

## BOOK REVIEWS

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STEFAN HEIDEMANN, *Die Renaissance der Städte in Nordsyrien und Nordmesopotamien. Städtische Entwicklung und wirtschaftliche Bedingungen in ar-Raqqa und Harran*, Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, vol. 40. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002). Pp. 555. \$154.00 cloth.

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Tourists coming to today's Aleppo or Damascus are often surprised by the abundance of Umayyad ruins from the early 8th century. In al-Raqqa, a town in northern Syria, they are impressed by magnificent 'Abbasid monuments from the late 8th century. All over Syria, more fortresses, mosques, and madrasas erected by Zangid, Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman rulers after the 12th century will also be worth a visit. What tourists will not find, however, are remains from the period between the 10th and early 12th centuries, because there are none.

This period is known to archaeologists as a "gap of settlement" in northern Syria. There is evidence of an almost complete abandonment of urban construction and a dramatic decrease in population during that time. Scholars such as D. S. Richards therefore argue that these two centuries marked a crucial turning point in the history of Islamic culture from a "classical" Islamic world toward a Turkish-dominated Islamic society in the Middle Ages (p. 4). Despite the obvious importance of this transition period, it has not yet received the in-depth scholarly treatment it deserves.

Stefan Heidemann's meticulously researched, richly documented, and well-written book fills this gap through a study of the region of Diyar Mudar in northern Syria. At the heart of his inquiry is an exploration of the specific causes of the "gap of settlement," starting in the 10th century, when bedouins with no particular interests in the maintenance of urban space conquered the region, until the "renaissance" of the cities under the Seljuks and Zangids in the 12th century. The author studied urban "non-development" in al-Raqqa and Harran since both were medium-size towns and therefore probably more representative of overall trends than the great capital city of Damascus. In his work he blends the writings of contemporary Muslim scholars with an analysis of material sources such as coins and architecture, which is a fresh methodological approach in the study of medieval Syrian history. Heidemann's skill in the field of numismatics is especially noteworthy, and he clearly demonstrates the broader potential the analysis of coins has in the future for the reconstruction of the histories of Islamic societies.

Heidemann demonstrates how after the final breakdown of 'Abbasid authority in northern Syria, bedouin tribes such as the Banu Numair, which had come from the Arabian peninsula in the 10th century, took power in the prevalent anarchic circumstances. As nomads, they neglected urban settlements and moved administrative centers from town to encampment (*hilla*). Market activities stopped, and the number of settlements declined precipitously because of permanent bedouin raids. Excavations reveal that, out of fifty-five Islamic settlements, only

four towns contained pottery dating from the 11th century (p. 298). Moreover, long-distance trade also collapsed at the time of bedouin rule, as is seen in the emergence of the so-called *black dirham* coined in northern Syria. Its name derived from a decreasing percentage of silver and a higher quantity of copper. The *black dirham*, which often bears the name of the local bedouin ruler, was circulated exclusively in local markets.

Only after the Seljuks drove out bedouin rulers at the end of the 11th century did the cities recover, despite inner Seljuk strife and the establishment of the Crusaders in the fortress of Edessa in 1098. According to Heidemann, the Seljuks encouraged long-distance trade and local agricultural production because they wanted to benefit from both through the trade taxes and revenues from the *iqṭāʿ* system. It was the Seljuk governor of Mosul, ʿImad al-Dīn Zangī (d. 1146), who managed to stabilize the region by repelling the Crusaders and by reforming the taxation and irrigation systems. During the second half of the 12th century, his descendants minted new indigenous coins, which replaced Byzantine copper coins in long-distance trade. This revival of the currency system reinforced the urban recovery during Zangid and later Ayyubid rule.

Overall, Heidemann's thorough research and sound analysis make for compelling reading. His descriptions of local political history may at times be too detailed for a general audience, and a chart listing the rulers of al-Raqqā and Harran would have improved readability. Commendable are the small summaries in all of his chapters and subchapters so the reader can easily select and recapitulate the information and findings. Specialist scholars of medieval Islam and Crusader studies will enjoy this book, which is rich in political, economic, and archaeological evidence. Heidemann successfully rediscovered large parts of the two "missing centuries" of Syrian urban development, thereby contributing significantly to our understanding of this crucial transition period in Islamic history.

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TREVOR H. J. MARCHAND, *Minaret Building and Apprenticeship in Yemen* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press 2001). Pp. 299. \$90.00 cloth.

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"To learn about learning in a context in which formal technical training, engineers, and drawn plans are non-existent" (pp. ix, 73): this is the main quest that lies behind the work of architectural anthropology authored by the architect turned anthropologist Trevor Marchand, currently a lecturer in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. His efforts focus on the builders of the minarets that grace the famously spectacular skyline of the highland Yemeni capital Sanaa. As the title suggests, the professional practice of building, and the system of transferring the knowledge necessary in that practice, occupy the center of this study. Marchand spent a year working as an unpaid laborer in the projects of Bayt al-Maswari, the leading "house" of minaret builders in Yemen. Thanks to his participant-observation method and his practical understanding of architecture, his narrative is appealingly vivid and provides unique insights into the themes of craftsman hierarchy, non-propositional communication, and the learning process within the "hierarchized space of the building site" (p. 46).

Prolific and resilient, traditional Yemeni architecture has been the subject of numerous studies and films. Minarets have also been extensively studied, although they are central to only three other monographs in English: Doris Behrens-Abouseif's work on Cairo minarets,

A. B. M. Husain's publication on Indo-Muslim structures, and Jonathan Bloom's authoritative *Minaret: Symbol of Islam*. To the study of both Yemeni architecture and minarets Marchand contributes the analysis of minaret building as a teaching and learning process and the explication of the role of builders as self-conscious agents. Focusing on the role and agency of expert craftsmen and of their patrons, Marchand reads into the symbolism of the soaring structures not only the status of the patron but also "the skill and dedication of the master craftsmen who built them." (p. 41).

To his field observations Marchand applies theories of practice and cognition. By relating his findings to the notion of embodied knowledge advanced by Pierre Bourdieu and others, as well as to explanatory models of spatial cognition, he contributes a clear picture of the different stages through which "structured knowledge becomes gradually inculcated" (p. 75). The layout of the book's core reflects the order of these stages: after an introductory overview of the traditional building trade in Yemen and a first chapter on the history of Yemeni minarets, the next three chapters are devoted to laborers, apprentices, and master builders, respectively. In an effective metaphorical scheme, the author relates the three successive levels of expertise to the building of the three successive parts of the minaret structure. Chapter 2 describes the building of a minaret's foundations and focuses on the training of laborers, who acquire discipline and a position on the site through performance of simple mechanical tasks. Chapter 3 details the building of the minaret's shaft and the learning process for apprentices who acquire expert knowledge by making. Chapter 4 juxtaposes the construction of the minaret's dome with the attainment of master-builder status.

For Marchand, the defining characteristic of traditional apprenticeship is the inculcation of both discipline and expertise through the process of making; understanding of spatial and structural relationships but also internalizing of roles at the building site through action is what the Yemeni system of apprenticeship imparts to the aspiring builders. The physical, non-verbal nature of this type of learning is both inherent in the learning method and instrumental in the expert craftsmen's firm grip on production of expertise. Scholars working on non-formal learning will find in Marchand's case study and theoretical analysis a highly illuminating comparandum. One possible application of the apprenticeship model is in the study of traditional and historical boatbuilding and navigation: in both areas practitioners appear to have worked largely without blueprints or models, charts or portolans; to have learned through apprenticeship; and to have observed a strict hierarchy of masters and apprentices.

While it is unfair to criticize the author for something he did not set out to do, the brief mention in his concluding chapter of Sylvaine Camelin's work on the transmission of knowledge among fishermen at the Hadrami port of al-Shihr is tantalizing, and systematic reference to her findings would have been instructive. When he does pursue a comparative approach, the comparison is with Canadian craft training, which exemplifies the formal Western transfer of craft knowledge, and which the author interprets as diametrically opposed to traditional apprenticeship. Here I agree with one previous reviewer of Marchand's work (Cynthia Myntti, *Yemen Update* 44 [2002]: 37) who notes that the difference between the two systems is overstated. I would argue that the perceived gap is possibly mitigated on the one hand by the use of some drawings by Yemeni master builders (pp. 212–16) and on the other by the practical, hands-on component of modern, Western training.

A more serious problem is the sustained emphasis on Islam as an explanatory backdrop to the formation of the builders' consciousness, intentions, and action, a trope that leads Marchand to the vague correlation of the three apprenticeship stages described earlier to the three stages of Islamic spirituality, *islām* (surrender and ritual practice), *imān* (conscious piety), and *ihsān* (perfection of coordinated piety and intentionality). The danger here is of viewing the Muslim experience as essential and pervasive. Is it really necessary, for example, to attribute the use of deteriorating building tools to what Titus Burckhardt calls "the very

acute awareness that a Muslim has of the ephemerality of things" (pp. 233–34)? Are not economy, conservation, and a craftsman's attachment to tools that have served him well better explanations for the use of aging adzes and hammers?

On the technical front, the author supplements his text with a series of eloquent photographs of buildings and builders at work and at rest; judiciously selected technical drawings elucidate explanations of building devices and structures. The indexes by topic and by author discussed are useful, and so is the glossary of the Arabic terms, especially for students of architecture and material culture in general. What a pity, however, that neither the glossary nor the main text follows any recognizable system of transliteration. This is a serious and unexplainable obstacle to using the fascinating technical information in the book.

These few weaknesses aside, I recommend this intelligent and highly informative work to anyone interested in systems of knowledge, architecture, material culture of the Middle East, and Yemeni studies. It can also serve as an excellent case study on the reading list of any graduate course on these and related subjects.

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YA'QUB YUSUF AL-HIJJI, *The Art of Dhow-Building in Kuwait* (London: London Centre of Arab Studies and Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, 2001). Pp. 176. \$70.00 cloth.

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The author describes his book as "a memorial to [Kuwait's] great dhow-builders" (p. x). More broadly, Ya'qub Yusuf al-Hijji's recent publication can be considered a kind of memorial to a Kuwait that no longer exists. The decline of Kuwait's maritime culture generally, and its dhow-building activities specifically, can be directly attributed to the country's shift to an oil economy in 1946 (p. 4). What this book effectively demonstrates is that rapid economic and social transformations over the past half-century have, in many ways, wrecked havoc on Kuwait's cultural heritage. The 254 stunning photographs that illustrate the text bear witness to people, places, objects, and activities that all too quickly are fading from collective Kuwaiti memory. At a time that, for most Kuwaitis, *muhallab* refers to a kitschy shopping mall shaped like a ship rather than to the celebrated deep-sea *boum* after which it is named, al-Hijji's book is most opportune.

The book relies primarily on photographs to present both the history and actual step-by-step process of Kuwaiti dhow building. Al-Hijji's knowledgeable, lively, sometimes anecdotal commentary renders even the most technical explanations absorbing. In his Introduction, al-Hijji explains that his interest in the subject began in 1976 after meeting one of the Kuwaiti master dhow builders and then reading Alan Villiers's 1940 book *Sons of Sinbad* (p. ix). Al-Hijji cites Villiers fondly and often and uses many of his photographs of dhows in his own text. In addition to photographs, the book includes detailed line drawings that help illustrate and clarify the more complicated aspects of dhow building. While it will appeal mainly to those concerned with the history of Kuwait or the Gulf region, *The Art of Dhow-Building* may also engage anyone interested in maritime history generally.

The book opens with a brief summary of Kuwait's maritime history, which can be traced back to at least the 17th century (p. 3). By the end of the 19th century, Kuwait had an active commercial harbor with direct trade between its merchants and those in India, East Africa, and southern Arabia. Its dhow-building industry attracted master builders from Bahrain, Oman,

and elsewhere. Commodities such as timber, iron, and cotton were imported from the west coast of India and other Gulf ports to build the dhows, which enabled commerce at both the local and international levels. Al-Hijji discusses six different types of dhows and explains that the dhow most distinctive to Kuwait is the double-ended *boum* (p. 21). The *boum* was developed by Kuwaiti shipbuilders at the end of the 19th century, and its extremely effective design quickly became popular throughout the Gulf region. Al-Hijji explains that only the simplest tools are required to build a dhow—a saw, a hammer, an adze, a bow drill, a clamp, a chisel, a Y-shaped wedge, a plumb line, and a quadrant imported from India. He also lists the various types of imported timber used to build particular dhows and reveals whether such timber is still available today (in most cases, it is not). The main part of the book outlines the steps required to build a deep-sea *boum*, a mast, and a sail. Again, photographs and drawings successfully convey the intricate skill needed to produce such dhows. Al-Hijji emphasizes that dhows were as unique as their master builders, who relied on the naked eye rather than on any precise measuring tools to construct their ships. He also explains how new dhows are launched once they are built and includes details regarding their overall maintenance and repair.

Al-Hijji presents a few thumbnail sketches of some of the most famous third-generation Kuwaiti dhow builders. The third generation was composed of those who lived and worked toward the end of the 19th and throughout the 20th century. The last dhow builder mentioned is ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Rasul, who died in 1995. It is not clear from the text whether any dhow masters are practicing their craft in Kuwait today. Al-Hijji also provides brief descriptions and histories of ten of the best known Kuwaiti dhows and a few of their captains. In his final chapter, “The Future of Dhow-Building in Kuwait,” al-Hijji is mildly hopeful that dwindling local interest in the dhow can be revived if an effort is made to include its history and to teach its craft in schools. He also offers his own technical solution to dhow builders, suggesting that they consider using the “half-model technique,” though he does not really explain to the lay reader the benefits of this technique or why adopting it might improve the future of dhow building in Kuwait (pp. 140–41). The book includes a fascinating appendix on the economics of dhow building, with tables that compare the costs of building a medium-size dhow in 1937 and 1987. It also contains an extensive table outlining various economic aspects of the dhow-building industry in Kuwait from 1913 to 1951. In addition, the book provides a useful glossary, with nautical terms specific to the Kuwaiti dialect.

Al-Hijji’s short, well-organized study is highly informative and contributes significantly to the understanding of Kuwait’s history and culture. It effectively conveys the texture of a way of life that has been completely overrun by new economic and cultural forces and very different international alliances from those that existed fifty years ago. The disappearance of dhow building in Kuwait signals the disappearance of an entire community, culture, and way of life. This book is a worthy attempt to represent something of this lost art and lost life.

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SHEMEEM BURNEY ABBAS, *The Female Voice in Sufi Ritual: Devotional Practices of Pakistan and India* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002). Pp. 239. \$45.00 cloth.

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Shemeem Burney Abbas’s book proposes to document “the place of women in Sufi practice” (p. xix) by exploring the oral performative expression of the female voice as deployed by

female and male performers of the Sufi traditions of *qawwālī* ("essentially a male genre, usually sung by professional musicians who come from a line of *qawwālī* singers" [p. 8]) and *sufiānā kalām* ("mystical poetry usually sung by a solo musician to minimal instrumentation" [p. 9]). By her own admission, the study does not use any particular theoretical frame but is directed toward "an informed, educated audience interested in the female dimensions of Sufism in the Pakistan–India subcontinent" (p. xxi). Although it lacks a clear audience or a guiding thesis, Abbas's study is most valuable for her original field-research materials from Sufi performance contexts both at Pakistani shrines and in the South Asian diaspora. She not only interviews internationally renowned singers such as Abida Parveen and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan but also, and perhaps more significant, explores locally based traditions and performers at the tomb shrines to the Sufi saints Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Bullhe Shah, and Shah Abdul Latif, as well as other, less well-known figures in South Asian Islam.

*The Female Voice in Sufi Ritual* consists of five chapters, each addressing a different aspect of the female in Sufi performance. Chapter 1, "History and Economy of Women in Sufi Ritual," draws on field studies of female performers, particularly in Sind among Sidi communities, and their traditions of patronage and performance. After a brief discussion of the tradition of audition, or *samāʿ*, in South Asian Sufi history, Abbas presents an interview with Abida Parveen regarding the nature of *samāʿ* as a means of inducing *wajd* and *kefiat* (states of spiritual ecstasy), an interview with Reshma concerning her popularization of the famous *kalām* "Mast Qalandar." She then moves to the system of traditional patronage among Sidi and Mohana fisherwomen. Although the connections between these topics are loosely drawn, each contains interesting primary insights into the nature of performance and the problematics of patronage for female performers. Chapter 2 jumps to "Ethnographies of Communication," wherein Abbas explores the typical performance context and the use of the female voice by male and female performers. This chapter includes a discussion of a fascinating performance by Abida Parveen at the Open University in Islamabad attended by government employees in which Parveen's linguistic, genre, and mood shifts demonstrated a facility with voice and language that allowed her an expressive range unavailable to male performers. However, this chapter is filled with jargon, using terms from performance studies, folklore, linguistics, and ethno-musicology without clear definition or sufficient explanation (e.g., Abbas uses the term "code-shifting" to indicate language shifts [p. 83] and creates charts of the performance process without exegeting them [p. 82]).

The third and fourth chapters address women in Sufi literary traditions and as lyric voices in *qawwāl* and *sufiānā kalām*. Chapter 3, "Female Myths in Sufism," gives brief sketches of several of the heroines of ballads associated with Sufi themes that are extremely popular in the northwestern regions of India–Pakistan: Hir, Sassi, Sohni, and Layla. There is also a brief, and odd, discussion of the Sabri Brothers' performance before a London audience of South Asians from mixed religions in which they refer to Mira Bai (a Hindu devotional poet) as a devotee of the most famous saint of South Asia, Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti. Abbas characterizes this "Mira Bai *qawwālī*" as "a modernization of the traditional *qawwālī* formulas, updated and recreated for the cosmopolitan, expatriate Asian audiences in England. Can this transformation be viewed as a development of transnational Islam?" (p. 101). This suggestion is provocative but unsubstantiated by her analysis, leaving the question open to further discussion. Chapter 4, "The Female Voice in Sufi Ritual," focuses on the use of female voice to express humility and selfless love, especially as a metaphor for the relationship between master and disciple, *murshid* and *murīd*. The last chapter, "Closing the Circle of the Mystic Journey," does anything but close the circle, as it ends with a page of suggestions for further research. The bulk of the chapter attempts to locate the female voice and female experience in Sufi tradition more broadly.

The greatest contribution of Abbas's research is her field research at Sufi shrines and among female performers. Indeed, the question of gendered performances by male *qawwāls* using the female voice and female performers using male and female voices is highly deserving of exploration. Furthermore, her material on Sindhi patronage systems opens a realm of *samāʿ* that is not present in other major studies of Sufi music, such as Regula Qureishi's important work on the *qawwāls* of the Nizamuddin Auliya' shrine in Delhi. The brief discussion of Abida Parveen's virtuosic performance in Islamabad is tantalizing, as it suggests a sustained social and political critique coded in Sufi poetry. However, Abbas tends to bury and downplay her most compelling and important insights into the changes in patronage systems, the use of the female voice as social criticism, and the wholly unexplored role of women as performers of Sufi music. It is this lack of sustained inquiry into any of the performers or performance contexts that is the greatest flaw of the book. The controversial practice of *samāʿ* in Islam and the enormous body of literature on it is barely discussed. Sufism in India-Pakistan is characterized simplistically as an effort to disseminate the principles of Islam in a vernacular palatable to a non-Muslim and non-literate society that was, at the time, oppressed by poverty, gender and caste discrimination, and disease. The significant research by Carl Ernst and Bruce Lawrence on *samāʿ* in South Asia is almost entirely overlooked. Lacking a clear argument, the book jumps from topic to topic, exploring first a particular performer and performance, then a socio-economic dynamic, then an ethno-musicological question, then a text-critical issue. This makes the enormously valuable and ground-breaking source material obtained by Abbas difficult to use either for research or for instruction.

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HERBERT BERG, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, Curzon Studies in the Qur'an (London: Curzon, 2000). Pp. 263.

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Using concise language and a clear organization, Herbert Berg's book provides a careful and nuanced examination of the modern scholarly debate over what he terms the "authenticity" of hadiths and *isnāds* in early Islamic texts. Berg outlines the major issues in the textual and historical study of hadith and proposes an alternative method for "testing" certain types of hadiths according to their *isnāds*.

Berg's study is primarily a critical review and analysis of the different Western scholarly evaluations of and approaches to hadith criticism. He groups Western scholars into three main categories: sceptics (Goldziher, Schacht, Stetter, Wansbrough, Rippin, Cook, Calder); reactionaries (Abbott, Sezgin, Azami, Horst, Birkeland, Stauth); and moderates (Juynboll, Rahman, Schoeler, Motzki, Horovitz, Fück, Robson, Versteegh, Nuranyi, Gilliot, Leemhuis, Coulson, Rubin). The number of scholars examined and the ease with which Berg moves from one specialized academic debate to another is remarkable. Despite what might appear to be an overly specialized subject, Berg's presentation is very readable and carefully explains concepts in terms accessible to the non-specialist. This does not mean that Berg over-generalizes, however, nor is his analysis overly restricted by its roughly chronological approach.

The focus of Berg's interest is what he calls "exegetical" hadiths, supplying a representative subset of the larger question of hadith in relation to early Muslim literature. Berg follows his overview of the general evaluation of hadith criticism by a more limited and detailed

investigation of hadiths employed in exegesis of the Qur'an. He makes a number of bold and insightful points such as the structural parallel between the place of the Prophet Muhammad in legal hadith and Ibn 'Abbas in exegetical hadith.

The centerpiece of Berg's book is his own testing of some 5,835 hadiths in al-Tabari's Qur'an commentary whose *isnāds* include the name of Ibn 'Abbas, though the number of hadiths for which statistical information is provided is much lower (a sample of 997 hadiths). Berg gives a meticulous description of his presuppositions and the methods he used in selecting and analyzing the *isnāds* using a computer database. Among the variables he examines are the number of *isnāds* with common informants of al-Tabari and Ibn 'Abbas; the number of different types of *isnāds*; and a classification of hadith according to exegetical devices (drawn primarily from Wansbrough). Chapter 5 (pp. 173–218) surveys selected results of this statistical analysis.

At no point does Berg seem to tip his hand toward one camp or another, beyond his shrewd observation that those who take a "middle ground" do not appear to differ much (at least in their presuppositions and conclusions) from those who defend the authenticity of hadiths through the *isnāds*. Nor does Berg appear to draw conclusions about the significance of these different positions or his own analyses for the larger issues of reconstructing the early history of Qur'an exegesis or Islamic literature more generally. Readers interested in more substantive questions will need to look elsewhere.

Certainly, Berg defines well the methodological and epistemological implications of the different approaches he examines, but there is little to ground this theoretical analysis in the historical questions that seem to concern the scholars under study. For example, although Berg concedes that scholars such as Wansbrough are not interested in what "really happened," others, such as Abbott and Sezgin, do seem to have that concern. The types of theses being argued by these different scholars, and the social contexts in which they were emeshed, may be more relevant to an analysis of their methods than Berg's study allows. It is particularly unfortunate that Berg does not elaborate on the implications of his own testing of hadiths for reconstructing the literary history of early Qur'an exegesis.

Overall, Berg's work should be considered extremely useful as an incisive introduction to Western scholarship on hadith criticism and as providing a fresh approach to the analysis of *isnāds* as a source for judging the authenticity of hadith literature.

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FARID ESACK, *The Qur'an: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2002). Pp. 192. \$15.95 paper.

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This introduction to the Qur'an contains an Introduction, eight chapters, and a short postscript focusing on the understanding of the Qur'an after 11 September 2001. The Introduction presents various approaches to the Qur'an by comparing them to approaches to the loved one adopted by various types of lovers. Six chapters situate the Qur'an in context, describing the place of the Qur'an in Muslim practice and social life; the process of revelation; the form of the Qur'an as we have it; the history of its collection; doctrine concerning its theological status; and the various modes of its interpretation. Two chapters treat the content of the Qur'an—one on theology ("Belief in the Qur'an"), and the other on ethics and ritual and legal topics ("Righteous Conduct in the Qur'an"). It is primarily descriptive, with some emphasis on the ways in which the Qur'an is and has been used and examined in Islamic society.



Overall, the work introduces the non-specialist reader to a number of important features of Islamic tradition and scholarship surrounding the Qur'an—*asbāb al-nuzūl*; different types of *tafsīr*; law and theology; and theory of *i'jāz*, or the miraculous nature of the Qur'an—briefly and in accessible language. The references in Chapter 1 to the use of Qur'anic verses in contemporary Islamic societies, drawing on examples from South African, Indian, and Pakistani contexts, are particularly useful. The work succeeds in impressing the reader that the Qur'an, as a scripture, is both at the center of numerous debates and treated as a store of ammunition for many others, and that these debates shape how the Qur'an is understood and what it means in the world. The author also introduces the reader to a range of opinions on the Qur'an from widely differing approaches, drawing on the works of medieval scholars such as Tabari, Zamakhshari, Zarkashi, and Suyuti; traditionalist modern scholars such as Khu'i; Islamic modernists such as Fazlur Rahman and Islahi; critical Muslim scholars such as Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd; and scholars working in the Orientalist tradition, such as Noldeke, Burton, and Wansbrough. Esack is also to be commended for stating his own approach and assumptions in a straightforward manner and attempting to do the same for many of the authors he cites. Frank discussion of controversial or sensitive topics, such as gender equality and depiction of the afterlife, that avoid the one-sidedness of apologetic approaches are also a successful feature of this work.

The text, however, includes a number of mistakes and questionable statements. *Jahannam*, one of the most frequently occurring words for hell in the Qur'an, is defined as "a place of great depth" (p. 162), when it clearly derives from the Hebrew "Gehinnom" (the Valley of [the Sons of] Hinnom), an area outside ancient Jerusalem that was the site of the city's dump and may have served as a ground for human sacrifice. Both were associated with fire. Moses is described as *kalām Allāh* (the word of God; p. 154) when his well-known epithet is *kalīm Allāh* (the one to whom God spoke [directly]). The possibility is held open that the term *tafsīr* (exegesis, commentary) derives from *asfara*, *yusfīru* (to break [of day]) as well as from the expected *fassara*, *yufassiru* (to explain, comment; p. 128); this seems unwarranted. The word *jamhūr* is defined as "the people" (p. 11), when the correct *jumhūr* means more specifically "the preponderant majority." The title of sura 74, "The Enshrouded One," is given as *mudatthir* (p. 33, n. 6; pp. 40–41), when it should be *muddatthir* (*mutadaththir*). The title of sura 53 should be *al-Najm* (the Star) rather than *al-Najam* (p. 44). Suras of one hundred verses are called *mi'un* (a plural of *mi'ah*, 'hundred') rather than *ma'un* (p. 62). The term *ḥisāb* is rendered "accountability" (p. 45) when it means "reckoning." The term applied to the two last suras of the Qur'an, recognizing their function as charms or incantations against evil, is not *Al-Mu'awwadhatayn* (p. 60) but *al-Mu'awwidhatān*. As a result of a very odd typographical error, the term referring to the eternal nature of the Qur'an is given as "detain" (p. 101); it ought to be *qidam*, as should *qadīm* (p. 105). Esack seems to take "Al-Mabani" to be the name of a medieval author who wrote the work on the Qur'anic sciences edited and published by Arthur Jeffrey in *Muqaddimatan fi'ulum al-Qur'an* (Cairo, 1954) (pp. 128, 197). Al-Mabani—or, rather, *Kitāb al-mabani li-nazm al-ma'ani* (The Book of Structures for the Ordering of Tropes)—is the work's title; the author has not been identified.

While trying to be even-handed in many passages, Esack engages in some cases in overstatement concerning Western critical scholarship. Commenting on Wansbrough's use of the categories Haggadic, Halakhic, and masoretic interpretation in his account of the history of Muslim exegesis, Esack counters that he has found that the terms have no meaning outside Judaism (p. 141). The terms "Haggadic," "Halakhic," and "masoretic" indeed derive from Jewish tradition and in a strict sense refer to that tradition, yet even leaving aside the intimate connections between Islam and Judaism, terms developed within one tradition may prove useful for the examination of another. They may provide new insights by bringing certain features into relief that an analysis operating entirely with native or internal concepts would miss.

Overall, the work is an interesting introduction to the Qur'an but marred by these and other errors and overstatements. Its strength lies in showing the Qur'an to be a part of Muslims' everyday lives and the object of contention.

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NAVID KERMANI, *Offenbarung als Kommunikation: Das Konzept wahy in Nasr Hamid Abu Zayds Mafhum an-nass*, European University Studies, Series 27, Asian and African Studies, vol. 58 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996). Pp. 155. \$28.95 paper.

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"At the beginning there was interpretation," is the theme of Kermani's study of the concept of *wahy* in Abu Zayd's book *Mafhum al-nass dirasa fi 'ulum al-Qur'an* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Masriyya al-'Amma li-l-Kitab, 1990). To understand the thought of a leading and controversial Egyptian intellectual, Kermani integrates *Mafhum al-nass* into Abu Zayd's larger work and past and present scholarship on the Qur'an. While the subtitle suggests a focus on Abu Zayd's concept of the revelatory process, the author goes well beyond that. Kermani displays his wide-ranging knowledge of the subject and skillfully weaves complex intellectual processes into a flowing, though at times repetitive, narrative accessible to non-specialists. Quotations from interviews with Abu Zayd bring to life the personality and intellectual agenda of the Egyptian scholar. Despite occasional mishaps in the transliteration of Arabic (e.g., pp. 6, 62, 110), in indicating translations from the original (p. 94), and in understanding Abu Zayd's thought, Kermani's book is a welcome contribution to the field of Qur'anic studies and contemporary Islamic thought.

*Offenbarung als Kommunikation* is divided into three parts. In Part 1, Kermani discusses Abu Zayd's methodological approach. Abu Zayd understands the Qur'an to be a divine message in human and, thus, historical language (pp. 28, 63). He studies it as a literary text subject to linguistic and textual methodologies and hermeneutics (p. 22). Abu Zayd sees the relationship between the message—that is, the Qur'an—and the recipient(s) of this message (the Prophet or any reader of the Qur'an) to be the dialectic relationship of interpretation (*ta'wil*). Interpretation, as Abu Zayd emphasizes, depends on the intellectual and cultural horizon of the recipient (pp. 7, 23, 25). Consequently, the interpretation of the Qur'an by a reader in the 20th century must differ from one of the 7th century and cannot be studied in isolation from the cultural and theological contexts of the interpreters (pp. 8, 24, 44–45).

In Part 2, Kermani examines Abu Zayd's concept of *wahy*. Abu Zayd maintains that "the revelation of the Qur'an, disregarding its divine origin, was based on the socio-cultural circumstances of that time, in this case, society's belief, in principle, in the possibility of *wahy*" (pp. 29–30). In pre-Islamic society, the term "*wahy*" was understood as a concealed communication, in particular between jinn and humans, based on a code known only to its sender and recipient (p. 39).

How the communication occurred is another topic addressed in Abu Zayd's analysis of *wahy*. The Qur'an states that it may either be in form of inspiration (*ilhām*) or through a divine messenger such as an angel (pp. 56–58). The question then arises, What exactly was sent down in this communication? Was it the utterance of the Qur'an in its literal form or its meaning and purport, which the Prophet then put into Arabic speech? Kermani's examination of Abu Zayd's position on this question is a weak point in his book, not so much in its overall presentation, but in the author's inaccuracies regarding details. For example, Kermani places

this question within the debate over the createdness of the Qur'an (pp. 59–67). However, Abu Zayd himself never refers to its createdness in this context (*Mafhum*, 48 ff.). Rather, he distances himself, as Kermani rightly points out, from the orthodox belief in the *eternity* of the Qur'an in its Arabic wording (p. 61). Abu Zayd is not concerned with questions regarding God's essence and attributes, which stand at the center of the createdness debate, but with the divine message as a communication that occurs at a particular point in time. And, as Wilferd Madelung's research shows ("The Origins of the Controversy Concerning the Creation of the Koran," in *Religious Schools and Sects in Medieval Islam* [London: Variorum Reprints, 1985], 5:504–25), the belief in the uncreatedness of the Qur'an does not necessitate believing that its Arabic wording is eternal.

In another instance, Kermani misunderstands Abu Zayd's objections to a view held by Ibn Khaldun. Ibn Khaldun differentiated between two stages of the revelation: a non-verbal one in which the Prophet Muhammad moved to the sphere of the angels to receive the divine communication, and a verbal revelation in which the angel took human form and communicated the divine message in Arabic (pp. 70–73). Abu Zayd does not, as Kermani suggests, object to the fact that Ibn Khaldun assigned the non-verbal and verbal revelation to two temporal stages (p. 73). Rather, he opposes the idea that Muhammad changed his ontological state (*Mafhum*, pp. 56–69). Abu Zayd's rejection of two physical spheres reflects his emphasis that the revelation was communicated in this world in a humanly understandable language. Not surprisingly, Kermani admits his confusion (p. 77) when Abu Zayd, like Ibn Khaldun, proposes two chronological phases for the Qur'anic revelation. In the early phase, according to Abu Zayd, Muhammad received the revelation as dream vision (*ru'yā*) in a non-verbal code, which he transformed into a linguistic message. Later, with Muhammad's growing familiarity with *wahy*, this communication was also possible in a state of waking in everyday Arabic speech (pp. 74–77). Abu Zayd's model poses the question, Who formulated the non-verbal part into Arabic? Kermani attempts to make sense of Abu Zayd's vague statements by proposing that he conceives the linguistic expression of the non-verbal revelation, although carried out by Muhammad, as necessarily given in its formulation (p. 82).

At the end of the second part, Kermani nicely summarizes Abu Zayd's two main concerns in *Mafhum al-nass*. First, in studying the revelation (*wahy*), God as the sender is not scientifically knowable; the only possible object of scholarly inquiry is *how* God revealed himself in this world (p. 87). Abu Zayd's second concern is a critique of the current religious discourse that contends that there is an absolute, eternally valid understanding of the Qur'an, one that is independent of historical developments and societal circumstances. For him, textual interpretation necessarily includes plurality (pp. 8, 27, 90–93).

In Part 3 of the book, Kermani addresses the question of why Abu Zayd's work evoked such a strong reaction, leading to the charge of apostasy. Kermani observes that Abu Zayd's work does not differ significantly from that of other Muslim scholars (pp. 89–90, 102, 109–10). He sees the main reason for the accusation in the fact that Abu Zayd approaches the Qur'an not only with traditional Islamic but also Western methodologies, introducing a new way of thinking about the Qur'an (pp. 104, 111–14). In addition, Abu Zayd is not diplomatic. He openly attacks prominent figures of the religious and political establishment, accusing them of monopolizing the understanding of God's word and denying Muslims interpretative plurality (pp. 95, 105–106). His opponents retaliated with the charge of apostasy, which Abu Zayd had anticipated (p. 106). They successfully used state courts against Abu Zayd: in August 1996, the Egyptian Court of Cassation declared Abu Zayd an apostate and dissolved his marriage. (Egyptian family law prohibits a Muslim woman from being married to a non-Muslim; apostasy itself incurs no criminal prosecution.) Living with his wife in exile in the Netherlands, Abu Zayd continues his intellectual project "to understand and change the present through the scientific study of the past" (p. 100).

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KIKI KENNEDY-DAY, *Books of Definition in Islamic Philosophy: The Limits of Words* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003). Pp. 213. \$75.00 cloth.

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Kiki Kennedy-Day's *Books of Definition in Islamic Philosophy* is about an under-studied genre of philosophical literature—namely, books of definition in medieval Arabic philosophy. The work surveys three philosophers central to Arabic philosophy—al-Kindi, al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina—and their contributions to this genre. The book has philologists working with Arabic and students of Arabic philosophy as its primary audience. Since the work includes a translation of Ibn Sina's *Book of Definitions*, and given Ibn Sina's influence on the history of philosophy, it is also aimed at the historian of philosophy more broadly.

The work consists of two parts, which, although thematically linked, can be read independently. Part 1, "Definitions of the Philosophers," has five chapters: (1) "What Is a Definition"; (2) "Al-Kindi: The First Arabic *Book of Definitions*"; (3) "Al-Farabi: The Emergence of Arabicized Greek Logic"; (4) "Ibn Sina: The Second *Book of Definitions*"; and (5) "Comparison of Vocabulary." This part traces the fortunes of three definitions of key concepts—substance, cause, and matter—in the works on definitions from al-Kindi, al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina. Primarily, it treats how considerations of one's audience, the reception of new material, and the subsequent appropriation and assimilation of that material affected philosophical style and content. Part 2, "Ibn Sina's *Book of Definitions*," has three chapters: (6) "The Socio-Political Milieu of Ibn Sina"; (7) "Translation: *The Book of Definition*"; and (8) "Commentary." The work has one appendix with the Arabic of the three focal definitions; twenty-four pages of notes, seven pages of bibliography; and a three-page index.

Although the work makes some good points locally, globally it lacks an over-arching thesis. Indeed, if the thesis is "to analyze the growth and stabilization of a philosophical vocabulary in Arabic" (p. 3), as Kennedy-Day claims, then it is not clear how her test cases bear out this point.

More specifically, the author seems to be unfamiliar with the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic Greek sources underlying the Arabic *falsafa* movement. Admittedly, she claims that her work is not a "source-hunt" (p. 12)—although she does exert considerable effort looking for non-Greek sources in Sufi, *Kalām*, Buddhist, and Chinese sources. Still, the absence of reference to obvious Greek texts leaves many of her discussions wanting. For instance, al-Kindi lists five definitions of substance. The last two involve substance's being susceptible to neither generation nor corruption, and substance's relation to our knowledge of particulars—both definitions that the author finds perplexing. In the pseudo-Aristotelian works *The Book of Causes* (an adaptation of Proclus's *Elements of Theology*) and *The Theology of Aristotle* (a redaction of books 4–6 of Plotinus's *Enneads*), both of which al-Kindi knew, the ancient authors treat intellectual substances and Platonic Forms in just the terms used by al-Kindi. Kennedy-Day makes no mention of these sources or the potential light they might throw on al-Kindi's definitions.

Kennedy-Day offers the first English translation of Ibn Sina's *Book of Definitions*. The text is technically difficult, requiring a solid grounding in the subjects considered—for example, metaphysics, physics, and psychology. Given the difficulty of the text's content, the translation for the most part is good. Still, some of the translations are somewhat confusing. For instance, Kennedy-Day translates Ibn Sina's definition of "cause" as "Cause. Every being (*dhāt*) which exists has existence from another essence (*dhāt*) in actuality. This being has existence in

actuality and existence of this being in actuality is not from the existence of that one in actuality.” Two difficulties face this translation. First, if, as translated, “every being which exists has existence from another essence in actuality,” then, since *y* is the cause of *x* and *y* is also a being, *y* will have a cause *z*, but *z* is also a being and so needing a cause, and we find ourselves on the road to infinite regress. Second, if “every being which exists has existence from another essence in actuality,” then, if one thinks that God is a being, God would also have a cause. The author correctly disavows both implications in her comments, but based solely on the translation they are possible interpretations. The problem could be with the Arabic, but in fact it can be translated to avoid these pitfalls. Thus, I suggest the Arabic—*al-ʿillatu kullu dhātin wujūdu dhātin ākhara bi-al-fiʿli min wujūdi hādhā bi-al-fiʿli wa-wujūdu hādhā bi-al-fiʿli laysa min wujūdi dhālika bi-al-fiʿl*—be translated, “The cause is every determinate being from which the existence of some other determinate being in act is from the existence of the former in act, whereas the existence of the former in act is not from the existence of the latter in act.” The suggested translation avoids the confusions that Kennedy-Day’s translation presents. Again, the author corrects the reading in her comments; however, since she does not provide an entry-by-entry commentary of all the definitions, one should use her translation with caution.

Despite deficiencies, Kennedy-Day’s *Books of Definition in Islamic Philosophy* makes some good points about this genre of literature, and her translation of Ibn Sina’s *Book of Definitions* expands the repertoire of Avicennan works available in English, a task that is much needed. Still, one might think twice before investing \$75.00.

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IRENE MÉLIKOFF, *Hadji Bektach: un mythe et ses avatars. Genèse et évolution du soufisme populaire en Turquie* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998). Pp. 343. €125 cloth.

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As Irene Mélikoff reminds her readers, she has been engaged in the study of Bektashism and kindred phenomena for more than a quarter of a century. She therefore intends the book under review to be an authoritative synopsis of her findings (p. xiii). Measured by the expectations this description arouses, her book is disappointing. Uneven in coverage, chaotic in organization, excessively speculative, containing many verbatim repetitions, and by no means free of demonstrable error, the work reads too often like a series of disjointed lecture notes.

To impose coherence on a shifting syncretic creed such as Bektashism is admittedly a challenging task. Mélikoff approaches it as an archaeological undertaking, one that involves the excavation of successive layers of influence, borrowing, and adaptation. The deepest layer, she maintains, is “an ancient phenomenon we can describe as an Islamized shamanism” (p. xx), and it is to this that she devotes her first chapter and that she returns on many other occasions. The main defining element of this revised shamanism is the Sufi *pīr* who replaces the Central Asian thaumaturge and replicates all of his miracles. This equivalence holds true only to a certain degree: while magic flight and transformation into a bird are generally unknown to Sufi hagiography outside the Turkic world, many other miracles attributed first to shamans and later to Bektashis can also be found in Iranian Sufi tradition. They cannot therefore be automatically ascribed to “Islamized shamanism.” Another element of shamanism Mélikoff is intent on discerning in Bektashism is the trance-inducing inhalation of smoke from burning juniper trees (*ardıç*), evidence for which she claims to find (pp. 85–86) in the *Vilâyetnâme*. In

fact, the juniper tree appears only once in the *Vilâyetnâme* (ed. Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı [Istanbul, 1990], 25), when it offers to transform itself into a tent to shelter Haji Bektash. As for the episode in which, insensate from the ecstasy of *samâ*<sup>6</sup>, Haji Bektash throws his cloak into a fire on the top of a mountain, thus giving it the name of Hırkadağı, it contains no mention of a juniper fueling the fire, contrary to Mélikoff's assertion (*Vilâyetnâme*, 36).

At the center of the Islamized shamanism scenario stands Ahmed Yesevî, to whom is attributed an implausibly conscious desire to "assimilate the principles of the new religion to ancestral traditions" (p. 8). Mélikoff accepts the traditional view that Ahmed Yesevî was one of the four *khalîfas* of Yusuf Hamadani and asserts that the latter "played an important role in the Islamization of the Turks of Khwârazm and Transoxiana" (p. 66). In the context of the work under review, the important question to solve in connection with the Yesevî would surely have been the validity of Bektashi claims to Yesevî ancestry. Mélikoff does not address it in any detail, simply remarking, with respect to the *Vilâyetnâme*'s report that Ahmet Yesevî had dispatched Haji Bektash to Rum, that the latter "very probably was a dervish issuing from the Yeseviye" (p. 95). Identifiable traces of the Yesevî order in Anatolia are, however, minimal; a probable explanation of the anachronistic report in the *Vilâyetnâme* is that the hagiographic tradition of Bektashism wished to gain for Haji Bektash the prestige accruing from connection to the person of Ahmet Yesevî.

Whatever elements Bektashism may have inherited from an Islamized shamanism, they are fewer and less important than those derived from *Ghulât* Shi'ism, the provenance of which the author does not adequately discuss. She suggests at one point that Shi'ism was already present in Anatolia in the 13th and 14th centuries, and that in its "popular" form it then congealed with "Islamized shamanism," because both forms of religion "appeal to the imagination" (p. 47 ff.) Elsewhere she remarks that the distinction between Sunnism and Shi'ism did not appear in Anatolia until the 16th century (p. 67), and she puts forward as possible sources for the *Ghulât* Shi'i aspects of Bektashism the *Akhî* sodalities (pp. 52, 114) and the Kalenders. Similarly inconsistent is her portrayal of the relationship between Bektashis and Alevis. Early on, the reader is instructed that "Alevism is nothing other than a form of Bektashism" (p. xxi), but elsewhere attention is drawn to the antagonisms and differences of ritual and belief that have existed between the two sects. These can allegedly be explained by the differing destinies of each group: because of settlement in the Balkans the Bektashis lost touch with their tribal origins, while the Alevis of Anatolia were spared such dislocation (pp. 197–98). Bektashism cannot be reduced, however, to a pre-eminently Balkan phenomenon, nor can Alevism be reduced to an exclusively Anatolian one.

Mélikoff gives due importance to the *Hurufî* component of Bektashism, but aspects of her account are questionable. Her assumption that Fazlallah Astarabadi, the founder of Hurufism, derived his theories from Ibn 'Arabi is untenable (p. 118); the latter's *'ilm al-hurûf* has little in common with the teachings of Hurufism. There is no reason to ascribe to Isma'ilism the sevenfold circumambulation of his *maqtalgâh* by the *hurûfis* (p. 123); the ceremony was plainly a parody of the rite of *ṭawâf* that takes place during the hajj. Likewise, the fact that the *tekke* of Otman Baba at Hasköy (present-day Haskovo) has seven posts hardly justifies the assumption that it was once an outpost of Isma'ilism (p. 124–25). Were the existence of sevenfold objects, entities, or practices to be an automatic sign of Isma'ilism, surely the whole world would be Isma'ili.

Some of Mélikoff's translations in the chapter devoted to Bektashi poetry are contestable. This line from Abdal Musa: *Cemî'-ı mushafdan nikabın attı/ Kur'ân yok gördüler Ali'den gayrı* is translated as, "*Celui qui a rejeté le voile du sens caché du Livre, / Celui qui nous a fait comprendre le Coran, qui est-ce, si ce n'est Ali?*" (p. 223). By making 'Ali simply a uniquely authoritative interpreter of the inner aspects of the Qur'an, this rendering dilutes the radical and distinctively Bektashi sense of the original—that the very person of 'Ali is identical with

the Qur'an. Likewise, *Sürülp kasaba gittik/ Kanarayı meskân* [should read *mesken*] *ettik* is clear and vivid enough. Why not give the obvious meaning, "We were dragged off to the butcher/ we made the slaughterhouse our dwelling" instead of "*a la voie, nous nous sommes abandonnés/ nous nous sommes résignés au sacrifice*"? (p. 232).

The last chapter of the book, "Réactualisation," is perhaps the most interesting, for it discusses the permutations that Bektashi/Alevi identity has recently undergone as the result of large-scale migration to cities in both Turkey and Europe. Syncretic malleability has become a disadvantage in an age and an environment given to sharply defined ideologies. Mélikoff notes dispassionately attempts made by Kemalists, leftists, and Kurdish nationalists to co-opt these migrants (pp. 263–69), but she is alarmed by the embrace of Twelver Shi'ism made by some Bektashis/Alevi, which "threatens to give rise to an uncontrollable fanaticism" (p. 269). However, the spectacle of an Alevi *dede* in Germany donning the garb of Santa Claus has her approval, as does the swift integration of Alevi women into the European environment, shown by their wearing of "tight-fitting garments and skirts." This contrasts with the misery of Sunni women, "held back by an attachment to the traditions of a dogmatic Islam" (pp. 262–63). The Sunni environment in which Bektashism/Alevism has existed over the centuries goes largely unnoticed and unexamined throughout the book, except as a threatening mass of medieval fanatics; this presumably justifies in her eyes the exclusion of Sunnis made by Bektashi/Alevi from the otherwise all-embracing tolerance she attributes to them (pp. 229, 257, 276). The final chapter of her book ends in a crescendo that is both Atatürkist and Gallic: "properly channelled, Alevism can, and indeed must, become an element of progress, a barrier to fundamentalism (*intégrisme*) . . . thus helping to ensure loyalty to Atatürk as the symbol of secularity (*laïcité*) and enlightened nationalism, and the triumph of secularism (*laïcisme*) over the forces of obscurantism" (pp. 276–77).

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GEOFFREY REGAN, *First Crusader: Byzantium's Holy Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001). Pp. 288. \$29.95 cloth.

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*First Crusader* is a semi-scholarly, semi-popular work aimed at demonstrating that the Byzantine Empire under Heraclius (610–41) provided the initial impetus for the crusading/holy war and even the jihad ideal common to Latin and Orthodox Christianity as well as to Islam. This is a bold thesis, which Regan seeks to demonstrate with a lively narrative of the life of Heraclius, which is sandwiched by briefer histories of Byzantium both prior and subsequent to his time. It cannot be said that he proves his thesis. Regan's notes are sketchy, and he does not seem to be aware of the basic scholarship on the subject. Although Walter Kaegi's volume on Heraclius was published after *First Crusader*, it is surprising how few of Kaegi's fundamental studies on this period are cited. Sparse though Regan's sources are for the Byzantine section of the book (which this reviewer is not competent to discuss), they are abundant when compared with the latter third of it when he discusses the early Muslim conquests. For this critical time period, for which sources translated into English and other scholarly languages abound (despite their problematic nature), he only cites Muir's *The Life of Mohammed*, Benjamin Walker's *The Foundations of Islam*, and Butler's *Arab Conquest of Egypt*. All of these sources are long out of date or are substandard and do not reflect the current state of scholarship concerning the conquests. In addition to these problems with the

scholarly source material, it is clear even to one who does not know Byzantine history very well that Regan has supplied a great deal of interpretive local color to fill in gaps. The book is filled with statements such as “must have been,” describing the attitudes or perceptions of historical characters who simply cannot be known. We learn, for example, that Heraclius’s eldest son Constantine “had longed to be at his father’s side instead of waiting restlessly under the stern looks of his tutors” (p. 125). Material of this nature, abundant in this book, is on the level of a historical novel.

These serious deficiencies taken into account, Regan’s thesis is still an interesting one. It is common for Byzantinists to divorce the Byzantines from the fervor of the holy war present in Latin Christianity or the Muslim jihad. Regan can be given credit for casting some doubt on the historical justice of this claim. His choice of Heraclius as the progenitor of some of the ideas of a religiously driven war is probably sound. I think that Regan does prove his basic point (although without the decisive and deep evidence that a scholar would like to see) that the Byzantine–Sasanian War of 602–29 was a holy war of this type—at least, from the Byzantine perspective. Regan thinks that those elements of the war, such as the Sasanian looting of the relics of the True Cross and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem, which provoked Heraclius’s holy war of revenge (622–29) were probably not planned. The speeches of Heraclius that Regan cites and the manner in which Heraclius planned and carried out his campaigns and maintained his political position in Constantinople are consistent with a holy war or a crusade. But, of course, a scholar would probably ask whether these elements are always common in a war of desperation, which the Byzantine–Sasanian War clearly was from the Byzantine perspective.

Regan is at his best when he is describing the strategic situation and empathizing with the dilemmas of the various protagonists of this otherwise senseless war. Military history is his forte, and it shows throughout the book, since in the ostensible discussion of the genesis of a military–religious doctrine such as holy war he cites very few religious texts or art to bolster his argument. The campaigns of the Byzantines, the Sasanians, the Avars, and the Muslims are all detailed carefully, although—at least, with regard to the Muslims—without the benefit of contemporary scholarship.

*First Crusader* is basically a historical novel with some interesting ideas that should probably be pursued further by Byzantinists. For the scholarly study of the Byzantine–Sasanian War and the early Muslim conquests, it is worth a skim but not much more because of the outdated nature of the sources and ideas that the author uses.

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JUAN COLE, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shi‘ite Islam* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002). Pp. 254. \$22.50 paper.

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Juan Cole’s history of Shi‘ism is the right book at the right time. It is essential reading for anyone—scholar, policy-maker, or concerned citizen—who hopes to follow the next few years of Middle East developments. Unfortunately, readers who have no background in Islamic and Middle Eastern matters are likely to find it hard going.

The history of English-language writing on Shi‘ism makes the need for Cole’s book evident. Dwight M. Donaldson published *The Shi‘ite Religion* in 1933. Thirty years later, when I was starting graduate school, it remained the only book on Shi‘ism available in English. Another



thirty years passed. The United States led a coalition that forced Iraq out of Kuwait and then sat idly by while Saddam Hussein brutally crushed the Shi'i uprising, urged by American propaganda. By then, historical scholarship had improved somewhat. Interpretive works by Moojan Momen (*An Introduction to Shi'ite Islam* [New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1987]), Abdulaziz Sachedina (*Islamic Messianism: The Idea of Mahdi in Twelver Shi'ism* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981]), and S. H. M. Jafri (*Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* [London: Longman, 1979]), among others, had filled in some of the blank spots in the early history of Shi'ism. And good studies of contemporary Shi'ism in Iran and Lebanon had become available. But a broad perspective on modern Shi'ism still eluded most students of the Middle East.

The profound Sunni bias of Western scholarship on Islam is seldom remarked. A centuries-old illusion that Shi'ism is for all intents and purposes an exclusively Iranian matter effectively absolved Arabists of responsibility for learning anything about it. The fact that Shi'i constitute the majority populations in Iraq and Bahrain, and the largest confessional community in Lebanon, should have alerted students of contemporary Arab affairs to the need to inform themselves. The same can be said regarding the political potential of Shi'i minorities in Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. But introductory works on Islam continue to this day to minimize discussion of Shi'ism.

The effectiveness of Western master narratives of modern Middle East history in confining discussion of Shi'ism to Iran resulted, after the Iranian Revolution of 1979, in a snap judgment in both popular and official thinking. Shi'ism was equated with suicidal fanaticism and Sunnism with moderate, sensible Islam—despite the fact that the attack on the grand mosque in Mecca in the same year was carried out by Sunnis led by Juhaiman ibn Muhammad ibn Saif al-Utaiba, a member of a highly regarded Wahhabi family, and despite the fact that the widely read writings of the Sunni thinker Sayyid Qutb advocated a revolutionary violence that went well beyond that of the Iranian revolutionary theorists.

Twenty-five years after the Iranian Revolution, American surprise at the power and organization of the Shi'i clergy in Iraq has at last made it clear that a crash course on contemporary Shi'ism in its full breadth is sorely needed. Cole's book largely fulfills that need.

Even though it is composed in part of previously published articles, the flow from chapter to chapter is almost seamless. Part 1—Chapters 2–6—deals with the history of Shi'ism in Iran and the Arab world in the early modern period. Chapter 4 on the Akhbari–Usuli struggle whose resolution led to the solid structure of religious authority in contemporary Usuli populations, including those in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon, is of particular importance. The three chapters in Part 2 cover Shi'ism in India, the subject of Cole's innovative first book, *Roots of North Indian Shi'ism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722–1859* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Part 3 takes up two key problems of 20th-century Shi'ism: the role of Shi'is as national minorities and the issue of theocracy.

Though the coverage of the book is impressive, and the weaving together of materials pertaining to the Shi'i communities of South Asia, Iran, and the Arab world is skillful, some important subjects fall outside its purview. The Alevi Shi'is of Turkey and the Hazaras of Afghanistan, for example, get little attention. However, compared with earlier works concentrating on single countries, Cole's breadth of vision is more than welcome. Departing from the exclusive concentration on doctrinal matters of scholars dealing with early Shi'i history, Cole grounds each chapter in a thorough discussion of the social context of the community he is discussing.

Unfortunately, this is where he is going to lose many non-specialist readers, including most beginning students of Middle Eastern history. Despite the deceptive brevity of the index, the text bristles with names, dates, and details. As a scholar, I would have it no other way. Cole's presentation of the contexts of modern Shi'i developments requires a full exposition, and

much of the information he brings forward has never been integrated into a general historical view of the modern Middle East.

Yet one could still wish for some sort of executive summary. With the United States embarked on a campaign to transform, by one means or another, a good part of the Muslim world, and with knowledgeable scholars possessing expertise that might shape or curtail misguided aspects of that campaign, it is more than ever incumbent on the Middle East scholarly community to seek an idiom for addressing the ongoing public debate.

This is not a criticism of the book that Cole has presented us with. It is by far the best and most far-ranging account of Shi'ism in the early modern and contemporary periods. Rather, it is to urge him to write another book that will be more accessible to students and to educated lay readers, and to urge other writers bent on explicating the contemporary complications of Middle Eastern and Islamic affairs to read Cole well and use his work to counterbalance the Sunni bias that continues to distort our policy decisions in troubling times.

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HOMA KATOZIAN, *Iranian History and Politics: The Dialectic of State and Society*, RoutledgeCurzon/BIPS Persian Studies Series (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003). Pp. 288. \$90.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY HAGGAI RAM, Department of Middle East Studies, Ben-Gurion University, Beersheva, Israel; e-mail: hram@bgumail.bgu.ac.il

*Iranian History and Politics* is a collection of previously published essays written by Homa Katouzian over the span of twenty years. While the book's chapters can be read independently, they are inter-related in that they are all governed by a grand theory that attempts to explain the logic and dynamics of Iranian history from antiquity to the present. The book is divided into two parts: the first sets out to elaborate the theory, while the second provides "historical applications" (p. xii) of it. The first part is a study in sociology, while the second part is a study in history.

Katouzian's point of departure is that historical writing is invariably predicated on theory, noting, "One observes because one has questions, problems, hypotheses, all of which are *a priori*, prior to observation, theoretical" (p. 3). Katouzian therefore is not a naïve positivist working under the assumption that the historian can actually detach himself or herself from the subject of inquiry to produce an "objective," neutral, and transparent account of the past.

Katouzian consciously engages with Iranian history by means of what he calls "the theory of arbitrary rule." This, in a nutshell, is a variation of Marxist notions of the Asiatic Mode of Production and of "Oriental Despotism." While the European states, from classical times to the present, "have been bound by law" and thus made possible the security of life and of property necessary for the emergence of functional social classes, at the very same time in Iran "there was no law, no long term code or tradition that governed the relationship between the state and society, or within society itself" (pp. 22–23). Consequently, no distinct social classes existed to counterbalance the arbitrary power of the state (or, incidentally, to generate any of the changes that have ultimately come to represent the regime of Western modernity). Though Katouzian dismisses the applicability in Iran of Wittfogel's "hydraulic" theory of bureaucratic despotism, he nevertheless seems to follow Marx's analysis of pre-colonial India in stressing a theory of fragmented society, meaning that historically the Iranian state has been able to rule despotically—and, hence, arbitrarily—not because this state was strong but because society was weak (pp. 61–76).

In applying the theory of arbitrary rule, Katouzian attempts to offer an overarching explanation for why "Iranian revolutions have not been quite like any of the European revolutions, old or modern" (p. 21). The emergence of social classes in the law-bound European states meant that revolts and revolutions in Europe would always be waged by some social classes against other (usually, ruling) classes. "Whether the Spartacist, Medieval and Reformation peasants revolts, the English revolutions of the seventeenth century, the French revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the Russian revolutions of the twentieth century. European revolutions have this entire feature in common" (p. 22). In Iran, however, where "lawlessness" and arbitrary rule had always reigned supreme, there were no functional and autonomous social classes to take up the cause of revolt against other, more privileged social classes. The arbitrary state and the society were completely disconnected and antithetical to each other. Consequently, the whole of society (indistinguishable by any particular social classes, and often including state officials) would rise up to overthrow the arbitrary state. "With all the differences among them," writes Katouzian, "there has been [this] familiar pattern in revolts of society against the state since ancient Persia" (p. 31); even the most recent 1979 Revolution, he argues, "was a massive revolt, true to the ancient pattern, of the society against the state" (p. 51).

Katouzian goes on to contend that the dynamics of arbitrary rule and the peculiar nature of upheavals in Iran have given rise to an endemic and vicious cycle in Iranian history—the "recurring cycle of arbitrary rule-chaos-arbitrary rule" (pp. 25 ff). The frequent collapse of the arbitrary state by the whole of society, he says, would invariably lead "to chaos brought about by the arbitrary society, until a new absolute and arbitrary ruler emerged from the ashes of civil conflict and destruction" (p. 105), and so on. The history of 20th-century Iran is faithful testimony to this process, Katouzian argues. In the aftermath of the Constitutional Revolution, "the ancient traditions of chaos resulting from the fall of the state were as strong as ever," and the ensuing "foundation of the Pahlavi state was in line with the emergence of a strong state after the chaos which had followed Iranian upheavals throughout the country's history" (pp. 53–54). The 1979 revolution, too, was true to the tradition of massive revolts against arbitrary rule and moreover, like them, it "was followed by conflict and chaos" (p. 30); "once again there was a democracy which looked more like anarchy, and a public sphere which was closer to abuse and violence" (p. 110).

There is rigor in Katouzian's theory of Iranian history, but it has self-evident shortcomings, as well. Katouzian's arguments are more persuasive when he transcends the boundaries of the grand theory, as often is the case in the historical section of the book. Two essays in particular merit consideration. Chapter 9 is an impressive historical reconstruction, a tour de force, of the campaign against the notorious Anglo-Iranian Agreement of 1919. Careful research into British archival documents coupled with a close reading of contemporary Persian sources have enabled the author meticulously to trace the failure of the agreement to a number of important causes, such as the upsurge of Iranian nationalism; the adamant opposition to the agreement by France, the United States, and Russia; and Lord Curzon's own "incredible rigidity" in dealing with the unfolding situation.

Chapter 10 is Katouzian's highly revisionist study of the 1920 revolt of Shaykh Mohammad Khiyabani in Azerbaijan. The conventional narrative has it that Khiyabani and his supporters were pro-Bolshevik and in reaction to the 1919 agreement, revolted against the central government with the aim of securing the succession of Azerbaijan. However, Katouzian's lucid analysis of previously unread sources—such as an unpublished manuscript on the revolt by Ahmad Kasravi—clearly shows that the revolt had not been intended mainly as a reaction to the 1919 agreement, was not pro-Bolshevik, and was not separatist in its goals. "Its primary aim," Katouzian convincingly demonstrates, "was to obtain a form of home rule,

led by Khiyabani himself, to impose order and discipline in Azerbaijan, and bring about modernization along European lines" (p. 203).

In sum, while Katouzian sets out to elaborate an overarching theoretical explanation for Iranian history and Iranian revolutions from ancient to contemporary times, he is actually at his best working in the archives, focusing on the micro-level, writing meticulously researched histories of particular moments in time that ultimately shed light on the underlying dynamics of modern Iranian history at large.

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ISABEL A. O'CONNOR, *A Forgotten Community: The Mudejar Aljama of Xàtiva, 1240–1327, Medieval Mediterranean, Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1500* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003). Pp. 254. \$84.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY APRIL L. NAJJAJ, Department of History, Boston University; e-mail: najjaja@juno.com

This monograph is a well-researched study of the Mudejar community in Xàtiva, a town south of Valencia in the Crown of Aragón during the unsettling and transitional decades of the 13th and early 14th centuries. O'Connor's thesis is evident in the title, for very little detailed work has been done to date on this particular Muslim community on the frontier between the Islamic Kingdom of Granada (all that remained of al-Andalus) and newly conquered Christian territory. She justifies the dates of her study based on "the [Mudejar] community's evolution and its response to acculturation" (p. 2).

In a preliminary chapter, O'Connor gives detailed historiographical background into Mudejarism and Arabic studies in Spain, including discussions of the long-standing debates between Castro and Sánchez Alborno and between Robert Burns and Pierre Guichard. In addition, she describes the evolution of Mudejar studies, which shifted over time from an emphasis on Christian tolerance, largely for financial and tax incentives, to issues of minority studies, discrimination, and segregation of the Muslim communities throughout the later medieval Christian Mediterranean world.

In earlier chapters, O'Connor contributes to the debate over when the Christian conquest of Xàtiva actually occurred (preferring the earlier date of 1244 to 1248 or 1249). She writes that the situation for the Mudejars was almost unchanged for a number of years after the initial conquest because of an ongoing Mudejar revolt in the kingdom of Valencia that kept King Jaume I preoccupied with military matters rather than with the Xàtivan surrender treaty (*carta-puebla*) or the accompanying efforts to attract Christian settlers to newly conquered territories vacated by Muslims emigrating to Islamic lands, whether Granada or North Africa.

The author also deals with the internal organization of the *aljama* in Xàtiva, including such issues as the local and regional economy, aspects of taxation, and legal and judicial matters. She argues that the Mudejars have traditionally been portrayed by historians "as a group of poor farmers and artisans who lived in the same town all their lives and who had a difficult time surviving economically" (p. 80). She suggests that this view needs to be revised, noting that the Mudejars were a valuable economic resource to the Christian king, the Catholic church, the nobility, and even to the Christian settlers who owned the fields and farms where the Mudejars worked. Nevertheless, the Mudejars had to be constantly vigilant to increasing restrictions and loss of rights and privileges originally granted to them, and O'Connor cites multiple documents from the Christian archives (the only documents

available for studying these Muslim communities) that describe the growing legal and religious curtailment of Mudejar activities in Xàtiva throughout the early 14th century.

Also included in the monograph are topics of resistance or of acculturation to an increasingly organized and confrontational Christian community. O'Connor discusses how, with the solidification of the Christian presence in Xàtiva and the rest of the kingdom of Valencia by the early 14th century, Mudejar officials in the *aljama* gradually lost power in legal, religious, and economic aspects of the community. During this period, the Christian population was growing, and the Mudejar population was decreasing because of emigration and increasing political and social pressures exerted on the Muslim community in Xàtiva. Christian officials were increasingly involved in the activities of the Mudejar community for several reasons: the substantial revenues and taxes generated by the Mudejar legal system; the considerable trade the *aljama* merchants carried out with the Islamic kingdom of Granada as well as with other areas in the Crown of Aragón; and the long-standing fears of Islamic religious contamination and revolt. O'Connor states that by the early 14th century, for example, Christians had greatly increased their intervention in Mudejar criminal cases, which were supposed to be subject to Islamic law, with the result that Mudejars at times appealed to the king when Christian officials became too involved in such affairs. However, she also mentions that such involvement could at times work to the advantage of the Mudejars and cites several examples from the early 14th century. Such an approach substantiates O'Connor's thesis that the Mudejar community of Xàtiva remained flexible in such troubled times as the decades examined in this monograph and that the community adapted and adjusted to changing circumstances to the best of its ability. Nevertheless, the trends of depopulation and growing economic dependence on the Christian community gradually lessened the freedom of action of the Mudejars in all spheres of life in the *aljama* of Xàtiva.

The work is intended for graduate student and professional academic use. The author relies very heavily on the primary source material and at times does not offer a great deal of analysis of the documents. Although she has produced an extensively researched study, O'Connor makes observations throughout the monograph that leave the reader hoping for a more complete explanation in a more detailed study in the future.

Finally, the monograph needs more detailed regional maps. The map provided at the beginning of the work does not include many of the small towns and regions mentioned in the study.

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A. HOLLY SHISSLER, *Between Two Empires: Ahmet Ağaoğlu and the New Turkey* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003). Pp. 288. \$59.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY SAM KAPLAN, Middle East Studies Department, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel; e-mail: skaplan@bgumail.bgu.ac.il

In her path-breaking study of the Pan-Islamist agitator Jamal al-Din Al-Afghani, Nikkie Keddie spurred scholars to consider seriously the creative role Middle East intellectuals have played in forging community solidarity in reaction to Western imperialism. Her student A. Holly Shissler has followed suit and produced a meticulously researched and abundantly documented intellectual history and political biography of Ahmet Ağaoğlu (1869–1939), a prominent publicist, statesman, and foundational figure of Turkish and Azerbaijani nationalism.

*Between Two Empires* is the story of an intellectual's struggle to reorganize social relations in the Muslim and Turkic world, first into a morally homogenous community, and

later, following World War 1, into politically exclusive nations—all the while upholding a liberal individualistic rapport to society. To this aim, Shissler organizes Ağaoğlu's life into three formative periods: his student days in Paris; his return to his native Caucasus; and his political activities in late Ottoman Istanbul and the new Turkish Republic. Each period is divided into two chapters, one that deals with his personal and intellectual formation and the other with his writings. In France, while under the tutelage of the Orientalists Renan and Darmesteter, Ağaoğlu the student drew on ethnology and philology to argue that Persian Shi' culture closely conformed to French Republican ideals and critical Protestant thought. Back in Russian Transcaucasia, in line with the reformist ideas of al-Afghani and Russian Muslim intellectuals (Ahkوندزاده, Gasprinski, and Shirvani), the now imperial civil servant attacked religious obscurantism as he advocated greater cultural autonomy and more equitable economic opportunities for Azerbaijanis. Finally, in Turkey, Ağaoğlu the statesman linked secular modernity and national collective identity with individualism and a liberal public sphere.

What emerges from Shissler's captivating study are three crucial points. First, she elucidates the relationship between different discourses of modernity and their social contexts. Second, she draws out the ambiguity, indeterminacy, and contingency of identities and the political flexibility of their interpretation. And, third, she takes to task the idea of a radical break in political culture between dynastic imperial regimes and republican nation-states.

More important, this biography raises issues of central importance to scholars exploring how intellectuals such as Ağaoğlu followed canonical concepts and procedures in interpreting and writing about society and politics. Throughout the book, Shissler covers exhaustively the themes of nationalism and modernity and situates them in the wider intellectual environment of the period. Specifically, she focuses on the distinctions between history as a linear sequence of events and the uses of this form of history, between politics and culture, and between nature and civilization. None of these distinctions is adequately explicated, however. More suggestive is her discussion (albeit embedded in p. 215, fn. 3) of how Ağaoğlu sought to define an ethnic or a religious community in terms of those holistic attributes commonly associated with empirical laws of nature. His recourse to methodological individualism, empiricism, historicism, and relativism to define and categorize the linguistic, religious, and cultural makeup of populations all point to conceiving social action and thought as an objective reality that is ultimately discernible by human observation. It goes without saying that such an approach to knowledge had radical implications for Islam. In inscribing Islamic revelation, beliefs, and practices into a secular teleology, Ağaoğlu de-sacralized both cosmos and religion.

Indeed, this teleology is unwittingly replicated in Shissler's treating of primary sources as semiotically fixed texts rather than politically and socially constituted artifacts of history. At issue is a steadfast belief in the fixity of text and stability of meaning, which together grant textual artifacts a prescriptive force in historical research. As a result, the author focuses on the discursive production of identities without addressing sufficiently the processes by which alternative social and political visions affected the intellectual's writings. What would have considerably added depth to the often mammoth *explications de texte* is seriously engaging with how meaning emerges from within a community of readers and writers who share fundamental notions about modes of representation, concepts, and associated narratives. Otherwise, it is unclear how Ağaoğlu specifically engaged with and against earlier and contemporary thinkers or how his essays were subsequently accessed and made meaningful. This methodological impasse is evident in the way Shissler reduces Gasprinski's influence to an obituary Ağaoğlu penned and in the way she bases a fifteen-page analysis of a 1903 essay on women, originally written in Russian, on a posthumous 1959 Turkish translation. Turkish terminology, which undoubtedly carries different notions of gender, politics, and society, is then meticulously analyzed and assumed to convey precisely Ağaoğlu's original intentions. Not surprisingly, Shissler ends up making numerous equivocal and conjectural statements about

the impact of seminal thinkers on Ağaoğlu as well as about the responses of his different reading publics.

My final concern is transforming a dissertation into a readable monograph. While the book is conceptually well organized and written in a clear and direct style, it could have benefited from serious editing. Too often, the author harps on the same arguments. This detracts from the otherwise thorough and meticulous research. Moreover, the tediously long quotes could have been considerably truncated, eliminated, or relegated to footnotes.

These concerns aside, *Between Two Empires* stands out as an excellent case study of a fascinating intellectual and statesman at a vital transitional period. Shissler's monograph not only contributes to the political and intellectual history of the Middle East; it also provides insights into the interplay of religious heritage, secularity, and identity politics—issues equally relevant in our present historical moment.

DOI: 10.1017/S0020743804364226

STEPHEN ERIC BRONNER, *A Rumor About the Jews, Antisemitism, Conspiracy, and the Protocols of Zion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). Pp. 189. \$12.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY HANI ZUBIDA, Department of Politics, New York University; e-mail: zh211@nyu.edu

This book presents a very interesting explanation of the rise of Judeophobia in Western civilization, as it concentrates mainly on one aspect of this phenomenon—anti-Semitism. The author, Stephen E. Bronner, uses the infamous forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as the cornerstone of his analysis. The core argument in the book brings to light three different aspects of the phenomenon of anti-Semitism: religious, social, and political anti-Semitism. The author suggests that, “Just as religious intolerance made way for social prejudice, social prejudice began to make way for a political antisemitism directed not merely against Jews, but against the quintessentially modern world they supposedly dominated” (p. 59). This is the leitmotif that dominates the author's analysis. Bronner examines various historical periods in which two societal forces were on a collision course. On one side were the “modern” liberal movements that strived to change the existing order; on the other side were the “old order” conservative forces that wanted to retain their control. The group caught in the middle of this recurring conflict was the Jews—or, in accordance with Bronner's argument, what the Jews were portrayed to be by the conservatives. According to Bronner, conservative anti-Semites would spread various lies about Jews, mainly using the *Protocols* as their proof text.

The book's layout is very appealing. After a brief Introduction, it begins, in Chapter 2, with the presentation of a selection from *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which is considered one of the main anti-Semitic manifestations of late-19th-century in Europe. Chapter 3 continues with a historical analysis of the roots of the three facets of anti-Semitism, interspersed with direct references to the *Protocols*. This, in my opinion, is the most interesting part of the book. In this chapter, the author retraces the various displays of anti-Semitism mainly in Europe from the early 1900s (with some references to earlier periods), and ties them to the various anti-Jewish fables that began to appear in European culture. In addition, he sets the contextual and chronological framework in which these different facets of anti-Semitism appear and become central in Europe, supported mainly by the *Protocols* and occasionally by other texts written by various “traditionalist” groups. As he argues, “[D]ifferent mixtures of these antisemitic forms assume primacy at different historical moments” (p. 35). The broader societal conflict, which results in the anti-Semitic outbreaks, has been presented throughout

the book as “the great battle between forces of modernity and the forces of tradition” (p. 56). The author argues that, whereas traditionalist elites are the breeders of anti-Semitic sentiments, the liberals who supported the emancipation and other liberal institutions (such as constitutionalism) are free of such dispositions. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are an attempt to cement the argument presented in the previous chapters and look at the present situation. Chapter 4 is the tale of the history of the *Protocols*’ invention. In Chapter 5, the author traces the *Protocols* throughout European history since the last century and its influence on various events and the legal battles that surrounded them. Finally, Chapter 6 presents a current overview of antisemitism today, its projected future and the role of the *Protocols* in shaping it.

This book serves several important functions. It documents the European origins and history of anti-Semitism, mainly throughout the last century. Moreover, it reveals a process that started with the composition of fallacious hatred literature by a few disfranchised people and went on to affect major socio-political events in Europe.

This book has some minor problems that are related to the theoretical basis of its central argument and to its source selection. As the author presents it, the *Protocols* have been used as a tool to sustain the existing order by “old” and “conservative” regimes and elites in the face of attacks on their reign by “modern” and “liberal” forces. While the author explicitly uses the terminology of “old” verses “new,” he provides no theoretical basis for this argument and no logic explains this clash between the “old” and the “new.” I expected to find a framework explaining the argument with reference to a plausible theoretical context. The obvious choices are, first, a Marxist framework that would set the argument within the political-economic realm, or second, the elite theory, which shifts attention from economic determination to elite conflict. Either of these approaches would lend additional depth to the argument by anchoring it in a theoretical framework.

The second issue has to do with the sources the author uses. The book relies heavily on the *Protocols* as its main reference source, with rare references to other anti-Semitic literature. This makes the influence of the *Protocols* very clear while reading the book but may result in an under-estimation of the impact of other anti-Jewish hatred literature. Finally, the author works mainly within the European context; there is no in-depth comparative analysis with other parts of the world. (Brief and insufficient mentions of other parts of the world include the Middle East by referring to Egypt and the Japanese case in East Asia.) I think that a comparative outlook would benefit this work and its attempt to explain the broader phenomenon of anti-Semitism.

All the same, this book presents a very rich and detailed analysis of a very important subject and could benefit both scholars in the field and lay readers. To make this good book even better, I recommend broadening its comparative aspect across cultures and its selection of anti-Semitic texts, and adding a theoretical framework to make it more suitable for interdisciplinary academic use.

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JONATHAN MENDILOW, *Ideology, Party Change, and Electoral Campaigns in Israel, 1965–2001*, SUNY Series in Israeli Studies (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003). Pp. 310. \$81.50 cloth, \$27.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY FRANK TACHAU, Department of Political Science, University of Illinois, Chicago; e-mail: ftachau@uic.edu

This is a densely packed analysis of the development of the Israeli political-party system focusing on the period since 1965. Jonathan Mendilow, a professor of political science at



Rider University in Trenton, New Jersey, previously wrote studies of British and French political thought. His familiarity with other political-party systems is evident throughout the book. Mendilow does not subscribe to the view that Israel is *sui generis*. He sets his analysis of the Israeli party system in the context of comparable developments in such other diverse cases as India and France, about which more will be said later in this review. Notably, he is thoroughly familiar with Israel and Israeli parties and political history and has produced an informative and insightful study.

Mendilow is particularly interested in understanding the formation of party groupings or alliances, a process that resulted in the formation of the center-right Gahal bloc and the center-left Labor Alignment in 1965. He distinguishes party clusters such as these from the formation of party blocs in the late 1970s and 1980s (Likud versus Labor). Finally, he examines the impact on the party system of the direct election of the prime minister, a reform initiated in 1996 and repealed in 2001. Throughout the analysis, attention is focused on models that seek to explain the phenomena under study. Mendilow finds two models of party change in the general literature on comparative politics, which he applies to Israel. The first is the "purposive action" model, in which change is driven by "calculated leadership decisions" (p. 12). The second is the "adaptive-organizational" or "social structure" model, in which the socio-economic environment is the root cause of changes in parties and party systems. These are not treated as mutually competitive but, rather, as complementary. Mendilow emphasizes that parties may lose votes because of changing environmental conditions, but they cannot adapt to the changed circumstances unless party leaders make appropriate and deliberate decisions. Thus, although the Herut Party, which became the dominant factor in the Gahal bloc and later in Likud, has been led by Ashkenazic (European-origin) leaders throughout its history (Begin, Shamir, Netanyahu, Sharon), it responded to the changing electorate by successfully appealing for the support first of voters of Asian African (Arab) origin, then those of Russian origin.

Mendilow sees the 1981 election as a turning point in the evolution of cluster party competition into "structural polarization." The electoral competition was not only fierce but subject to wild swings. He reminds us that at the beginning of the campaign in January 1981, the Labor Alignment outpolled the governing Likud by 58 percent to 20 percent, only to barely hold its own (48–47%) in the formal election just four months later, largely a result of "election-economics" policies enacted by the government in an apparently successful effort to woo the electorate. Mendilow sees this election as inaugurating a more competitive bipolar party system, paradoxically one in which the two parties were so evenly matched that they had to choose after each election between the options of forming a narrow coalition of like-minded partners or forming a "national unity" government with their opponents.

Mendilow also sees this stiff competition between equally matched contenders as leading directly to the misconceived "reform" of direct election of the prime minister inaugurated in 1996. Although he tries to draw comparisons between this extraordinary system, which provided for separate election of prime minister and Parliament, and political systems adopted in such other countries as France and Germany, the fact is that the Israeli reform was unique. In Germany, a two-ballot system combines the single-member-district (or first-past-the-post) electoral system with the proportional representation system. But the German system does not involve a separate ballot for prime minister, or chancellor, and thus is not comparable to the Israeli concept. Fifth Republic France bears a superficially greater resemblance inasmuch as it provides for direct election of the president and a separate election for the Parliament. Unlike in Israel, however, the French president is not required to organize a governing coalition within the Parliament. He appoints the prime minister, who has that responsibility. The difference may appear to be slight, but it is important: the president in France stands above the partisan fray once he is elected and is not required to risk personal embarrassment by engaging in

parliamentary horse trading. Moreover, if the prime ministerial candidate fails to organize a parliamentary majority, the president has greater opportunities to dissolve the Parliament and call for new elections. Both Mitterand and Chirac demonstrated the effectiveness of this power. However, if the president's party does not constitute a majority in the Parliament, he is required to enter into a co-habitational arrangement with the opposition. In Israel, the prime minister was constrained to work with the parliamentary distribution of seats as he found it, even if his own party had smaller representation than the opposition. Notably, even though this was the situation more than once between 1996 and 2001, no national-unity government was formed during that period.

The Israeli prime minister thus had less room to maneuver. Mendilow, who provides an inordinate amount of detail about the electoral campaigns of the 1990s, shows clearly how Israeli political leaders—instead of being empowered, as the authors of the reform expected—were badly hobbled. He shows how two successive office holders (Netanyahu and Barak) fell from positions of apparently unassailable power to ignominious defeat within the span of only a few years. Granted, Netanyahu barely eked out an electoral victory over Shimon Peres in 1996. But Barak won a clear majority over Netanyahu in 1999 and suffered a humiliating defeat barely two years later at the hands of the belligerent Ariel Sharon. In both cases, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict was a major factor. In 1996, the introduction of suicide bombing in Israel helped push the electorate into the arms of the more militant Likud candidate. In 2001, the failure of the Camp David peace process and the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada helped seal Barak's electoral fate. At the same time, the two major parties suffered a devastating decline in parliamentary strength. Their combined representation, which had dominated the Parliament throughout most of the period of statehood, sank to well below 50 percent. The result was that the prime minister could boast of overwhelming mass electoral support but had great difficulty cobbling together a working parliamentary coalition. This is as true of Ariel Sharon today as it was of his two predecessors. Small wonder that the direct election of the prime minister was quietly relegated to the dust bin of history in the wake of the 2001 election. It is too early to determine the effect that this reversal will have on the party system.

Mendilow has produced an interesting study of the Israeli party system. It should be of interest not only to students of Israeli and Middle East politics but also to students of comparative politics on a broader front. If there is a flaw in this volume, it is due mainly to what appears to be careless editing, resulting in a number of spelling errors, awkward word choices, and clumsy phrases.

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PHILIP ROBINS, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003). Pp. 423. \$30.00 paper.

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The momentous changes in the international system that marked the end of the Cold War also had significant repercussions for Turkish foreign-policy. The new international context presented Turkey with an intricate web of challenges and opportunities, pushing it out of the comfort zone of the familiar foreign-policy parameters of the bipolar era. In *Suits and Uniforms*, Philip Robins successfully tackles the challenging task of presenting a sound and multi-dimensional analysis of the complex dynamics of Turkish foreign policy in a period of systemic transition.

The main argument of the book is that in the post-Cold War period, Turkey, which firmly maintained its Westward orientation and remained committed to a multilateral approach to regional conflicts, has been a status quo power in terms of both norms and conduct in an extremely volatile region.

Rather than a chronological or region-by-region approach, which is often the case with books on Turkish foreign policy, this book is organized thematically. The first of the study's three parts examines the general contours of Turkish foreign policy by identifying and analyzing its key processes and players. Robins presents the government, presidency, foreign ministry, and security establishment as the primary players in foreign-policy making and implementation. The interaction between civilian and military actors, as highlighted in the title "suits and uniforms," is particularly emphasized. The study presents the Parliament, media, interest groups, ethnic pressure groups, and public opinion as complementary, yet secondary, players with a more limited impact.

In the second part of the book, Robins uses an interactive approach to integrate external and internal factors shaping foreign-policy decisions. The author successfully relates complex domestic factors to the formulation and execution of foreign policy. This section is further divided into subsections highlighting historical, ideological, security-related, and economic factors as the ideational (ideological and identity-related) and material determinants of foreign policy.

In the final part, the author zooms in on four case studies to provide a better understanding of the complex dynamics of Turkey's foreign affairs. These case studies include an assessment of Turkish-Israeli relations as the "embattled" alliance of the "new Middle East"; Turkey's relations with the Turkic republics as an indicator of the prevalence of self-interest rather than sentiment in shaping policy; an analysis of the dilemmas of Turkey's position concerning northern Iraq; and Turkey's multi-lateralist approach in the Bosnian crisis.

Robins, who is also the author of *Turkey and the Middle East*, is a well-known expert on Turkey's relations with its Middle Eastern neighbors. This strength is clearly revealed in the relevant parts of the book and the case studies related to the Middle East and Central Asia. The author acknowledges that he has deliberately avoided separate chapters on Turkey's relations with the European Union, Greece, and Cyprus, arguing that the existing publications on these topics are already in "inverse proportion to the substantive developments" concerning these areas during the period under discussion (p. 5). The absence of separate chapters, however, does not mean that these areas are neglected; there is coverage of these topics in some subsections, particularly on the international system, history, ideology, and economy.

Nevertheless, while Robins gives so much importance to the interaction of domestic and external factors in foreign-policy analysis, he has a very limited discussion of the post-Helsinki period, during which relations with the European Union served as a powerful "external anchor" for instigating and giving impetus to domestic reform in Turkey. Moreover, by excluding the impact of these drastic reforms on a number of previously taboo issues, including the abolishment of capital punishment, extending broadcasting and educational rights to the Kurdish minority, and the measures to curb the influence of military in politics, Robins runs into the danger of over-stressing the "normative gap" between Turkey and Europe and overlooking critical changes in Turkey in this regard.

Sometimes in analyzing contemporary events the time lag between the completion of the work and its publication makes an important difference. In this context, given the important foreign-policy implications of the domestic reform process to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria, the results of the November 2002 elections, and the critical developments of the Copenhagen summit, an epilogue or a postscript that would bring events up to date would have been particularly useful.

The book is based on an extensive survey of secondary published works, mainly in English. There is also limited reference to some works in Turkish and French, as well as to a number of contemporary primary sources. The *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* and newspaper sources are also frequently used. In terms of the Turkish media, the author relies heavily on the *Turkish Daily News* and the *Turkish Probe*. The limited use of Turkish materials is the main shortcoming of the bibliography, but the author refers to numerous interviews with Turkish diplomats and policy-makers, senior officers, businessmen, journalists, and academics. There are also four useful maps in the beginning of the book and an exhaustive index at the end.

*Suits and Uniforms* is the product of meticulous research and penetrating analysis by one of the leading specialists on Turkish foreign policy. This book is a must for specialists on Turkish politics and foreign policy, as well as for the generalist international relations readership and the layman who is interested in having a compelling and comprehensive account of Turkey's foreign affairs.