has also edited a special issue of the Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée, Intellectuels de l’islam contemporain. Nouvelles générations, nouveaux débats [123, 2008], on contemporary liberal Muslim thought. She is currently working on a book on Islam and the state in the Arab world in the modern period (19th—21st century), forthcoming at Princeton University Press.

**Abstract of Lecture:** Is a state’s religious establishment compatible with a democracy? In drafting their constitution between 2012 and 2014, Tunisians debated how they could continue to have a state “whose religion is Islam” while shaping a democracy for the first time in their history. Malika Zeghal examines how they constitutionalized these two imperatives without introducing sharia law in the 2014 Constitution. She details the terms of the constitutional debates about religion and explains how they shaped the political cleavages in post-Ben Ali Tunisia. These debates revealed the notable absence of secularists and a broad agreement on the imperative of a Muslim state —whose meaning was nonetheless an object of disagreement. The constitution reflected an innovative but perilous compromise in which the state was at the same time the main custodian of Islam and the protector of freedom of conscience.
We would like to offer our sincere thanks to the generous people who have contributed over the years to the Wadie Jwaideh Memorial Fund:

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Thank you!

Stephen Katz
Chair and Professor
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures