While criticizing me for using an opposition between colonizer and colonized, Silverstein ironically reproduces a clear-cut opposition in his review. He reduces a highly diverse body of historiography on colonialism in North Africa into two categories: one (represented by my work and that of Marnia Lazreg) that is anticolonialist in the tradition of Fanon and Sartre, he says, and another that is "revisionist," pioneered, according to him, by scholars who "seek to transcend monolithic dichotomies of 'colonizer' and 'colonized.'" Some of those he mentions in the latter group share a serious scholarly handicap: they do not know the languages of the colonized, that is, Arabic or Berber. How can they then transcend anything? Can a scholar without knowledge of local languages have access to the world of the population s/he attempts to understand? Since French is the language of colonial power that constructed the population as *indigenous*, would not relying on French alone in one's research do nothing but reproduce the colonial understanding that one ought to deconstruct first? To say that neither the colonized nor the colonized constituted a homogeneous group is self-evident for postcolonial scholars. I depict diverse and even conflicting groups within colonial society that Silverstein chose to ignore in his review. However, to suggest that colonizer and colonized is a dichotomy that can be transcended is to simply overlook the defining cultural character of the colonial enterprise, namely racial ideologies that set Europeans and the local population in a sharp contrast.

At any rate, in reducing the historiography on colonialism to two poles, Silverstein overlooks the colonial trend—still alive and well, especially in France—representing colonial modernity as a precious French gift and colonialism as having had a positive role. He also ignores the neocolonial trend, whose representatives, not only in France, still reiterate old colonial categories such as Arabs versus Berbers and refer to the population by the colonial French name *indigènes* (or indigenous). It is unfortunate that Silverstein did not understand the theoretical dimension of my book, a *sine qua non* condition to understand the perspective I offer. For instance, he mistakenly attributes the theory of translation I use to Walter Benjamin and could not see that it was inspired (not borrowed) from Algirdas-Julien Greimas and Louis Hjelmslev. He also wrongly accredits Abdallah Hammoudi for the insights I use about sacrifice while I explicitly acknowledge Marcel Mauss and Emile Durkheim. Lastly, I mention in the book having made three stays in Algeria for the purpose of this study and he misrepresents that fact when he says just "a brief field trip to Algeria." Nevertheless, he is correct when he remarks that I depicted a "pessimistic picture." Indeed, how can optimism come out of colonial modernity unless one takes its side and endorses its claims?

A REPLY TO ABDELMAJID HANNOUM

PAUL SILVERSTEIN
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I regret that Professor Hannoum believes I mischaracterized his argument. By their nature, book reviews synthesize and condense; they cannot capture all the nuances authors may have wished to convey in their larger work. For all of our shared interests

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and engagements, Professor Hannoum and I clearly disagree on the contours of the academic historiography of colonial Algeria, on the lasting influence of colonialism as a (violent) project of world-making, on the interplay of empirical description and theoretical reflection, and on the role of anthropological research in articulating a political critique of the present. Professor Hannoum's book was written as a polemic and thus invites argument. I encourage readers to examine his book and respond themselves.

A RESPONSE TO TAREQ ISMAEL'S REVIEW OF *RED STAR OVER IRAQ: IRAQI COMMUNISM BEFORE SADDAM*

JOHAN FRANZÉN
doi:10.1017/S0020743813000330

It was with great expectation that I awaited *IJMES*' review of my book on the Iraqi communist movement, *Red Star over Iraq: Iraqi Communism before Saddam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), published in the November 2012 issue. However, any hope of a balanced assessment of my work—the result of many years of painstaking research—disappeared as soon as I began reading Professor Tareq Ismael's review. Ismael, who is the author of the only other work on the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) that has been published in English in recent times, might seem like an appropriate scholar to offer a specialist view on the topic. But this proved not to be the case.

Sadly Ismael fails to engage with any of the main topics that are raised by the book. He does not mention how the book carefully and attentively contextualizes the rise of the ICP in the 1940s and 1950s, showing how an indigenous Iraqi organization struggled with the peculiar concept of "communism" and how to make sense of this in an Iraqi context. He does not comment on the role played by education in shaping a new type of intelligentsia in the 1920s and 1930s, something that was a fundamental precondition for the emergence and rapid popularization of the party, and which is treated at length in the book. He similarly fails to make any mention of what is perhaps the main contention of the book, namely that the ICP gradually transformed itself into an "Iraqist" nationalist party—not dissimilar from other political parties in the country at the time—rather than merely being a Soviet "satellite" party, which Third World communist parties usually are said to have been. It is this syncretization of political ideologies that is key to understanding the role of the ICP in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The ICP went from being a Marxist-Leninist party with a dogmatic understanding of Iraqi society to becoming an *Iraqi* party espousing an ideology of *waṭanī* (nationalist/patriotic) socialism. Instead Ismael finds it worthwhile to devote his whole review to details such as when exactly Akram al-Hourani's Arab Socialist Party merged with the Baʿth Party in Syria, or whether Yemen was included in the ICP slogan calling for a federal union with the United Arab Republic in the aftermath of the 1958 revolution, or what military rank members of the Revolution Command Council in Baʿthist Iraq might have held.

Ismael further questions my assertion that the Free Officers who pulled off the coup that led to the revolution in July 1958 were organizationally modeled on the communist party. He refutes this by saying that they were modeled "in every respect" on the

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