

## BOOK REVIEWS

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ALESSANDRO BAUSANI, *Religion in Iran* (New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 2000). Pp. 479. \$38.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY DOMINIC BROOKSHAW, Oriental Institute, University of Oxford

The period 1955–62 was a particularly productive one for the eminent Italian Orientalist Alessandro Bausani (1921–88), professor of Islamic studies at Rome University. His Italian translation of the Qurʾān, which appeared in 1955, was soon followed by a trilogy of works, each of which testifies to the depth and scope of his encyclopedic knowledge of and love for all things Iranian: *Persia Religiosa* (Milan, 1959), *Storia della Letteratura Persiana* (Milan, 1960), and *I Persiani* (Florence, 1962). The last, a concise history of Iran that many consider complementary to *Persia Religiosa*, was translated into German as *Die Perser* (Stuttgart, 1965) and into English as *The Persians* (London, 1971) within a decade of its release. It seems strange, then, that *Persia Religiosa*, which forty years after it was first published is still the only work in a Western language that treats the history of religions in Iran in a comprehensive manner (p. vii), should not have been translated earlier. Perhaps some of Bausani's innovative, avant-garde insights meant that scholars of Iran downplayed the book's significance at the time.

In the Introduction, Bausani says that one of the main purposes behind writing *Persia Religiosa* was to circulate “the fundamental aspects of Persian religious thinking among educated Westerners” (p. 1), with a view to combating their relative ignorance about the religious world-views of Middle Easterners in general. *Persia Religiosa* was originally intended for the general Italian reader and was the fourth volume the *La cultura* series published by Il Saggiatore of Milan. Bausani's central thesis is that Iranian religious history can be understood only in terms of continuity. He rejects the direct continuity argued for by Corbin (p. 2), favoring instead one in which continuity in the historical and social factors that have shaped Iran have in turn given rise to continuity in religion. But Bausani's passion for continuity on occasion leads him to suggest somewhat artificial connections (between the Zoroastrian and Babi calendars [p. 61], for example, and among the missionary methods of early Christians, medieval Ismaʿilis and 19th-century Bahaʿis [p. 158]).

Bausani is interested in cross-fertilization among religious traditions. He draws comparisons between Iranian and Indian religions, frequently linking Persian Zoroastrian terms with equivalent Indian concepts (see pp. 19, 29–30). But Bausani does not neglect the role of Hellenistic influences on Iranian religion, in particular the Gnostic elements of Zurvanism (pp. 42–47). Further, the Mazdean tradition, Bausani believes, was “more open towards the West than towards India” (p. 41). Bausani's evidence for a rebirth in Zoroastrian studies under the Abbasids (pp. 15–16) makes for interesting reading, as does his suggestion of possible Qurʾānic influences on Mazdaism (p. 119). But however stimulating their content, the chapters on pre-Islamic Iranian religions are too involved for the average reader. Bausani suggests that some of this disorganization is intentional (p. 22), but perhaps tighter editing would have been beneficial.

Bausani's discussion of Islam assumes a basic knowledge of the religion (p. 112), a mistake in a book ostensibly aimed at the lay reader. According to Bausani, what the Qurʾān and Islam brought to 7th-century Persia was not so alien because Persia, he believes, had long been

“Gnosticized” and “Semitized” (p. 114). He argues that Persian Islam must be viewed as a positive contribution to the Muslim tradition rather than as a negative polemic against Islam (p. 143). He is equally adamant that Shi‘i Islam should not be viewed as an Iranian phenomenon (p. 146) and that, although it has shaped the whole of modern Iranian culture, it should not be forgotten that it is in essence “an Arab form of religion imposed on Persia by a Turkish dynasty” (p. 299). Noting that until 1500 the majority of Iranians (including the greatest poets) were Sunni (p. 142), he is scornful of those who draw a link between what he calls the “Safavid Shi‘itization” of Iran and the Iranian spirit (p. 302). Bausani is equally bold when he rules out an Iranian origin of the “Husaini cult of suffering” (p. 348), favoring instead a Western (perhaps Christian or pre-Christian) source (p. 368). Bausani’s translations of Shah Isma‘il’s religious poetry (p. 303) are some of the most engaging of the whole book.

Bausani’s audacity is not confined to his discussion of Shi‘ism. His presentation of Babi-Baha‘i as a new religion, independent from Islam, should not be underestimated (p. 379). Aware of the stigma attached to the study of this religion among European Orientalists (p. 385), Bausani, although himself a Baha‘i, produced relatively little scholarship that is specifically related to Baha‘i. He was nevertheless seen by contemporary Orientalists as an authority on Baha‘i and wrote numerous encyclopedia entries (see, e.g., *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*) to replace earlier ones based, he felt, on inaccurate information (p. 395). The brief survey of Baha‘i history, scripture, and theology in *Religion in Iran* (pp. 396–404) is unremarkable; what is interesting, however, is that Bausani considered the role played by Baha‘ullah as integral to his discussion of Iranian religions as, say, that played by Zoroaster. To Bausani, Baha‘i is the fourth monotheistic world religion and the first truly monotheistic religion to originate in Persia (p. 396).

The choice of *Religion in Iran* for the title of the English translation of *Persia Religiosa* is, I feel, somewhat unfortunate. Perhaps “Iranian Religion” or “Iranian Religions” would have been more suitable titles, given that the book covers not all of the religions that have thrived in Iran but only those that originated in Iran (e.g., Manichaeism, Baha‘i) and sects of non-Iranian religions that have been, or are currently, dominated by Iranians (e.g., Sufism, Shi‘i Islam). A more detailed discussion of the Iranian forms of Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Sunni Islam would have given the reader a more balanced depiction of the history of religion in Persia.

*Religion in Iran* has been diligently edited by scholars currently engaged in the study of Iranian religions who have supplied it with updated, additional bibliographies to complement those given by Bausani in the original. These supplementary bibliographies are useful for two reasons. First, they direct today’s reader toward the most recent (occasionally forthcoming) publications; and second, they give the reader an idea of how research in a given field has or has not developed over the past four decades. Other valuable additions include a biographical note on the author (pp. ix–xii) and a selected bibliography of Bausani’s publications (pp. xxiii–xxiv). These help the reader to place *Religion in Iran* in the context of Bausani’s other works and to gain an appreciation of the breadth of his scholarly interests. One section of the book that appears to have been overlooked by the editors is the appendix of photographs (pp. 413–46). Some are extremely difficult to make out (e.g., Figure 6, the stone lion of Ecbatana; Figure 8, the Zoroastrian dakhma; and Figure 39, the Kurdish cemetery), whereas others do not appear to have any direct relevance to the text (e.g., Figure 43, felt hats put out to dry in Bam, and Figure 52, the “Devil worshippers” of Kermanshah). *Religion in Iran* is a long book. Bausani included many translations of original texts so that *Religion in Iran* would also serve as a “religious anthology of Persian thought” (p. 4). A number of these quotes, however, appear overly long (e.g., pp. 97–100, 203–208, 368–75) and could have been edited down or consigned to appendixes to facilitate a more engaging read. No doubt tight constraints dictated the extent to which the English version could deviate from the Italian original.

Overall, the publication of *Religion in Iran* in English is welcome. It brings together in one volume material that is often scattered across encyclopedias, journal articles, and books. Bausani poses interesting hypotheses about continuity in Iranian religion and presents unique material, especially translations of obscure texts. This book should be recommended to Islamic studies undergraduates and lay Iranians who want to learn more about their spiritual heritage.

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EERIK DICKINSON, *The Development of Early Sunnite Hadith Criticism: The Taqdim of Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi (240/854–327/938)*, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001). Pp. 156. \$46.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY HERBERT BERG, Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of North Carolina at Wilmington

The *Taqdim* of Ibn Abi Hatim was meant to serve as an introduction to his biographical dictionary of hadith transmitters, *Kitab al-Jarh wa-l-ta'dil*. Dickinson argues that the primary purpose of this introduction was to show that hadith criticism as practiced by Ibn Abi Hatim began early and was used continuously up to his own time. In this way, he defended the practice and its techniques against its detractors. Dickinson also highlights the general principles and methods of the hadith critics of Ibn Abi Hatim's time.

Dickinson begins with a short and concise summary of the major theories on the development of hadith. Chapter 1 argues that the development of hadith criticism in the time of Ibn Abi Hatim was born in an attempt to impose doctrinal unity. To him and to others called the Hijazians (now known as the *ahl al-ḥadīth*), the doctrines and teachings of their opponents, the Kufans (*ahl al-rā'y*) were arbitrary and capricious. Only exclusive reliance on the Qur'an and the hadith could bring uniformity. Reliance on hadiths brought single answers, and *rā'y* should not even be used on issues about which the Qur'an and the hadith were silent. Unfortunately, hadiths often contradicted one another—but Ibn Abi Hatim argued that scrutinizing the *isnāds* would eliminate any false hadiths, and uniformity would be found.

After an excellent and thorough exploration of Ibn Abi Hatim's life and works in Chapter 2, Dickinson analyzes the *Taqdim* in the remaining four chapters. The main point of the *Taqdim* is to depict early Hijazi scholars as hadith critics, thereby justifying the contemporary techniques. Like an *isnād*, each generation of "critics" guarantees authenticity of hadith criticism. Ibn Abi Hatim assumes that the first two generations of Muslims transmitted hadith flawlessly. The first "hadith critics" emerged in response to later negligence of rigor in transmission. This first generation of critics includes Malik ibn Anas, Sufyan 'Uyayna, Sufyan al-Thawri, Shu'ba ibn al-Hajjaj, and others. Subsequent generations of critics are similarly discussed and culminated for Ibn Abi Hatim with his father, Abu Hatim, and his other teacher, Abu Zur'a. To demonstrate early continuous hadith criticism, Ibn Abi Hatim uses testimonial, biographical, and documentary evidence for each critic.

The traditional material is composed of reports that suggest hadith criticism was used by these earlier Muslim scholars. Even members of the *ahl al-rā'y* such as Abu Hanifa are enlisted to lend support to the evidence. The biographical material focuses on their legitimizing dreams, dedication to studying hadiths, moral character, and aloofness from politics of the critics. The only problematic area of Dickinson's study comes in the discussion of documentary evidence. The examples of general principles and the critics' methods draws more material from works of Muslim, Bukhari, Ibn Hibban, and others than from Ibn Abi Hatim's *Taqdim*. Dickinson demonstrates that early hadith critics—at least, by Ibn Abi Hatim's time—were well aware of converging *isnāds*, or what Schacht would call the common-link phenomenon. Moreover, most of the technical aspects of hadith criticism were already fully developed. Apart from a few

technical contributions, Ibn Abi Hatim gave the earliest explicit formulation of the doctrine of the collective accreditation of early Muslims. A more detailed discussion of this formulation could have been included.

Dickinson's scholarship is excellent and thorough; references to all appropriate contemporary Muslim scholarship are employed; and the book has an excellent bibliography and index. His book makes an important contribution to our understanding of the development of hadith and will be an asset to scholars of Islamic law, hadith, and Islamic origins and should be in their libraries. The work's importance lies in Dickinson's demonstration that Ibn Abi Hatim engaged in the same project that led to the need for hadith critics—he legitimized his own view of Islam by projecting it back to earlier generations of Muslims.

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DAPHNA EPHRAT, *A Learned Society in a Period of Transition: The Sunni 'Ulamā in Eleventh-Century Baghdad* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000). Pp. 229. \$16.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY TAYEB EL-HIBRI, Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Studies on the social history of the ulama are generally scarce for the medieval Islamic period, which makes one welcome any new study to tackle this overlooked subject. Surveying ulama (both hadith and fiqh scholars) of different Sunni *madhhabs* for the 11th and 12th centuries, Ephrat analyzes considerable data in the biographical dictionaries to provide patterns that characterize the ulama who lived in Baghdad, migrated there, passed through the city in their travels, or were attached to teaching positions in madrasas there. The inquiry yields interesting insights into the relative powers of different *madhhabs*. One notes the preponderant role of Hanafis and Shafī'is in the formation of rival madrasas in the second half of the 11th century and how the Hanbalis, mortal enemies of *kalām*—which preoccupied Mu'tazilis and Ash'aris over issues such as the concept of divine unity, attributes (*al-ṣifāt*), and justice—were late-comers to this institution in the 12th century, having chosen earlier to use mosques and private houses to disseminate hadith teaching. The Hanbalis' emphasis on educational routine on ascetic example and public exhortation gave them little need for the forum of the academy.

Ephrat produces a range of statistical surveys that shed light on telling trends, including the higher retention rate of ulama in Baghdad in the second half of the 11th century (after a steep decline in the first half), the rise in the number of native-born Baghdadi scholars remaining in the city, and the tendency for ulama from western Iran to settle in the city more than their counterparts from eastern Iran. The charts compiled on the composition of the ulama (native, emigrant, and transient); the lists of patrons of madrasas, professors, holders of judgeships; and the relationship of scholars to different *madhhabs* and religious preoccupation (hadith, Qur'an recitation, asceticism, etc.) are all instructive and pave the way to better understanding of the socio-religious history of this period.

The book is divided into six slim chapters that range evenly between the areas of social and cultural (educational) history. In the first two chapters, the author outlines the setting of *madhhabs* in Baghdad and includes most of the statistical material that forms the kernel of the study. Later, in Chapter 6, the author provides interesting information about the role of the ulama in their official capacities as qadis and professors and sheds light on Seljuq policy. Through their patronage of madrasas that appointed major scholars who often served as judges, the Seljuqs influenced the socio-religious scene. Seljuq public support for different sects appears to be both rotating and segmented as the Seljuqs moved from backing the Hanafis to the Shafī'is in ma-

drasa formation but also managed to advertise humility to the Hanbali hadith scholars. The discussion here should help revise the traditional historical view that tended to detach the sultans from the ulama scene.

In spite of its contribution and many thought-provoking moments, however, this study may have been published prematurely, judging from a number of defects in various areas. The most obvious is the sacrifice of a much needed historical context to familiarize the reader with rulers, viziers, caliphs, commanders, and contests of that period. The chronology used in chart headings often varies (e.g., A.D. 1018–1154, A.D. 1067–1213) and is never explained. And in these and other lists of patrons, professors, and qadis, no references are given to a specific body of sources. The author may be unaware of the more exhaustive list of qadis for every neighborhood of Baghdad done by Salih Ahmad al-‘Ali in the article “Majallat al-majma‘ al-‘ilmi al-‘Iraqi” (1969), and of Husayn Amin’s exhaustive list of madrasas in his book *al-‘Iraq fi al-‘asr al-Saljuqi* (Baghdad, 1965). Several key sources are strangely absent from the bibliography, especially the biographical dictionaries by al-Dhahabi, al-Safadi, Yaqut, Ibn al-Dubaythi, and Ibn al-Najjar, and some works on learning, such as al-Khatib al-Baghdadi’s *al-Kifaya fi ‘ilm al-riwaya*. The lack of full transliteration often makes names with unfamiliar accents hard to read, and renditions such as “Baghdadian” (pp. 49, 142) and “majlises” (pp. 70, 123) will jar a few. The urban maps of Baghdad, reproduced from Le Strange’s study on Baghdad, appear blotted and impossible to read.

More important, in conceptual terms, the author may have focused excessively on the ulama as a collective unit for studying social history, to the detriment of other categories such as class, region, or family. One wonders whether there is room to probe a Baghdadi “patriciate” class parallel to that of Nishapur, and to what degree sectarian rivalry masked established social and political ties (as per Richard Bulliet’s pioneering finds for the city of Nishapur). Although Ephrat lists some of the main notable families of the period (especially the Zainabis and the Damghanis) in an appendix, this seems too brief for the sources of the period and too detached from the discussion in the main chapters. Some attention also should have been paid to the various branches of the Abbasid house—their internal rivalries and relations with other Hashimis and the ruling Seljuqs.

Other problems arise when the author attempts to define madrasa education. In her effort to stress the autonomy of the ulama as a civilian elite and to emphasize the strong bond that hadith instruction gave to a teacher–disciple relationship, Ephrat exaggerates the informal and personal character of that transmission process, ultimately dismissing the possibility that any formal education happened in the madrasa (i.e., that there was no curriculum or classes and no point to the institution other than its creation for a famous professor). The evidence adduced for this (in chaps. 3, 4, 5) is diffuse and not very compelling. It includes the idea that the *ḥalqa* was an open classroom; that some scholars listened to hadith during brief travel stops; that famous scholars occasionally did hadith recitals by popular request in homes; that the teacher–disciple bond, together with the feelings of loyalty and support that it produced, undermined formal (institutional) education; that teachers taught from notes they had gathered from their previous education; that students wrote notes haphazardly in the margins of a hadith text; and that the Islamic concept of *ṣuḥba* (companionship) meant no systemic educational routine.

The occasional anecdote inviting one or another of these suggested patterns is not so much troubling as is the fact that the evidence centers mainly on hadith and Sufi practice and tilts heavily toward Hanbali examples. (Ibn al-Jawzi would be glad that his prolific work found its loyal recipient.) Accepting this, however, means ignoring the complex intellectual world of Hanafis and Shaf‘is with their famous debates (*munāzarāt*), which no doubt required a ladder of training and competence in a range of fields, including Qur’an, poetry, grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, and law. The madrasa could not have been a haphazard environment where no education of any substance (or formal character) took place—or, as the author cynically puts

it, "teachers came to the madrasa in order to obtain an official post and its accompanying salary, students in order to receive stipends and living quarters" (p. 85).

Finally, I found a persistent thread of contradictory messages in the book that makes it hard to draw conclusions about the madrasa, the ulama, or even the notion of *'ilm*. At times, the ulama are described as "reluctant to assume positions in the official sphere" (p. 8); elsewhere, however, significant statistics are given on Shaf'is and Hanafis who held paid civil and religious offices (p. 138), and descriptions are given of how they jockeyed for office. The author warns against seeing the madrasa as foreshadowing Ottoman bureaucratic reliance on institutional recruitment (pp. 8, 115) but later quotes al-'Imad al-Isfahani on how Nizam al-Mulk ensured that the most talented scholars were conveyed to high positions (p. 113) and graduates of the madrasa were favorite candidates for high religious office (p. 65). The author rejects that any formal or hierarchical organization surrounded the madrasa, as in the Western model, but then gives a description of academic ranks (*shaykh*, *mudarris*, *nā'ib mudarris*, *mu'īd*, *mufīd*) (pp. 105, 109) that point to an organized teaching environment. Education is mainly restricted to religion and hadith, but specialists in other fields, such as the literary scholars Abu Zakariyya al-Tabrizi, Abu Ishaq al-Kalbi, and Abu Sa'adat al-Shajari, appear among the madrasa teachers and contradict the argument (pp. 65, 81). All this makes the discussion frequently incoherent and hard to pin down.

The history of the ulama and that of the medieval madrasas are closely related but are not entirely identical. Had this study restricted itself to the lives of the ulama—their travels, affiliations, and transitions in time—and confined itself to a clear period, it could have made a lasting step forward in the history of 11th-century Baghdad. By ranging widely in controversies over the madrasa, digressing into Western comparisons, and generalizing the picture of the *madh-habs*, Ephrat missed an opportunity to make a thorough prosopographic study.

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REUVEN FIRESTONE, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Pp. 206. \$25.00 cloth.

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The Qur'an contains numerous verses dealing with the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. Some exhort the Muslims to summon the non-Muslims to Islam through peaceful discussions (e.g., Q16:125), whereas others instruct them to fight the unbelievers unconditionally (e.g., Q2:216, Q9:5). In the chapters on jihad, Muslim jurists resolved these contradictions by claiming that these verses were the expression of successive stages in the policy of the early Muslim community with regard to the non-Muslims. According to this theory, the verses instructing the Muslims to summon the unbelievers to Islam by peaceful means are the oldest. Those permitting the Muslims to fight the unbelievers because they have been wronged and expelled from their homes (Q22:39–40), revealed immediately after the Hijra, mark a turning point, after which defensive warfare was allowed. The final stage, according to traditional Muslim exegesis, began at a later but unspecified date and was inaugurated by verses unconditionally ordering the believers to wage war on the non-Muslims (e.g., Q2:216, Q9:5). These last verses, often called "Sword Verses," were regarded as having abrogated all previous revelations on the subject of the relations with the unbelievers.

This canonical view on the development of jihad in early Islam was never challenged by a critical reading of the pertinent sources. This is precisely what Firestone sets out to do. Through a new reading of the Qur'anic verses related to warfare in connection with other early sources

(*tafsīr*, *ḥadīth*, and *sīra*) he wants to “reconstruct the conceptual development of [Islam’s] views on war” (p. 14).

In the first part of the book (“Imaging Arabia”), the author sketches the situation of pre-Islamic Arabia and establishes that, in the Jahiliyya period, there were no religious types of war. The question of when this form of warfare emerged is examined in the second part (“The Qur’an and Its Interpretation”), which forms the core of the study. The last part deals with the oral tradition—that is, the *ḥadīth* and *ṣīra*.

In the second part, dealing with the Qur’an, the author tests the traditional view (claiming that there was a clear linear evolution in the ideological positions regarding the relationship with the non-Muslims) against evidence offered by the *tafsīrs*. He finds that the commentaries do not support this evolutionary view: there are too many conflicting opinions about the exact dating and meaning of these verses. Because the chronological order of the verses cannot explain the contradictions in their contents, the author presents an alternative explanation.

His point of departure is that the transition from “mundane, materially driven fighting” to “sacred, divinely sanctioned warring” (p. 127) occurred in a relatively short period immediately following the Hijra and that this change was not a smooth one. The new ethos of warfare was not immediately accepted by the whole community. There was opposition against it, which was aggravated because the new policy on warfare was preceded by another ideological change: the introduction of the idea that the religiously based solidarity of the newly created *umma* was of a higher order than tribal and familial solidarity. This is evident, as the author shows, from the provisions of the so-called constitution of Medina, which he analyzes in Chapter 6. To accept this new solidarity and to discard the old one was especially hard for the emigrants. Very soon after the Hijra they found themselves attacking their fellow Qurayshites. They must have been uneasy about it, especially when such raids also violated other pre-Islamic norms such as those with regard to the ban on fighting during the holy months. There was also opposition amongst the Ansar. Evidence for the existence of less militant factions is abundant in the text of the Qur’an: there are many verses criticizing Muslims who were not willing to take part in warfare. They were labeled *munāfiqūn* (hypocrites, or, as the author calls them, dissenters), a term that acquired a very negative connotation.

By carefully reading the Qur’anic passages, the *asbāb al-nuzūl* literature, the classical commentaries, and the relevant parts of the *ṣīra*, the author tries to throw light on these processes of ideological change. His explanation for the contradictions found in the Qur’anic verses is that they were the expressions of diverse and contradictory positions vis-à-vis the new ethos of warfare.

Firestone’s study offers a new and alternative explanation for the contradictory nature of the Qur’anic texts on the subject of the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. There is one crucial aspect, however, that he does not discuss: the question of how the contradictory positions on fighting the non-Muslims found their way into the Qur’an. It is of course possible that in the beginning Muhammad was wavering and did not follow a clear policy, although the *ṣīra* is silent on this aspect. But this is not what the author says. He argues that they were the expression of the positions of various factions within the early Muslim community. If we accept, as most scholars do, that the final redaction of the Qur’anic text was completed within twenty years of the Muhammad’s death and that at that time many Muslims were alive who had known Muhammad personally and knew parts of the text of the Qur’an by heart, it is difficult to see how important passages could be included that did not reflect Muhammad’s views, unless they were the result of a generally acknowledged change in the prevailing positions—for example, the case of the ban on drinking wine.

Perhaps the author does not discuss this aspect because he followed uncritically the method used by Morton Smith in his 1957 Harvard University thesis on the Jewish factions that left their traces in the Old Testament (published as *Palestinian Parties and Politics That Shaped*

*the Old Testament* (New York, 1971), a study to which he repeatedly refers. This kind of interdisciplinary approach can be very fruitful, but in this case the differences in textual history between the Hebrew Bible and the Qur'an make it difficult to transfer methods developed in one field to another. Unlike the Qur'an, the Hebrew Bible is a text that had been fluid for centuries and whose final redaction was the result of a combination of different traditions. The interpretation of the Qur'an as a historical source therefore requires a totally different approach.

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MARGARETHA T. HEEMSKERK, *Suffering in the Mu'tazilite Theology: 'Abd al-Jabbar's Teaching on Pain and Divine Justice*, Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Science: Texts and Studies (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000). Pp. 226. \$68.00 cloth.

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One of the two key principles of the Mu'tazila was the emphasis on the omnibenevolence and justice of God ('*adl*). Among the issues that this raised was that of the origin of evil. That is, where does pain and suffering come from? For the Mu'tazila, the principle of '*adl* demands that humans have freedom of choice and so have the ability to create evil, pain, and suffering. However, there is suffering, such as that caused by nature or illness, that is not the responsibility of humans and must be created by God. For this reason, even this suffering, although it appears bad, must be good because it comes from God. Heemskerk explores how 'Abd al-Jabbar (d. 1024), a very important Mu'tazili theologian, developed this theodicy by arguing that pain is divine assistance and that either here or in the hereafter the afflicted person will be compensated.

The sources used by Heemskerk are 'Abd al-Jabbar's *al-Mughni fi abwab al-tawhid wa-l-'adl*, Mankdim's *Sharh al-usul al-khamsa*, and Ibn Mattwayh's *al-Majmu' fi-l-muhit bi-l-taklif*. The latter two works are critical paraphrases of 'Abd al-Jabbar's works by two of his disciples and are used primarily by Heemskerk to highlight where later Mu'tazili scholars of 'Abd al-Jabbar's school differed from him.

Heemskerk begins with a lengthy historical survey of the Basra school of al-Jubba'i, the Mu'tazili school that 'Abd al-Jabbar headed. It contains much useful information on 'Abd al-Jabbar, Mankdim, and Ibn Mattwayh. However, this chapter is not essential to the discussion, as Heemskerk herself admits, and so its fifty-eight pages seem more appropriate in a dissertation than in this monograph.

The second chapter explores 'Abd al-Jabbar's discussion of the existence and perception of pain. Some scholars argued that pain does not exist in itself; it is just the absence of "soundness." 'Abd al-Jabbar argues that, because pain is perceptible and because perception is a reliable path to the knowledge of the existence of things, the *ma'nā* of pain exists. We suffer not because pain exists in us, but because we perceive something for which we feel aversion, whereas something for which we feel desire is a pleasure. How this pain comes into existence is explored in the next chapter. For 'Abd al-Jabbar, pain is one of the things that humans can produce: they can produce pressure, which can lead to *waha* (lesion or a separation), which causes pain. Thus, pain ceases of its own accord—that is, it does not require the presence of its "opposite" to cease. Where there is no "pressure" from a human, such as a headache, illness, or even the excess pain from a scorpion sting, the pain must come from God.

'Abd al-Jabbar's theodicy becomes clear in Heemskerk's last two chapters. In Chapter 4 she discusses 'Abd al-Jabbar's judgments on inflicting pain. Determining whether an act is good or bad is related to, but not identical with, the praise and blame assigned to that act and the profit and harm it causes. If one causes another pain, it matters whether one is aware of one's actions and whether permission was given. Such an act can be bad without being blameworthy. When



harm, pain, and sorrow are inflicted, the act's goodness or badness can be determined based on whether their infliction is unjust, which can be known by reason. Such an act is bad if the profit is less than the harm caused—if the act is deserved, as in punishment. If the profit is equal to the harm, the act is a useless one and therefore unjust. For 'Abd al-Jabbar, the infliction of pain is good by exception only: when profit outweighs harm (usually requiring consent of the one harmed), when another harm is averted, or when the pain is deserved. In the last case, there is no need for profit to outweigh harm, because the pain is deserved. In this way, 'Abd al-Jabbar preserves human responsibility for pain that one inflicts on another. However, he must show how the pain inflicted by God meets these exceptions.

Chapter 5 deals with 'Abd al-Jabbar's discussion of the compensation of pain. God, he argues, has imposed obligations (*taklīf*) on humanity. They are an opportunity to earn reward. One is free to perform these obligations, but God sends "assistance" (*lutf*) to help motivate one to fulfill these obligations. *Lutf* comes in many forms, such as prophets. However, pain and suffering are also *lutf*. The assistance may be for the person in pain, but it may also be for those around the person. The latter is particularly true for children who suffer, because presumably they are not old enough to understand the assistance. However, for 'Abd al-Jabbar's solution to work, he must show that the pain caused by God is good while maintaining the principle of justice that the Mu'tazili held dear. To this end, he suggests that pain must be compensated for. A person given pain by God must be compensated in the hereafter. A person given pain by another must be compensated here on Earth. And even if justice is not meted out in this lifetime, God can act as mediator to ensure that one person compensates another in the hereafter, regardless of whether these people are in heaven or hell. Of course, reward and compensation differ. Rewards are earned, eternal, and non-transferable. Compensations are not.

Heemskerk demonstrates that 'Abd al-Jabbar's discussion does not focus on morality, but is a theodicy. He has preserved God's justice and human freedom and responsibility while at the same time explaining why pain and suffering exist and why God does not intervene when His creatures hurt one another. They will be compensated for their pain. Pain from God will also be compensated, but its point is to serve as a warning or divine assistance. This justifies why God created a world in which pain exists. Heemskerk's presentation and use of the sources is both accurate and thorough. Scholars interested in Mu'tazili and early Islamic theology will find the book very useful. Its contents, however, are too specialized for students interested simply in Islamic theodicies.

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COLIN TURNER, *Islam without Allah? The Rise of Religious Externalism in Safavid Iran* (London: Curzon Press, 2001). Pp. 284. £45.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY SHOLEH A. QUINN, Department of History, Ohio University, Athens

Colin Turner started writing *Islam Without Allah* as a biography of Muhammad Baqir Majlisi, the highly influential Shi'i scholar of the Safavid era. However, on deciding that not enough primary material was available for a book-length study, he decided to extend the topic and place Majlisi's life and thought within the broader context of the "victory of the exoteric over the esoteric" (p. viii). The book is evidence of continuing interest in Shi'i Islam and makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the environment within which Majlisi's thought developed.

Chapter 1 sets the theoretical foundation for later chapters. Turner's thesis is normatively derived. He believes that, over the centuries, Muslims came to confuse *imān* and *islām*. It is the notion of *imān*, or inner belief, that Turner believes has been wrongly overshadowed and confused with *islām*, or submission or adherence to the religion of Muhammad. The term *islām*,

which receives much less attention in the Qur'an than *imān*, has also been confused, according to Turner's model. He distinguishes between the *islām* signifying inner submission to God and the Islam referring to the communal code of the religion.

In subsequent chapters, Turner relates this theory to the life of Majlisi and developments in Iranian religious history. Chapter 2 covers the history of religion in medieval Iran, the rise of the Safavids, and the later Safavid period. Particular attention is focused on Twelver Shi'ism in Iran before and immediately after the establishment of the Safavids. Turner's account of the rise of the Safavids is a particularly useful summary of early Safavid history.

One of the strengths of this book is its use of several underused and previously neglected sources. For example, in Chapter 3, Turner makes use of Mirza 'Abdullah Afandi's *Riyad al-'ulama'*, a biographical dictionary of Shi'i scholars, mostly from the Safavid era. The chapter also traces the rise of what Turner calls "externalism"—the outward form of Islamic expression that eventually became the dominant emphasis in Safavid Iran under a succession of kings. The migration to Iran of Arab scholars from the Jabal al-'Amil region of Lebanon, where Shi'ism had flourished, helped transform Iran from a predominantly Sunni country to a Twelver Shi'i state preoccupied with "externalist" matters. It was this religious and intellectual environment that Majlisi promoted to a large degree and in which he flourished.

Chapter 4, the most interesting chapter in the book, consists of a biography of Majlisi. Here we learn about Majlisi's family, especially his father, Muhammad Taqi Majlisi. We also learn about Majlisi's early religious education, his many teachers, and his eventual decision to specialize in the study of fiqh and hadith. His relationship with the Safavid state is also explored. Within this context, Turner analyzes a number of Majlisi's writings, including the Persian *Haqq al-yaqin* and the massive and influential collection of Shi'i traditions, the *Bihar al-anwar*, explaining how the latter was compiled with the help of a number of Majlisi's students. Turner uses two major sources for his information on Majlisi: the first, a work entitled *Fayd al-qudsi*, contained in volume 105 (erroneously cited in the notes as vol. 102) of the second edition of Majlisi's *Bihar al-anwar*. He also makes extensive use of Muhammad Taqi Danishpazhuh's index of a collection held in the University of Tehran library. Unfortunately, in many instances Turner is able to cite only Danishpazhuh and not the work itself listed in the index.

Chapter 5 focuses on two Shi'i doctrines outlined in the *Bihar al-anwar* and Majlisi's attitude towards them: *intiẓār* ("waiting for the return of the Hidden Imam," p. 194) and *raj'a* ("the return of the Twelve Imams"). Here again, Turner holds up Majlisi's attitudes toward these doctrines against the theoretical split between externalism and internalism outlined earlier. He bases his arguments on an in-depth analysis of volume 13 of the *Bihar al-anwar*, also titled *Kitab al-ghayba*, which contains traditions relating to the Mahdi. Turner identifies four of the thirty-six sections in this volume as especially relevant to "externalism." Included in this chapter is an interesting summary and analysis of the extensive "Tradition of Mufaddal," which appears in the *Bihar al-anwar*. The chapter ends with a critique of the 20th-century Iranian 'Ali Shariati's religious-political treatise, *Tashahyū-i 'Alavi, tashayyū-i Safavi*. The book ends with Chapter 6, a brief summary and conclusion.

The use of a theoretical framework of externalist versus internalist has advantages and disadvantages. It makes tracing the development of religious thought and religious trends in a detailed manner possible thus reducing the risk of overgeneralized, possibly superficial, conclusions. So little work has been done on important figures such as Majlisi that focusing on one aspect of his thought certainly allows us to understand him better. However, the normative framework also leads Turner to conclude that Majlisi and other influential religious clerics, by misunderstanding the dichotomies Turner outlines and not adhering to the specified norms, somehow misguided Iran and in a sense betrayed "true" Islam. In this way, the author betrays something of a distaste for Majlisi's perspectives. The presentism of some parts of the book,

such as the discussion of 'Ali Shariati, is somewhat disruptive in a work devoted to the Safavid era. Finally, the bibliography could use updating: for instance, the *Safwat al-safa*, listed as a manuscript, has recently been edited. The so-called Ross Anonymous is no longer anonymous and has been dated to the 1680s. Recent scholarship has focused on clerical migration from Lebanon to Iran in the Safavid period. Finally, the notion that, at the time of the establishment of the Safavid state, all that Iran knew of Shi'ism came from one book (a statement based on one passage in one chronicle), has been shown to refer only to 1501 Azerbaijan. These points, however, do not detract from an otherwise useful book that will be of value to those interested in Majlisi, Shi'i studies, and the intellectual and religious history of Iran.

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MICHAEL BRETT, *The Rise of the Fatimids: The World of the Mediterranean and the Middle East in the Tenth Century C.E.* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001). Pp. 508.

REVIEWED BY AMALIA LEVANONI, Department of History, Haifa University

This book represents a breakthrough in Fatimid research. Brett challenges the prevalent approach that the Fatimids were a minority heretic sect on the fringes of Islam. To date, scholars have interpreted Fatimid history in terms of success and failure of their political and religious doctrine. This view is the outcome of the huge gap between the meager traces left of the Fatimids in Egypt's history following almost two hundred years of rule and the high aspirations set up in the doctrinal "platform" of the Isma'ili mission, which aimed toward universal fulfillment of the true faith and just rule. Brett, in contrast, suggests that Fatimid secular and religious history must be examined in terms of its impact on Islamic civilization and on Christian Europe of the Middle Ages. From this point of view, the appearance of the Fatimids in the 10th century was a major event.

The author's principal thesis is that the Fatimids attempted to realize a utopian idea held by the monotheistic religions—namely, that of conjoining political power and religious authority in the hands of one ruler. This idea was inherited from the old imperial world order of the former Roman and Sassanid empires. However, this vision proved no longer suitable for the political order of the Islamic realm and Europe of the 10th and 11th centuries. At that time, empires were replaced by provincial states, and the idea of God-guided leadership lost its vigor. When the Fatimids reintroduced this idea, they were doomed to failure because of the inherent extremist precepts of the notion and its lack of relevance to the new world order.

The Isma'ili doctrine of the imamate affirmed that community leadership is transferred through a kind of apostolic succession, from Muhammad to 'Ali and from 'Ali to his offspring, through to the Fatimids. This doctrine raised anew the question of succession to rule in Islam, an issue already resolved by both Sunni Islam and the Shi'i. When the Fatimid Mahdi appeared at the beginning of the 10th century, Abbasid rule had already been recognized and consolidated as the legitimate leadership of Sunni Islam. In the case of the Shi'i, the appearance of the Fatimid Mahdi came after a schism had already appeared regarding the question of the imam's identity and the conduct of Shi'i missionary activity in the absence of an imam had become a matter of routine. Against this background, even the recognition of the Seveners Shi'i sect granted to the Fatimids still left their genealogy in question, eroding their status among their opponents from Sunni Islam and the other Shi'i sects.

The messianic idea on which the Fatimids based their right to religious and political leadership, the imamate, drew largely on orthodox Islam. Sunni Islam perceived Muhammad as the seal of prophets. In times of discontent, Muslims nurtured the hope that the return of a descendant of the Prophet would re-establish the Prophet's ideal form of leadership, through which an egalitarian society would be maintained. Tenth-century Sunni Islam had undergone a revolu-

tionary change. From an elitist religion of a ruling ethnic minority it had become a religion of the masses. This resulted in general disenchantment with Muslim law that was expressed in political uprisings, theological schisms, and controversy. Not by chance, at this time the Fatimids offered to revive the God-guided monarchy of the descendents of Muhammad (the source of religious and political authority) and 'Ali as a solution to religious controversies. However, the unification of religious and political authority in the hands of the Muslim ruler had already been debated in Sunni Islam as early as 848 in the *Mihna* (Inquisition), in the struggle over the doctrine of the divine creation of the Qur'an. The victory of the traditionalist school over the school of dogmatic theology (the Mu'tazila) reflected the failure of the Abbasid caliphs to assert supreme authority in matters of faith. Although the Fatimids perfected the Abbasid ideal of theocracy, the anachronism and extremism of this ideal prevented its realization. The Fatimids were compelled to compromise once they gained power and established a state. When the mahdi became the overt ruler, he also became open to criticism. The change in his status from the leader of a small, nomadic society in North Africa (much like the Prophet in Hijaz) to the ruler of an empire was bound up in a further change that necessitated the adoption of the Abbasid pattern of rule, with all its concomitant characteristics. The Fatimid doctrine *al-Da'wa*, which began with an uncompromising demand for obedience to the God-guided imam, was gradually moderated as *al-Dawla*, recognition of his political authority where he maintained direct rule. As their state diminished, the Fatimids compromised on their claim to be the source of religious authority, and government in remote communities of the faithful was left to the discretion of the *Dā'i*, or the movement's missionary. With the collapse of the Fatimid state, the Isma'ili movement returned to view the imamate as a guiding principle, forgoing political aspirations. In the *al-Da'wa al-Jadida* (new preaching), the imam was again regarded as the source of divine knowledge and revelation in principle rather than in person. The confrontation of Sunni Islam with the radical preaching of the Isma'ili *al-Da'wa al-Jadida* resulted in a theological revolution among the former. Eleventh-century Sunni Islam, like the Isma'ili mission, came to view the Prophet as the sole source of spiritual and political authority. The utopian idea of unifying religion and state was manifested in the practice of delegating government authority from the caliph to the secular rulers, such as the Seljuqs. Sunni states, particularly those in North Africa (such as Muwahhidun), were established along the lines of the Fatimid model.

The legal doctrines of the Muslim schools of law lost their supremacy to a doctrine that restricted their authority to the law of the Prophet and the Qur'an. The Nizamiyya colleges (*madāris*) established by the Seljuqs in the 11th century to teach orthodox Islamic law were designed along the lines of al-Azhar, the center of the Fatimids' Isma'ili propaganda.

The Fatimids triggered messianic ideas in Europe, as well. Brett contends that the radicalization of Sunni Islam against Christianity, as was manifested in the Seljuq attacks against Byzantium at the instigation of the Fatimids, was used by the Catholic church as the grounds to embark on crusades. The crusades presented the papacy with the opportunity to regain political power and revive the idea of unification of church and state in Europe.

Brett concludes that in historical terms, the importance of the Fatimids lies in the impact they had on their opponents rather than on how well they succeeded in fulfilling their ideology. The Fatimids set intellectual and political challenges for the Sunni religious and political leadership that forced them to engage in reforms inspired by the theological principles manifest in the radical Isma'ili writings.

Brett develops his thesis in twelve chapters, divided into three sections. The book also contains a bibliography, maps, and indexes. The first and last chapters are the introduction and summary, respectively. Chapters 2–5 constitute the first part of the book, "The Fatimid Revolution." This section deals with the background that brought about the growth and development of the Isma'ili movement until the mahdi appeared in 910 in Ifriqiya (today's Tunisia). The second section, "North Africa and the Mediterranean," comprises Chapters 6–8. This section

discusses the consolidation of Fatimid rule in North Africa and examines the changes that came about in the Isma'ili doctrine with the realization of the imamate's theoretical model. The third section, "Egypt and the East," includes Chapters 9–12. This section deals with the extension of the Fatimid empire to Egypt and eastward to Syria and Hijaz. It also discusses the implications of this expansion on the organization of state institutions through a comparison of political practices with the theoretical model of the Imamate.

This book is an excellent contribution to the growing literature on Islamic history in the Middle Ages. The research is based on a broad review of primary and secondary sources. This study is not only exhaustive in scope; it also offers a new perspective on the development of the Isma'ili mission and the history of the Fatimids within the general context of the medieval Muslim state. In my opinion, Brett proves that the Isma'ili mission made a significant contribution to Muslim civilization, enriching it in terms of political, philosophical, and legal thought.

Despite its considerable merit, the author's thesis sometimes presents the history of Islam—and, to a certain extent, that of Christianity in Europe in the 11th and 12th centuries—as Fatimid-centered. For example, the Fatimid claim to the crown of the defenders of Islam is stressed as a primary factor in the radicalization of the Seljuq rulers' position, which incited them to wage a jihad (holy war) against the Byzantines. This Fatimid-based radicalization is also proposed as a factor in bringing about, albeit indirectly, the crusades against Islam (pp. 2–3, 433). This viewpoint reduces the importance of the radical form of Islam adopted by the Seljuqs before their entry into Islamic lands. After all, the similarity between the socio-political structure of the Seljuqs and that of the Kuttama, the first supporters of the Fatimids in Ifriqya, was strong. Both were nomadic tribes, and quite naturally their brand of Islam was basic and militant. Each of the two caliphates, the Abbasid and the Fatimid, regarded itself as the only legitimate rule inherited from the Prophet. Sunni Islam employed this model to create political order, and later the Fatimids based their alternative imamate doctrine on it. Therefore, the religious zeal of the Seljuqs could have originated in Sunni Islam itself as early as the middle of the 9th century.

This book is the thirtieth volume in E. J. Brill's series *The Medieval Mediterranean*, edited by Hugh Kennedy et al. It will indubitably be of interest to scholars and students of medieval Islamic history. The author's detailed survey of the present state of research and his comprehensive description and analysis of both Fatimid and contemporary Islamic histories also make this book accessible and useful for non-specialists.

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ROBERT I. BURNS AND PAUL E. CHEVEDDEN, *Negotiating Cultures: Bilingual Surrender Treaties in Muslim–Crusader Spain under James the Conqueror*, *Medieval Mediterranean Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1453* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999). Pp. 298. \$108.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY MARÍA ÁNGELES GALLEGO, Departamento de Biblia y Oriente Antiguo, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid

Sometimes the writing of history seems to float free of its grounding in archaeological and documentary data, offering (albeit necessary) abstractions when we require detailed and concrete records. This is not, however, the case in the volume under review. In *Negotiating Cultures*, the reader enjoys a coherent perspective on textual data in all their complexity and meticulously rendered: the discovery of a lost document in the Archives of the Crown of Aragon (Barcelona); edition and translation of texts; dating; identification of names of places and personalities; and all kinds of complementary tasks that lead to a historical contextualization and analytical study.

The core of *Negotiating Cultures* is the study of two surrender treaties produced in early-13th-century Valencia between a conquering Christian side, represented by James the Conqueror, King of Aragon, and two Muslim parties, the Muslim rulers of Játiva and the Muslim leader al-Azraq. Both treaties are bilingual and inter-linear, Arabic alternating with Latin in the former and with Romance in the latter. Both documents are of great value not just for their content but, and very especially, because they are rare survivals of a category of treaty that is attested to have been common in this period, within the process of the Christian "Reconquest," or crusade against Islam on the Iberian peninsula.

The book is divided into three parts. The first and second parts are devoted to the al-Azraq and Játiva treaties, respectively, and their historical context. Burns is responsible for most of the historical study, including a revision of previous scholarship on the different topics. Burns's extensive work on the history of medieval Valencia is echoed in the masterly way in which he deals with some intricate matters, such as clarifying and interpreting the contents of the texts, confronting them with contemporary treaties, and establishing problematic dates (in the al-Azraq treaty, there is a discrepancy between the Arabic and Romance dates, and in the Játiva treaty, the year has been lost). In addition, Burns provides a translation of the Romance and Latin texts. His work on the al-Azraq treaty is a revision and update of previous publications, whereas his reconstruction of the Játiva charter is novel in the field.

Chevedden carried out the part of the study related to the Arabic documents. His edition of the Arabic text of the al-Azraq treaty is a revision, with only minor corrections, of his previous transcription presented in *Der Islam* (1989), which in turn was a revision of his first edition of the text, published in 1983. Other scholars, notably M. C. Barceló (1977, 1982), have offered transcriptions and translations of the same text. One can consider the current version as the most reliable and faithful to the original. Chevedden accompanies his transcription of the al-Azraq treaty with a linguistic study, pointing to the dialectological influence of the Andalusí—that is, Spanish Arabic—dialect. (Many of the characteristics he mentions are in fact common to all neo-Arabic.) Because of the fragmentary state of the Játiva treaty, the author has concentrated on the reconstruction of the text and elucidation of its meaning rather than on its linguistic features.

The Spanish Arabist Mikel de Epalza contributed Chapter 10, in Part 3, dealing with general aspects of the coexistence of Muslim subject communities in Christian societies by means of pacts such as those described in this book. In the last chapter, Burns and Chevedden briefly discuss several misconceptions related to Muslim surrenders of this period, including the view that these treaties consisted of a series of conditions imposed by the Christian side and the myth of incompetent Muslim defense. Finally, an appendix contains Chevedden's translation of the Treaty of Tudmir and a very useful glossary of terms. The book also includes several illustrations—notably, several photographs of the al-Azraq and Játiva treaties.

Burns and Chevedden provide an extensive bibliography in Spanish and Catalan, acknowledging Spanish scholars' significant production in this field. What is most impressive, however, is their use of other primary sources to elucidate the meaning of the two treaties, ranging from Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima* to the *Book of Deeds* and the autobiography of James the Conqueror.

One of the few drawbacks of *Negotiating Cultures* is the lack of the kind of teamwork that one might reasonably expect, given the joint authorship of the book. Burns and Chevedden have each written chapters related to their own fields of expertise, and nothing in the book seems to be the product of a joint effort. Moreover, in some cases Burns and Chevedden treat the same topics from their own personal and scholarly angles rather than producing a joint text incorporating both views, which would have been desirable. This is the case in Part 1 when they deal with an issue of special interest: the sound discrepancies between the Romance and Arabic version of the treaty. Burns approaches this topic as the confrontation of two different cultures and mentalities (pp. 34–35), whereas Chevedden (pp. 57–59) stresses external factors such as the drafting process and the long negotiations that probably "entailed a lengthy ex-

change of proposals and counterproposals" (p. 57). Burns and Chevedden's independence also becomes clear in methodological differences within the book. In the edition of the al-Azraq Treaty, for instance, Burns does not offer any collation of the Romance text with previous transcriptions by other scholars, whereas Chevedden has noted divergences from all of the other Arabic editions.

On the whole, this book provides a deep and thorough analysis of two exceptional documents that illustrate the vicissitudes of the political changes on the medieval Iberian peninsula. They reflect the terms of coexistence of a dominant Christian rule that, at this stage, was still tolerant of Muslim communities. Further, these treaties are of enormous relevance as rare bilingual examples of Christian–Islamic diplomatic practice during this period of conflict. The masterly work of Burns and Chevedden, with the collaboration of M. de Epalza, establishes this volume as a fundamental source book in this genre of historical study.

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SHOLEH A. QUINN, *Historical Writing during the Reign of Shah 'Abbas: Ideology, Imitation, and Legitimacy in Safavid Chronicles* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000). Pp. 197.

REVIEWED BY RULA ABISAAB, Department of History, University of Akron

The Safavid period (1501–1736) boasts a rich and diverse body of chronicles that range from universal histories to general and dynastic ones. The scarcity of secondary literature on Safavid historical writing and the transformation of historiographical traditions poses fundamental challenges to historians of this period. Despite these obstacles, Sholeh Quinn has managed to produce a work of great value that fills a void in the field of Persian historical writing.

Quinn focuses on the structure and content of Safavid historical prefaces (*ḏibāchihs*) from the formative period of Safavid rule through the reign of Shah 'Abbas I (1588–1629) and identifies models of "imitative writing" in historical narratives. She devotes special attention to the period of Shah 'Abbas when the rules for the writing of prefaces became established. The term "imitative," however, is misleading because it assumes the presence of an unchanging canon, whereas Quinn asserts that the canon was constantly revisited by historians to provide new perceptions of the past, particularly on issues of sovereignty and religious legitimacy. Quinn provides great insight into the manner in which the educational training of the chroniclers—be they chancery scribes, accountants, or astrologers—and their political positions shaped their "recollection" of events and ways of lending legitimacy to Shah 'Abbas. In the last part of the book, Quinn assesses Safavid historiography in the context of neighboring and later traditions of Mughal and Afsharid historical writing. It is important to note that no study before Quinn's has examined in depth the appropriation of Safavid and Timurid historiography by the Mughals.

Quinn makes significant observations about the period of Shah 'Abbas. She argues that the preference for dynastic histories over universal or general histories aims at establishing "broader contours of political legitimacy" for Shah 'Abbas. Moreover, it was no longer possible to pursue universal pretensions, because the Islamic world was divided under Mughal, Safavid, and Ottoman rule. Unlike early Safavid chronicles such as *Habib al-Siyar*, which covers the Mongol, Timurid, and Safavid periods and continues to 1524, *Khulasat al-Tavarikh* and *'Alam-ara-yi 'Abbasi* do not dramatize the Twelver Shi'i roots of the Safavid founding fathers. Rather, they embellish cultural and political connections between the Timurid and Safavid dynasties. Quinn successfully argues that the discussion of the burial rituals of Shaykh Safi, the founder of the Safavid Sufi order, reflect concerns with contemporary Ottoman claims. The Ottoman chronicles were replacing the earlier use of genealogical proofs indicating Ottoman descent from the legendary Oghuz Khan with more "Islamic" proofs; thus, they were using issues of descent and genealogy to advance particular political claims.

Mainly because of problems with source identification and lack of critical editions of Safavid sources, some of Quinn's observations are based on hindsight. She upholds, for instance, the view that the defeat and execution of the Qizilbash leader Ya'qub Khan Zu'l Qadr in 1590 demonstrated that Shah 'Abbas had regained full control of his kingdom. Her confirmation, however, does not emerge directly from the historical narratives, which are complex and fluid and therefore entertain other possibilities. There is an obvious tension in the narratives because the court historian Iskandar Beg Munshi tried consciously to downplay the khan's strength and the shah's inability to control all of the Safavid domains. In comparison with *Khulasat al-Tavarikh*, written by Qazi Ahmad—the earliest account of the fate of Ya'qub Khan—*Tarikh-i Qizilbashan*, written between 1598 and 1604, continued to hold the Qizilbash in high regard and did not condemn Ya'qub Khan. It also conveniently omits the underlying motivation for the khan's execution, as Quinn asserts. On another note, Quinn argues that the primary reason for seeking Timurid connections of legitimacy for the shah was the decline of the Qizilbash. It is important to note, however, that the temporal dimension of the events that led to the demise of the Qizilbash, and the social process tied to it, took much longer to unfold in the actual history than in the chronicle. Thus, the anti-Qizilbash and pro-Timurid sentiments reflected in *Khulasat al-Tavarikh* do not necessarily rise from the decline of the Qizilbash, as Quinn notes, but from Qazi Ahmad's political affiliations and class alliances. It is also possible that, among the court historians in particular, the political climate was such that they were seeking alternative sources of legitimacy to the Qizilbash a long time before their actual marginalization and the execution of Ya'qub Khan.

Quinn also expounds on the "pillars of legitimacy" erected by the chroniclers to strengthen the foundations of Shah 'Abbas's rule. She notes that the genealogy of the Safavids was incorporated into the historical canon during the reign of Shah 'Abbas as an attempt to "lessen the void left by the defeat of the Qizilbash" thus strengthening the claim to be the shadow of God on Earth and to descend from the Twelver Shi'i imams. The reader may, however, be confused by Quinn's later observation that the same chroniclers emphasized Timurid connections because Shah 'Abbas was unable to base his right to rule on his role as head of the Safavid order after the decline of the Qizilbash. She notes that the shah also faced an influential clerical class that included jurists from Jabal 'Amil (not al-'Amil, as found on p. 5) and could not advance the claim to rule in the name of the Hidden Imam. For these reasons, historians turned to a Muslim world conqueror such as Timur for a source of legitimacy. I believe that the incorporation of the Safavids' genealogy into the new prefaces underscores the continued importance of Twelver Shi'i foundations for Shah 'Abbas, which can hardly be replaced by Timurid models of conquest. The latter, however, may have functioned as supplementary sources of legitimacy for the shah.

These issues do not diminish of the importance of Quinn's pioneering work and her distinct contribution to the field of Safavid studies. One hopes that her book will develop a sustained interest in historiography and enrich our understanding and assessment of Safavid history.

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RAN AARONSOHN, *Rothschild and Early Jewish Colonization in Palestine*, Geographic Perspectives on the Human Past (Lanham, U.K.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000). Pp. 336. \$79.00 cloth, \$26.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY UZI BARAM, Division of Social Sciences, New College of Florida, Sarasota

*Rothschild and Early Jewish Colonization* analyzes the Jewish settlements of late-19th-century Ottoman Palestine within a consideration of colonialism. Focused on the 1880s, the volume examines Zionism using a comparative approach. Employing archival sources, Aaronsohn pro-



vides a detailed overview of the administration of the colonies by the Baron Edmond de Rothschild. The volume sets the settlements as an idealist endeavor supported by a patron who did not have explicit exploitative intentions. The discussion of the administration seeks to redefine the significance of Baron Rothschild in Zionism, as well as to bring forward the complexities of the Jewish colonial endeavor in Palestine and its lasting implications for Zionism.

The nuanced agenda of the argument is divided into three parts. The first third sets off colonialism as exploitation against a definition of colonization as the peopling of an area. The discussion situates Jewish colonization in Palestine as focused on the movement of people, not on extracting resources. Some of the comparisons provide interesting information—for instance, on Jewish colonies in Argentina—but the discussion is not a robust source on the complex issues of terminology and intentions. For instance, an examination of the term “colony” would have been helpful. The middle section of the book is a translation of the author’s 1990 *Baron Rothschild and the Colonies: The Beginnings of Jewish Colonization in Eretz Israel* (in Hebrew). The segment provides rich details on the Jewish colonies of 1880–90 Palestine, moving through the individual settlements, the towns’ spatial layouts and materiality, the individual staff members of the Rothschild administration, and the decisions regarding production in the colonies. Aaronsohn opted to leave out the ideological underpinnings of the endeavor, focusing on the 1880s as a decade of slow growth for Jewish colonies in Palestine. The concluding section is a narrative history of the Rothschild enterprise. The evaluation of Rothschild’s role is very positive: the baron is presented as the guiding hand in creating a new Jewish national culture in Palestine. Throughout the volume, Rothschild is centered as the means for maintaining the Jewish colonies in Palestine but is curiously removed as the impetus for the Zionist endeavor.

Aaronsohn asserts the significance of this argument for the historiography of Zionism. The exploration of the historical contingencies of the organization of social and economic life is a contribution to the emergence of the Jewish state institutions in Palestine. The book is useful because it takes seriously the roots of Zionism and the complexities of the original colonies that today are recognized within the territory of the State of Israel. As is hinted throughout the book, the decisions in the colonies had repercussions. Little, it seems, was done without major discussions and considerations. The difficulty with the argument revolves around Aaronsohn’s ultimately unsuccessful attempt to normalize the late-19th-century endeavor.

The contributions of the volume include detailed historical information on the administration’s staff, informative maps of the colonies in Palestine, and a useful discussion of Rothschild’s historical significance for Israel. The key issues in the analysis are labor within the organization and administration of the colonies and the transformation of the landscape in regard to production (particularly of viticulture). The main point conveyed in the book is that Rothschild’s administration was quite successful. Although his approach favored the staff over the colonists, and the colonization had no coherent plan, the baron’s financial support and administrative structure were crucial to the success of the colonies.

The focus on the first decade of colonization allows a near-microscopic examination of the process. By the end of the eight-year period studied, 2,000 people were settled in twelve colonies. The settlers made up just 6 percent of the Jewish population of Palestine (most Jews lived in the cities of Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias, and Hebron) and were nearly invisible among the indigenous population of Palestine. Yet these few people became the ideological and spatial basis for the expansion of Zionism, leading to the creation of the State of Israel. Aaronsohn gives the reader an encyclopedic inventory of the administration and production of these colonies, providing details on each category of administrator and discussion of the types of decisions made. For example, the colonies were set up with street-village designs. Aaronsohn looks favorably on this “orderly” approach to settlement, arguing that it is a positive result of Rothschild’s firm administration of the colonies. Similarly, economic and social life is presented via

details on administration, including the training and the length of stays in Palestine for individual employees of the baron. The plentiful detail on the staff makes the lack of discussion of the colonists and of Rothschild surprising. More discussion of the colonists' revolts, for example, would have been welcome.

Aaronsohn's arguments are part of the ongoing re-evaluations of the origins of the State of Israel, although little context is provided for their significance in the larger debates on Israel in the Middle East. It seems that the contrast between colonialism and colonization is implicitly aimed at the revisionist histories that position Zionism with other European colonial endeavors. Aaronsohn's internalist history of the colonies does make comparisons with other colonialisms, but the examples consist of Jews in Argentina, the German Templars in Palestine, Italians in Libya, and the French in Tunisia and Algeria. None of these groups became a nation-state. When the baron is presented as an absentee landlord, a comparison to Belgium's King Leopold II in the Congo is invoked. Later in book, Aaronsohn rejects that analogy. Another comparison is with the indigenous leadership in Palestine: the baron is likened to the urban-based Arab effendis who improved landholdings through their agents. The baron as local landowner is an interesting notion, although the difference in wealth should have been acknowledged to recognize more fully how the Jewish colonies fit into the political economy of Ottoman Palestine. The near-invisibility of Palestinians throughout the discussion is a major failure of the analysis. That move creates a tension recognizable from the Introduction that states that Palestine occasionally will be used as a neutral term for the place, when throughout the volume the place is most often referred to as *Eretz Israel*. Aaronsohn thus interjects an ideological position into the presentation without acknowledging the contours or implications of that move. He concludes the exploration of the administration of the Jewish colonies by noting that Rothschild was significant to the success of Zionism but not essential to the endeavor. After Rothschild withdrew from direct involvement in 1900, colonization continued.

Overall, the three sections of the book fit together logically but do not form a smooth narrative. The middle section makes a significant contribution through its details on the administration of the colonies, but more integration of the components might have sustained the presentation of the plentiful historical details. This book should appeal to those interested in the materiality of the Jewish colonies, for its exploration of Rothschild's organization in Palestine, and for its consideration of production in the creation and maintenance of the colonies. The interpretation of Rishon L'Zion, Rosh Pinna, Zichron Ya'acov, and the other Jewish colonies would benefit from clearly situating the Jewish settlements in the social context of Ottoman Palestine. Within such confines, situating Rothschild as a "national institution" on par with the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization should lead to some discussion of the sources for the political structure that became the Israeli state. The argument fits with larger discussions regarding the trajectory of Zionism, but the lack of external context for the colonies—social, ideological, and political—will trouble many readers. Even with those limitations, the book merits a place on library shelves as a resource on the Rothschild administration of the 1880s Jewish colonies in Palestine.

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AS'AD ABUKHALIL, *Historical Dictionary of Lebanon*, Asian Historical Dictionaries, No. 30 (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 1998). Pp. 290. \$65.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY SAMI A. OFEISH, Department of Political Science, University of Balamand, Tripoli

Writing a historical dictionary of a country is a difficult task. The author encounters fundamental questions in defining the scope of the academic enterprise and faces hard choices in setting

its boundaries and goals. Subsequently, the author has to make careful decisions about entries that should be included and others that should be discarded. For example, what makes a certain event more or less important, and on what basis should this judgment be made? Similarly, who should be recognized? Should the author consider a person's fame, contributions, or a mixture of both factors?

As'ad Abukhalil has written a thorough and comprehensive dictionary of modern Lebanon, mainly covering the noted events, groups, and personalities of the 19th and 20th centuries. The book includes an appropriate brief Introduction, a lengthy section of entries (pp. 15–230), short appendixes that list the Ottoman mutasarrifs of the 1861–1915 period and the presidents and prime ministers of the 1920–98 period, and an extensive bibliography (pp. 235–68).

Far from the simplistic and often stereotypical descriptions that have been written about Lebanon's history, politics, and culture, the author presents a solid and serious work. Most of his entries include a healthy combination of description and analytical treatment, thus providing the reader with a very good understanding of the subject at hand. Although many of the dictionary entries stand separately as adequate to comprehending specific subject matter, reading the entire volume or large segments of it gives a greater appreciation of Lebanon's complexities.

Jon Woronoff, the series editor, suggests that the book's purpose is twofold: "[t]o provide essential information in order to grasp the realities of an exceedingly complex country and, in passing, to dispel some myths and illusions" (p. ix). Abukhalil has met the first goal. He has also addressed some myths and fallacies and tried effectively to demolish them. One such myth is the primacy of non-Lebanese forces in initiating and promoting the 1975 civil war. The author shows the interplay between the internal and external factors in this civil war, as well as in other relevant political events. Although he does not address in detail significant socio-economic and political factors that contributed to the war's outbreak (such as extensive rural-to-urban migration, unemployment, inflation, and growing student and labor unrest), he amply focuses on the war's internal dynamics. That said, he does not ignore external influences on events in Lebanon. The roles of such powers as France, Israel, the Palestinians, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the United States are frequently discussed and assigned sizable entries. Noticeably missing in a separate entry, however, is Iran, an influential external force in Lebanese affairs particularly since the early 1980s.

That said, the criteria used to select the entries are not always clear. For example, the coverage of some areas is particularly strong: participants in the 19th-century Arab Renaissance (al-Nahda) and many of its publications; feminist activists and writers; presidents, prime ministers, and many prominent politicians, especially in the post-independence period; journalists; and major newspapers; and socialist, Nasserist, and rightist organizations, including many of their leaders, especially in the past forty years.

But some major concepts, events, groups, and personalities receive insufficient treatment. Some have only brief entries; some are mentioned in passing; and some are not discussed at all. The following concepts, events, and groups suffer from these shortcomings: sectarianism, the sectarian system, the 1943 National Pact, *'iqta'* (feudalism), clientalism, personal-status laws, civil marriage, the student movement (especially in 1960s and 1970s), the labor movement, non-governmental organizations, and the Tripartite Alliance of 1968 (which was the catalyst for the right-wing mobilization before the 1975 civil war). The Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) should have also been treated more thoroughly. Its historical contribution to enhancing the secularist trend, and its well-known leaders—such as George 'Abd al-Masih, 'Abdallah Sa'adeh, In'am Ra'id, and As'ad al-Ashqar—deserve greater treatment. The author also completely ignores the party's contribution to the national resistance against Israeli occupation, particularly in the 1980s.

The dictionary is also weak in covering artistic production in Lebanon. There are no entries on cinema and its contributors or on theater, and only two performers are mentioned: Nidal al-

Ashqar and Marun Naqqash. Nor are there entries on sculptors or painters (only the brothers Basbus and Mustafa Farrukh are mentioned). The significant role of the mushrooming non-print media after 1975 is also left unaddressed. Only one radio station, Voice of Lebanon, is allocated an entry.

Some major personalities are also missing or receive insufficient attention. They include politicians and leaders such as former Foreign Minister Charles Malek, President Emile Lahhoud, and Hizballah General Secretary (al-Sayyid) Hassan Nassrallah; journalists such as Michelle Abu Jawdah; writers such as Sa'id Taqiy al-Din, Ilyas Khoury, Halim Barakat, Hanan al-Shaykh, 'Isam Mahfuz, and Amin Ma'luf; artists such as Etel 'Adnan, Mu'azaz Rawdah, Seta Manukian, and Paul Giragosian; theater performers and playwrights such as Rafiq 'Ali Ahmad, Roger 'Assaf, and Ziad al-Rahbani; and Palestinian leaders such as George Habash and Abu Hassan Salameh, whose long and direct involvement in Lebanon's politics warrants such attention.

As for general concepts, two in particular should be defined in their broader context. Abukhalil accurately suggests that *bakhshish* is "bribery used by citizens to expedite governmental transactions" or "to obtain access to a high government official" (p. 39). But it is also widely used to mean a tip given to a handler or server. Similarly, he defines *wāsiṭa* as the value of access and connection provided by a *za'im* to his constituency to attain a job or to facilitate a transaction with the government (p. 224). But *wāsiṭa* is becoming less an exclusive domain of *zu'amā'* and, incidentally, a few of the emerging *zu'amā'* are now women. In addition, *wāsiṭa* may mean a connection provided by one or more people to others to facilitate access to benefits or services in the public and private sectors.

Several other issues are also worth raising. For example, in his presentation of Rafiq al-Hariri, Abukhalil states that, "[u]nlike previous prime ministers, he has never tried to enrich himself in office" (p. 91). It has not been clearly established that all previous prime ministers did so. The author specifically praises Salim al-Huss, for example, for his clean record as prime minister (p. 98). In contrast, however, al-Hariri has frequently been accused of multiplying his financial gains while in office, and several books have been published on the subject. The author also identifies many of the personalities he introduces via their religious affiliations. This helps reinforce the perception that Lebanon's personalities behave on the basis of their sectarian affiliations, a notion that can be seriously contested.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, which can be addressed in an updated edition, the book stands as an important, refreshing, and complex presentation of Lebanon. As a historical dictionary that covers Lebanon in the 19th and 20th centuries, it has no match in recently published literature. It is a major contribution in the field and will be a great aid for general readers and researchers on Lebanon.

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TURKKAYA ATAÖV, *Kashmir and Neighbours: Tale, Terror, Truce* (Aldershot, Hants, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing, 2001). Pp. 258. \$47.96 cloth.

REVIEWED BY RAJU G. C. THOMAS, Department of Political Science, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*Kashmir and Neighbours* is a remarkable book for its detailed and in-depth knowledge of various facets of the Kashmir problem in both its narrower Kashmiri and larger, Subcontinental context. The sweeping analysis covers history, religion, ethnography, society, and politics. Of the fourteen chapters, two deal with the northeastern insurgency problem in India and that of Sikhs, Bengalis, and Tamils. The author demonstrates a high degree of sensitivity and understanding of all the nuances of the peoples of the Subcontinent. Innumerable books have been published on Kashmir in the past fifty years, with a surge in output since the revolt in Kashmir

from 1989 onward. Yet this book is original. The author's familiarity with the peoples of the Subcontinent and his knowledge of Hinduism and Islam and of the related Hindi and Urdu languages, which he uses often (with translations), appears to be that of a *desi* (native) rather than a *farangi* (foreigner).

Underlying the writing is a compassion for the suffering and tragedy that has befallen the peoples who emerged in two different states out of British India and a wish for reconciliation and peace among them. Ataov argues for a tolerant and secular India and Pakistan, claiming that, despite the personal rivalry and political differences between Jawaharlal Nehru and Mohammed Ali Jinnah, this was the common vision of both (pp. 78–85). States based on religion as prescribed and propounded by the Hindu Mahasabha and its successors, the Jan Sangh and Vishwa Hindu Parishad; by the Jaamat-i-Islami of Pakistan; and by post-Liaquat Ali Khan Pakistani leaders were aberrations of Nehru and Jinnah's concepts of the state. In the Indian case, the concept of Hindutva was alien to Hinduism itself.

Nehru's concept of India's secular democracy is well known, but Jinnah's is not. In Chapter 6, "Nation Building," Ataov quotes Jinnah's address to the Indian Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1947, three days before independence and the creation of Pakistan: "You are free to go to your temples . . . to your mosques or any other places of worship in the State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the state. . . . We are all citizens and equal citizens of one State. . . . In course of time, Hindus would cease to be Hindus, and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the perceived faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State" (p. 79).

Chapters 3 and 4—"The Kashmiris" and "Historical Backdrop," respectively—examine the origins of Hinduism and Islam in Kashmir and of the Kashmir kingdom and Kashmiris, and the development of the united and integrated concept of the "Kashmiriyat." According to Ataov, "Islam influenced Hinduism in Kashmir and vice versa to a greater extent than generally accepted. Not only the lower castes embraced it through the Sufi missionaries, even the Brahmins, who held to Hinduism, were influenced by it, and adjusted themselves in terms of certain beliefs and practices. . . . While even the Muslim rulers wed Hindu women and were influenced by their religion, the new converts continued to observe the old rituals from which they could not break easily" (p. 35). Many Hindu Pandits who converted to Islam continued to use their brahmin last names—for example, Muhammed Ali Pandit, Ifthikhar Raina, and Rafiq Rishi.

Although there is a great deal of understanding and sympathy for the Muslims' plight and cause in Kashmir and for the oppression that the Sikhs, Moghuls, and Dogra Hindu rulers inflicted over the centuries, Ataov's political stance on the Kashmir issue tends toward the Indian position—that is, it appears to be based on his personal support for the concept of the secular state. This is not surprising, as his ethnic background is Turkish, and he has published books in that language that have been translated into several languages. Turkey is a secular Muslim state fashioned on the Western model, which, he believes, was Jinnah's model of the new Pakistani state. Among the collection of black-and-white photographs in the middle of the book—which includes pictures of Ataov with prime ministers Indira and Rajiv Gandhi and autographed photographs dedicated to him by prime ministers Benazir Bhutto and Atal Bihari Vajpayee—there is one with Mustafa Kamaal Pasha, a member of the Kashmiri cabinet who was named by his secular-minded father after modern Turkey's founder.

Ataov supports the Indian version of events—namely, that Pakistani forces invaded to seize Kashmir when the maharajah of Kashmir wavered on the Muslim-majority state's accession to Pakistan and on the nature of the U.N. resolution calling for a plebiscite. He claims that the Indian version of the raid of Kashmir by Pakistani tribals and regular soldiers "wearing plain clothes" was "substantiated by General Akbar Khan in his book, . . . that this infiltration was planned and actively carried out by the Government of Pakistan . . . that the latter let loose the

tribal people on Kashmir holding out to these newly acquired poor citizens the alluring promise of land and plenty there, and also to kill the Pathanistan movement, thereby securing its own safety in an expanded Muslim society. Major General Akbar Khan was the officer charged with the responsibility of organizing the raids" (p. 56). He further notes that the U.N. resolution had three parts, which required Pakistan first to withdraw all of its forces; followed by the withdrawal of the bulk of Indian forces, with enough remaining to maintain law and order; and then a plebiscite to determine the will of the people (p. 59). However, in a later chapter he points out that, strategically and geographically, Kashmir was more closely linked to Pakistan than India.

Much of the rest of the book focuses on the contemporary armed struggle in Kashmir and the nature of the Indo-Pakistani relationship, including the situation following the nuclear tests by both sides. Again, these sections amount to a comprehensive study filled with facts and analysis. There is extensive coverage of the various insurgent and terrorist groups operating in Kashmir and, to a lesser extent, in northeastern India. Thus, the book as a whole is about not only Kashmir but an outpouring of events, interpretations, and reflections on the Indian Subcontinent reminiscent of Nehru's *Discovery of India*. Written in an exciting style and readable English, the book provides a comprehensive and profound study of the politics and passions of the Indian Subcontinent. Two Turkish professors from Bilkent and Ankara universities provided cover blurbs for the book, describing it as "top-rate scholarship . . . meticulously researched and reasonably argued scholarly work" and an "academic, literary, indeed artistic description full of information, insight and explanatory observations." I concur.

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SHIRIN EBADI, *History and Documentation of Human Rights in Iran*, trans. Nazila Fathi (New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 2000).

REVIEWED BY HALEH VAZIRI, InterMedia Survey Institute, Washington, D.C.

Shirin Ebadi has earned her fame in Iran and internationally the hard way—by fighting tenaciously for what she believes in and paying the price for combating injustice. The price? Harassment by the Islamic Republic's ruling clerics, culminating in charges that she collaborated in preparing videotape cassettes to reveal the involvement of conservative officials in terrorism. This charge, and the guilty verdict against her in July 2000, resulted in a jail sentence and a five-year suspension of her professional rights and privileges as an attorney.

However, silencing Ebadi, the first female judge before the Islamic Revolution of 1978–79, will be tough, because she articulates her battle for human rights in the terse study *History and Documentation of Human Rights in Iran*, translated into English in 2000, a year after its publication in Persian. Ebadi evaluates the Iranian legal system before and after the revolution in the context of the universalist human-rights discourse as captured in international law.

Readers should construe Ebadi's work as exploratory, for she seeks to encourage intellectuals in various disciplines, but especially law, to engage in a civil but passionate debate about how to vindicate human rights in Iran. In particular, she rejects cultural relativism, underscoring how the Islamic Republic's constitution and legislation explicitly violate Iranians' human rights to life; to free association, expression, and movement; to equal treatment irrespective of gender, ethnicity, and religion; and to choice and privacy in family matters.

Ebadi's study highlights two contrasts: (1) between laws passed during the ancien régime and since the Islamic Republic's establishment; and (2) between the Islamic Republic's legal system and international law. What she does not do is explain how activists and experts can challenge the present Iranian legal system on the grounds of human-rights violations. Thus, Ebadi's treatise informs readers, especially those who are less familiar with the Islamic Repub-

lic's shari'a-based laws, but it may seem incomplete or tentative to specialists seeking to conceptualize human rights in theory and practice.

Ebadi divides her work into two parts. In the twelve chapters of Part 1, she examines the major principles of universal human rights expressed in international legal documents—from the prohibition of genocide and bans on gender and racial discrimination to the right to seek asylum. As if to teach readers who do not know their rights and remind others of the contexts that shaped relevant international laws, Ebadi meticulously describes what each right entails and how it is legally stipulated. Part 1 reads like a primer on the codification of human rights into international law, with few references to Iran. These first twelve chapters are the foundation of her analysis of how international and domestic laws are related.

In the thirteen chapters of Part 2, Ebadi discusses how the “provisions of international human rights instruments are reflected in Iran's domestic laws” and reviews the latter's “compatibility . . . with international regulations” (p. 59). Her assessments of the Islamic Republic's commitments to the right to life and the rights of husbands and wives are particularly powerful.

Part 2 begins with Ebadi's consideration of the right to life “as the most basic and primary right, because all other rights are derived from this right” (p. 61). Iran, as a member of the 1990 Charter of the Islamic Conference of Human Rights, affirmed its commitment to this most fundamental right, because life is conceived as a gift from God that may not be denied without legal due process. The Islamic Declaration of Human Rights is essentially consistent with more secular international legal instruments in asserting the right to life.

However, as Ebadi demonstrates, the definition of premeditated murder in Iran's Islamic Punishment Act contains exceptions that nullify the rights of certain categories of people. Premeditated murder should result in “*qiṣāṣ*” punishment, except when (1) the perpetrator is a Muslim and the victim is a *kāfir* (lit., unbeliever) or non-Muslim; (2) a father or paternal grandfather kills his child; (3) a sane person slays an insane one; or (4) a man murders his wife. These exceptions to capital punishment are rooted in the Islamic Republic's understanding of the need for social order and a man's ownership of his offspring and spouse—both of which override the rights of non-Muslims, children, the mentally ill, and married women to their lives.

Ebadi's deliberation on the rights of husbands and wives is similarly cogent and convincing. As with the right to life, Iran declared its commitment to the equal dignity of woman and man by participating in the Islamic Declaration of Human Rights. This declaration differs from secular international laws, because Muslim societies chose to emphasize duties as well as rights within marriage and the family. Yet Iran's civil code does not meet even the standards established by the Islamic Declaration. Domestic laws privilege the husband or father in instances such as child custody, the parents' role in their child's marriage, the child's nationality, inheritance, and the right to divorce. In sum, women's spousal rights are practically nonexistent in Iran's civil code.

Ebadi so thoroughly compares international and domestic laws that readers might find puzzling her lack of concrete suggestions about how activists may challenge Iran's legal system, whether from within or without, on the grounds of the human-rights violations she underscores. Ostensibly, when publishing this book in Persian, she may have restrained herself from making recommendations, trying to remain within the academic realm to avoid irritating the ruling clerics by seeming to encourage resistance to domestic laws. If this was the case, Ebadi's self-restraint is understandable and tactically smart; otherwise, the Islamic Republic might have prohibited the book's publication. Nevertheless, the absence of advocacy leaves specialists reading Ebadi's treatise with the sense that it is incomplete or tentative.

Considering the predicaments and persistence of human-rights activists in Iran, personified by Ebadi, the tasks of strategizing and challenging the Islamic Republic's laws may be best left for now to authors removed from the risk of punishment by the ruling clergy. Ebadi's study is informative, especially for general readers who aspire to learn about the legal system and status

of human rights in post-revolutionary Iran. More significantly, Ebadi's work eloquently, if not implicitly, challenges Iranian officials to respect universalist human-rights principles by adopting and enforcing domestic laws that do not contradict international legal instruments. Hoping to inspire scholars from various disciplines, inside and outside Iran, to debate the meaning and practical implications of human rights, Ebadi's concise theorizing is an essential first step toward praxis in the Islamic Republic's restricted and repressive political environment.

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YOAV GELBER, *Palestine 1948: War, Escape, and the Emergence of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* (Portland, Ore.: Sussex Academic Press, 2001). Pp. 410. \$79.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY CHARLES D. SMITH, Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson

*Palestine 1948* is an interesting yet odd work of scholarship, of some value to specialists who are already familiar with the literature and controversies on the subject, and almost useless for anyone seeking an introduction to the topic or guidance for further study.

In his Foreword, Walter Lacqueur calls the book "as balanced and truthful an account as we are likely to get," in part because Arab archives are not open and Arab historians "have not been particularly eager to explore the war as conducted by their side with any kind of determination" (p. vi). Gelber agrees, arguing that Arab scholars have concerned themselves only with the issue of justice and "have scarcely endeavoured to find out what really happened, when, how, and why" (p. 2). This will come as news to many, but it enables Gelber, a historian at the University of Haifa, to limit himself almost entirely to Israeli archival sources, supplemented by research in British Foreign, and Colonial Office papers, with very occasional references to secondary sources in English. There is no bibliography. No work by an Arab scholar in Arabic is cited, because, as noted, Arab scholars have not been interested in the subject in a serious historical manner. Anyone who peruses the bibliography of Eugene Rogan and Avi Shalim's edited volume *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (Cambridge, 2001) will see how false Gelber's assertion is.

Gelber argues the nationalist version of Israeli history of 1948 against the revisionists. The latter have been concerned only with presenting the Palestinians as "innocent victims of others' conspiracies and atrocities," with the Israelis appearing as "having no other worry in the most difficult time in their history than cynically plotting their enemies expulsion from their own homeland" (p. 3). Having taken care of the revisionists, Gelber proceeds to provide the "facts" in seventeen chapters covering the period November 1947 to June 1949. An Epilogue surveys the aftermath to the present. Here Gelber focuses on the reappearance of the Palestinians as a people after 1967; the term "Palestinian" had been forgotten for eighteen years, he says (p. 298). He concludes that there is no solution to the Palestinian-Israeli problem because no Israeli compromise, however great, would be acceptable to a people who "strive for neither co-existence nor compromise but *justice*" (p. 302). This sense of justice is absolute and, by inference, insists on Israel's destruction. End of story.

But this presentation of Gelber's "worldview" does not prepare one for his close, albeit idiosyncratic, analysis of events. This is not a standard Zionist version of the Arab League encouraging Palestinians to flee in 1948. Gelber rejects that account. Nor does Gelber dismiss the notion that Israelis massacred 250 Palestinians at Lydda in the summer of 1948. Instead, tracking diaries by many Israelis, as well as material from various Israeli archives, he presents his own version of the give and take of the war. Despite his lack of concern for non-Israeli sources, this close analysis of events and the context in which Israelis found themselves, based



primarily on Israeli accounts, should be of use to scholars who can evaluate it against other materials.

Still, the reader must beware. Gelber's approach to history does not usually allow for discussion of the revisionist views he rejects. He simply does not mention them, having already discounted them in his Introduction. Thus, when discussing King Abdullah's decision-making in the spring and summer of 1948, Gelber never mentions Golda Meyerson's (Meir's) visit to Abdullah and what was discussed. He simply relegates the matter to a footnote (p. 331, n. 72), where he directs the reader to another of his books for details, without any reference to Avi Shlaim's *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine* (1988). Shlaim had already been sent to oblivion in a footnote on page 3.

As for Dayr Yasin (p. 98 ff), Gelber never identifies the units that attacked the village and questions whether it contributed significantly to the panic that followed. Although he openly rejects revisionist accounts in his introduction, he occasionally cites Avi Shlaim (articles), Benny Morris, and Ilan Pappé in his notes and only once in the text challenges Morris's history of the Palestinian refugees, when discussing the expulsion from Lydda (p. 162).

In sum, *Palestine 1948* is a book to be examined by scholars of the period with interest but to be used, if at all, by those who are unfamiliar with the subject with extreme caution. It could have been published in Hebrew, as it is aimed directly at the nationalist–revisionist debate. The fact that it was published in English, with the prefatory and concluding remarks about Arab scholars and Palestinian intransigence, suggests hope of using it for publicity purposes with respect to the current Israeli–Palestinian confrontation.

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JAMES JANKOWSKI, *Nasser's Egypt, Arab Nationalism, and the United Arab Republic* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002). Pp. 242. \$49.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY DONALD MALCOLM REID, Department of History, Georgia State University, Atlanta

*Nasser's Egypt* has made a timely appearance just as political and scholarly circles in Cairo are reassessing the subject in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of the coup that brought the Free Officers to power on 23 July 1952. This tightly focused monograph examines the formation and execution of Egyptian state policy toward the Arab world from that revolution through 28 September 1961, when Syria seceded from the United Arab Republic (UAR).

This book is in a sense a sequel to Jankowski's valuable *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs: The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1900–1930* (New York, 1986) and *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, 1995), co-written with Israel Gershoni. These earlier books, however, devoted only about a third of their space to the practical application of ideologies, with the remainder drawing on periodicals to analyze the tendencies they label pharaonism, Easternism, Islamic nationalism, integral nationalism, and Arab nationalism. *Nasser's Egypt*, in contrast, concentrates on state implementation of the ideology of Arab nationalism.

The first chapter of *Nasser's Egypt* sketches the old regime's background and surveys the coup and the ensuing two years, during which Nasser established personal control over the regime. Another chapter traces the evolution of his personal views on nationalism. Then the narrative traces the involvement of the Egyptian state in Arab nationalism in chronologically ordered chapters about the 1952–54, 1955–57, and 1957–58 periods. Two chapters treat the United Arab Republic (1958–61): one treats Egyptian–Syrian relations inside the union, and the other treats the UAR's relations with other Arab states. A chapter on Syria's secession and a Conclusion wrap up the story.

Along with appropriate themes from secondary sources, the records of the U.S. State Depart-

ment (occasionally supplemented with British Foreign Office materials) structure the narrative. Nasser's speeches and the memoirs of Egyptian and other Arab political insiders give views from the other side. Jankowski notes that American and British diplomatic dispatches were recorded shortly after the events described but have the disadvantage of reflecting outsiders' views of Egyptian decision-making. Memoirs by Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal (Heikal), 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, Anwar al-Sadat, and Mahmud Riyad, in contrast, were written by insiders but long after the fact and with the self-justification inherent in the genre.

It is worth emphasizing explicitly the handicap under which Jankowski and all historians of contemporary Egypt and other Arab countries labor. Documents from Soviet archives would enrich our understanding of Cold War-related events. But the critical absence is the lack of day-to-day memos and diaries of Nasser, his circle, and other Arab leaders, even though these events are now forty to fifty years in the past. Can one imagine writing today a history of American foreign policy under Eisenhower and Kennedy without access to U.S. government archives?

This is not mainly a revisionist work; instead, it substantiates, elaborates, and fine-tunes a familiar story. It emphasizes that, despite some Egyptian involvement in Arab affairs before 1952, Nasser came to power with a basic commitment to Egyptian territorial patriotism. He moved toward Arab nationalism more for pragmatic than for ideological reasons, courting Arab support for British evacuation of the Canal Zone and for winning what he took to be Egypt's rightful respect in regional affairs. Jankowski reaffirms the view that Nasser was wary of becoming entangled in inter-Arab politics, most famously during the negotiations leading to the UAR. External events and his own emerging stature as the pre-eminent Arab leader, however, sometimes led Nasser to overrule his inclination toward caution. Jankowski concludes that Nasser's policies toward other Arab regimes were less activist and more defensive than hostile accounts would have it.

Jankowski reviews the spread of Syrian disenchantment with Egypt's domination of the UAR. By the time Syrian officers put an abrupt end to the experiment, Nasser had become so identified with Arabism that he felt compelled to continue promoting it, along with socialism, from his remaining base in Egypt. He blamed the secession on reactionaries acting against the interests of the Syrian people. Only the 1967 defeat would compel him to consider returning to the more Egypt-centered policies that his successors Sadat and Mubarak would elaborate.

Noting Nasser's fierce repression of the Muslim Brothers, Jankowski confirms the picture of a regime that only occasionally paid lip service to the Islamic component of Egyptian identity that emerged so powerfully after 1967. Egypt's Christians may have felt as marginalized under Nasser's secular Arab nationalist regime as under Sadat's partially Islamized one, but the question is not raised here. "Copts" does not appear in the index.

*Nasser's Egypt* was not intended to introduce general readers to Nasser, the Egypt of his era, or Arab nationalism. The tight focus on Arab nationalism in state policy, the limitation to the first half of Nasser's era, the skillful weighing of American diplomatic dispatches against Egyptian memoirs and public speeches, and the clear, concise style all come together to make this instead a fundamental resource for advanced students and scholars.

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MOHAMMAD GHOLI MAJD, *Great Britain and Reza Shah: The Plunder of Iran, 1921–1941* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001). Pp. 442. \$59.95.

REVIEWED BY STEPHANIE CRONIN, Iran Heritage Foundation Fellow in Iranian History, University College, Northampton, U.K.

Iranians have often been criticized for overestimating the role played by external forces in the domestic history of their country; they also have been accused of attributing "occult powers"

especially to the British and of cultivating a paranoid style in political discourse. Yet as studies of early-20th-century Iran have repeatedly shown, such myths, far from being purely irrational fantasies, had their origins in actual historical realities. In the first quarter of the 20th century, British and British Indian military officers and civilian officials were widely and intimately involved in Iran's political and economic life, both in Tehran and in the provinces, providing levels of political, financial, and military support to their clients, which profoundly affected the political landscape and rearranged local, national, and regional balances of power.

Acknowledging the strength and extent of British influence and power, however, does not free the observer from the obligation to chart precisely and accurately its actual historical character and evolution over time. Even at its zenith, the British role in Iran was determined crucially both by the Iranian context within which it was played out and by wider geopolitical realities. In the capital, British influence had traditionally been counterbalanced by that of imperial Russia, and it was precisely the collapse of its ally and quondam rival in 1917 that presented Lord Curzon with an unprecedented opportunity to assert an untrammelled British pre-eminence. In southern Iran, the British had been supreme for decades. There, British patronage, and a liberal distribution of cash and rifles in roughly equal measure, had permanently altered local political realities, creating and sustaining the essentially artificial ascendancy of the Qavamis of Shiraz, the great khans of the Bakhtiyari, and of Shaykh Khaz'al of Muhammarah, creating a southern ruling elite freed from any dependence on domestic political support.

For Mohammad Gholi Majd, however, it is the arrival in Iran in 1918 of the British Dunster Expeditionary Force, with its Caucasian objectives, that was the watershed: From then until 1942, "Iran was completely controlled by Britain." In this account, the British seized absolute control of Iran in 1918 and maintained it until power was wrested from them by the Americans after 1941. The 1921 coup itself was merely a symptom and mechanism of British control. Majd's perspective appears to derive from his deep antipathy to the Pahlavi dynasty and his strong pro-Qajar sentiments. His desire to present the Qajars in a flattering light is unusual, and his efforts to contrast the Qajar record with that of Reza Khan prevent him from making any mention of the not very glorious role of later Qajar monarchs in resisting foreign domination. Very few would recognize Majd's description of Ahmad Shah as "a true constitutional monarch, and a patriot who, unlike Reza Khan, was not willing to betray his country to the British in order to maintain his throne."

Majd pays scant attention to the complexities of British policy-making. For him the 1921 coup was, in a simple and straightforward way, a British undertaking. In fact, his account of the coup of 1921, drawing heavily on U.S. records, adds very little to what is already generally known and accepted. He makes much of American assertions that the coup was inspired by the British. Yet very few scholars now doubt that certain British officers and officials—particularly General Ironside, commander of the North Persia Force; Colonel Smyth, who was in charge of the reorganization of the Cossacks at Qazvin; and Smart, the Oriental Secretary—were deeply involved in the preparations, both political and military, for the coup. Majd does not clarify the ambiguous role played by British Minister Herman Norman; nor does he produce any evidence to contest the conventional view that Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon was unaware of the plot. Indeed, the letters of General Dickson, chief of the British Military Mission in Iran, which Majd quotes at length, seem rather to confirm older interpretations.

Some British involvement in both the planning and execution of the coup is not in serious doubt. There are, however, other, perhaps more interesting, questions that remain unanswered. Majd places very little importance on the domestic Iranian context in giving shape to, and constraining, British objectives. For Majd, Reza Khan was simply a tool in British hands, as helpless and incapable of independent action as any marionette. Yet in the years 1919–21, the idea of national salvation through a coup was very much present among wide circles of the Iranian political classes. Although the British themselves believed that they had found and

selected Reza Khan, the pre-coup period was very much one in which Reza Khan was himself searching for a vehicle for his personal ambitions, and we may well ask, Who indeed was using whom? After February 1921, the British were quickly disabused of any notion of Reza Khan as, in Norman's words, "an honest and capable officer without political ambition". The focus of British hopes was Sayyid Ziya, but the British could not prevent his downfall, and they suddenly found themselves completely excluded from their habitual role in the making and unmaking of cabinets. Between May 1921 and the arrival of Sir Percy Loraine, the new British minister, in December, Britain's attitude toward Iran was unremittingly hostile. Curzon was demonstrably and quite genuinely furious both at the new government of Ahmad Qavam and at the British officials, principally Norman, whom he held responsible for the prevailing state of affairs, and Majd's suggestion that episodes such as the dismissal of British officers working with the Cossacks were a "charade by the British intended to bring Reza Khan into greater prominence and gain him political capital" is very wide of the mark.

Nevertheless, it is certainly true that Percy Loraine, minister in Tehran during the crucial years between 1921 and 1926, was an important figure both in winning the backing of the British establishment for Reza Khan and in assisting his rise to absolute power. For the next twenty years, the British supported Reza Khan—sometimes enthusiastically, sometimes grudgingly—but their own role nevertheless diminished inexorably and changed in character. Although Britain remained an imperial power, the British capacity to intervene directly in Iranian politics, whether in Tehran or among local southern elements, underwent a real decline. By 1925, the situation had already changed fundamentally. Yet in his chapter on "British Coups d'Etat," Majd deals with the change of dynasty as if it had been brought about in the same way as the 1921 coup. He claims that "the abolition of the Qajar dynasty, and the choice of Reza Khan as the new shah, was yet another British coup d'etat that was rapidly and skillfully executed", while the Constituent Assembly was "a shameless charade of constitutionalism that was being staged by the British". In Majd's account, British control is absolute in 1918 and remains unchanged until 1941. Everything in Reza Shah's Iran succeeded or failed according to the designs of the British. The republican movement failed because the British did not support it. Reza Shah was then able to remain in office "thanks to the support of the military, which in practice meant the British". He became shah because the British were in favor; the Millsaugh Mission was removed because of British opposition; and so on. The Iranian environment is unchanging and unimportant and rendered mute and powerless by the power of the British and their puppet, Reza Shah.

Although Majd discerns British machinations in every action of Reza Khan's regime, he does not find British connections in the very place that they most assuredly existed: the southern tribal confederations. The British had no truer clients in Iran than the Bakhtiari khans, Shaykh Khaz'al of Muhammarah, and the Qavamis of Shiraz. Yet Majd offers no discussion of the patronage these elements long enjoyed from British officials and from the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. All are presented as victims of Reza Shah, again without any discussion of the close links that people such as Sardar As'ad Bakhtiari, Ibrahim Khan Qavam al-Mulk, and Isma'il Khan Sawlat al-Dawlah Qashqa'i established with the new regime in the 1920s.

Majd has based his work largely on the records of the U.S. State Department. He evinces a healthy skepticism about the British records and about British explanations of their own actions, yet he takes a different and much less critical approach to the U.S. records, seeming to see them as containing some sort of truth rather than simply another partisan version. This is so despite his awareness of the fact that the Americans had their own objectives in Iran, which conditioned their view of what was happening and its general significance. This was the period in which the U.S. desire to dislodge the British from their control of Iranian oil, as well as a generalized American resentment and jealousy of the British imperial position, first appeared. Majd is aware that the United States "greatly resented British exclusion of American oil inter-

ests and the subsequent British domination of Iranian military aviation at the expense of American concerns" and that the U.S. government showed "profound unhappiness and outright hostility" to British policies in Iran, yet he maintains little critical distance toward American documents. Further, although the British documents "cannot be expected to provide an accurate and objective account of events", as he accurately comments, the project of writing a history of Britain in Iran without using them is hardly satisfactory.

There is much valuable and interesting information in this book, and Majd has clearly spent a lot of time and effort trawling the largely unmined U.S. archives. The book contains mountains of information on many subjects that have received little attention, including the shah's peculiar mania for land acquisition; the extreme brutality, including mass population transfers, of the tribal policies; and the reign of terror launched by the regime in the early 1930s. The work's main difficulty is its rather rigid analysis and its polemical inclinations. Although certain British personnel played key roles in ensuring the success of the 1921 coup, it does not automatically follow that Britain was in complete control of those they assisted in bringing to power—far less that they retained any such control until the regime's demise in 1941. Notwithstanding the British role, the coup marked a turning point in Anglo-Iranian relations. Never again were the British to exercise the degree and kind of power that they had possessed before 1921. Reza Khan was not a tool in a foreign grand design. Rather, he was the chief protagonist in a narrative of his own, collaborating with the British when it suited him, yet reducing their influence as far as he could. That Britain and the Soviet Union were obliged to resort to military invasion in 1941 is itself a measure of the degree to which their old ability to intervene politically, to manipulate and control, had been lost.

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KIRSTEN E. SCHULZE, *The Jews of Lebanon: Between Coexistence and Conflict* (Brighton, U.K.: Sussex Academic Press, 2001). Pp. 256. \$69.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ANTHONY GORMAN, independent scholar, Miranda, N.S.W., Australia

The position of Jews in Arab societies is an arena of enduring controversy in Middle East scholarship. In the hands of some writers, the persecution of the Jews by a Muslim majority serves as a central theme and an implicit justification for the Zionist position. Other, more measured studies have emphasized a dynamic of relatively peaceful coexistence, if not always harmony, that presents a more complex and, at the same time, more convincing picture of Jewish life in the Middle East. In *The Jews of Lebanon*, Kirsten Schulze takes up a position in the second camp in her presentation of a case study in which two large Christian and Muslim communities in a multi-confessional society provide the backdrop.

Schulze's main contention is that the Jews of Lebanon considered themselves, and were generally considered, Lebanese before anything else. A small community that probably never numbered much more than 10,000 people, Schulze describes the development from Ottoman to modern times of a community that was integrated, if not assimilated, into Lebanese society and whose Jewishness was principally a religious and not a political issue, at least until the second half of the 1970s, when the Lebanese state became seriously destabilized. One of Lebanon's twenty-three different minority groups, its presence was testimony to the delicate balance of a multi-ethnic society. Schulze challenges the general contention that after 1948 the position of Jews throughout the Arab world immediately became precarious by pointing out that the Jewish population in Lebanon actually increased during the 1950s. She ascribes the continued stability and prosperity of the Jewish community to a number of factors: above all, its commitment, shared by the Lebanese state, to a multi-ethnic society; its indifferent support for Zionism and general abstention from politics; and its understanding with the Zionist movement and the

Maronites, which had been operating since the 1920s. However, if the Jews were largely bystanders in the political conflict of 1958, the pressures that came with the arrival of the Palestinians, the civil war in 1975, and the Israeli invasion of 1982 drew their fortunes unavoidably to center stage. Ultimately, the Jews became a casualty of the same forces that tore apart the confessional balance in Lebanon.

Schulze draws on published literature in English, French, German, and Hebrew, and uses a range of archival sources from various state and private collections, the majority of which are Israeli and Jewish. Use of Arabic-language sources, wholly lacking except for some newspaper references, might at least have provided a more contextualized picture. The material from interviews conducted with former and surviving members of the Lebanese Jewish community provides valuable detail and important insights into the activities of the community and its relations within wider Lebanese society. However, the use of personal anecdotes, although sometimes illuminating, is somewhat overdone, and on occasion the reader is given more detail than seems necessary or germane to the argument. The listing of the Jewish hostages taken in 1980s (pp. 143–45) might have been more usefully set out in an appendix, and the long lists of names for various committees (pp. 102–103) do not substantially add to the narrative. Occasionally, an attempted sense of drama mars the style, and we are given limp prose such as, “On the eve of the Six-Day War the Sofer family knew there was going to be trouble” (p. 110).

While the author provides an interesting account of the historical development and political dynamics of Jewish life in Lebanon, the analysis also raises important questions. Schulze stresses that the Jewish community was not much attracted to Zionism or communism but was “essentially non-political” (p. 94), “apolitical” (p. 130), and “politically disinterested” (p. 58). At the same time, however, the Jewish community maintained a long association with the Kata’ib (Phalangists), enjoying the protection of its militia, from whom it received military training, and integrating its youth movements with that of the Kata’ib. Schulze also quotes figures suggesting that about a third of Jewish voters were Kata’ib members while puzzlingly saying in the same paragraph (p. 116) that few Jews joined the party. This association is not consistent with the assessment of being “apolitical.” Was this association a source of reproach from other political groups? I would have liked more discussion on this point. There is reference to the hostility of the Greek Orthodox community toward Jews for economic reasons (p. 54) but no mention of the strongly anti-Jewish policies of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party. If Jews shared a genuinely multi-communal vision of Lebanese society, as Schulze asserts, how did this sit with the program of the Kata’ib, which was bent on defending a Christian hegemony? Some discussion of the dynamics within the Jewish community would also have been illuminating. Schulze says that there were three Jewish “sub-communities” in Beirut: the Lebanese Jews, Ashkenazim, and Sephardim (p. 68). How did they express themselves in political and socio-economic terms?

On occasion the author’s view seems less than clear. At different places we are told that the emigration of Jews from Lebanon began with the first civil war of 1958 (p. 101), in the wake of the events of 1967 (p. 154), and with the outbreak of the civil war in 1975 (p. 4). Schulze’s description of the no doubt complex attitude of Lebanese Jews toward Israel is also somewhat confusing. Generally she argues that there was little support for Zionism because of the strong sense of Lebanese identity. Elsewhere, however, she states, “Lebanese Jews welcomed the creation of the State of Israel and had a deep commitment to the idea of the Jewish state” (p. 76). The persecution of Jews referred to in other Arab states (pp. 90, 151) might be qualified because, as Schulze recognizes elsewhere (p. 155), the position of Jews in Egypt and Iraq was not immediately threatened after 1948.

The work suffers from poor editing. On three occasions, and in almost exactly the same words (pp. 6, 76, 92), we are told the number of Jews in Lebanon in 1951 and the number who were Lebanese citizens. There are some inconsistencies in the dates given for chief rabbis

Babbout and Lichtman. Spelling, particularly of names, is particularly fraught in Lebanon, where English and French systems of transliteration vie with other forms, but there are some unnecessary variations, such as Yitzhak–Itzhak; Yosef–Joseph; and *shohet*–*shochet*. The references to newspapers in the notes would be more useful if they provided the title of the article rather than just the date of publication.

These problems notwithstanding, the study fills an important gap in the literature by discussing the special circumstances of Lebanese Jewry. It offers a significant contribution to the scholarship on Jewish communities in Arab society and useful insight into an aspect of the Lebanese confessional system. The study is recommended reading for those with an interest in these matters and, more generally, in the position of ethnic and religious minorities in the Middle East.

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MARTIN SICKER, *The Middle East in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2001). Pp. 299. \$69.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY GLENN E. PERRY, Department of Political Science, Indiana State University, Terre Haute

This handsomely bound, well-written volume (remarkably devoid even of typographical errors) on the period from 1914 to the end of the century continues a series of works by Martin Sicker that deal with the Middle East from early antiquity on. In fact, the volume deals almost exclusively with international politics—what the author calls the area’s “geopolitical history” (p. 1)—and is far from providing comprehensive coverage of that. Aside from the Conclusion and Introduction, the book consists of twenty short chapters (some of which are extremely sketchy considering the nature of the subjects being dealt with) in chronological order, starting with “Britain and the Arabs, 1914–20” (some other aspects of this period were covered in the preceding volume) and ending with “Conflict in the Persian Gulf Region, 1973–99.” The bulk of the book deals with the Arab–Zionist/Israeli conflict and matters pertaining to Egypt and Arab Asia, although there are chapters on Iran, on oil in the period leading up to 1947, and even on Transcaucasia in 1917–21.

The author begins by stressing the importance of “approach[ing] the subject simultaneously from two distinct but interrelated perspectives, the global and the regional, the latter being circumscribed by the former”. He goes on to say that, during “three relatively distinct phases”—the imperialist period (to 1945), the Cold War, and the more recent (and “therefore poorly comprehended”) phase—“intra-regional developments have been “shaped and constrained by extra-regional forces” (p. 1). Or, as he rewords the idea, regional history “has unfolded within the context of global politics” (p. 3). However, the author makes little attempt to relate the series of chronicles that follow this rather obvious, pedestrian thesis.

The sparse endnotes for each chapter point to a book based almost entirely on secondary sources, and often very limited ones at that. The occasional references to documentary materials hardly indicate significant findings. The ten-page selected bibliography seems to have been used rather unevenly, and although it includes many good items, other essential ones do not appear. For example, considering the emphasis given to the issue of Palestine, particularly in and around 1948, the omission of works by historians such as Benny Morris and Avi Shlaim, as well as broader studies by, say, Mark Tessler and Charles D. Smith, is striking. It also points toward the book’s slant, as does the treatment of Transjordan’s role without any sign of knowledge of studies by writers such as Shlaim, Yoav Gelber, and Joseph Nevo.

The coverage of the area’s international relations is incomplete and—on the topics that are most emphasized—one-sided. Although Sicker presents a standard account of some subjects,

too often his slant borders on the eccentric. As a case in point, he rails against British officials' attempts at times to be "fair" to the Arab Palestinians during the Mandate period in total disregard of the "preferential treatment" for the Jews that was "clearly intended" in the Balfour Declaration. He righteously invokes the well-known statement by Arthur Balfour that others cite as evidence of racist disregard for the rights of indigenous non-Western peoples: that Zionism was "of far greater import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs"—reminding us that Balfour thought "self-determination did not apply to the people of Palestine" (pp. 41–42). The author all but proclaims that fairness itself was unfair. Other than that one reference to "700,000 Arabs" and a few vague statements about Arab communities later on (p. 177), as well as a reference to "refugees" (p. 188), the uninformed reader would not find out much about the people who, before 1948, made up the bulk of the population of Palestine or about their grievances.

Another example of tendentiousness is the treatment of Israeli–Egyptian frontier incidents in the mid-1950s. The author demonstrates an almost autistic disregard of such sources as Moshe Sharrett's diaries on David Ben-Gurion's violent, aggressive approach and of scholarly opinion that the Egyptian regime was giving low priority to the conflict with Israel before the raid on Gaza in February 1955, presenting Gamal Abdel Nasser instead as "deliberately fanning the flames" (p. 195). The Lavon Affair, the Qibya raid, and so on fail entirely to make their way into Sicker's version of the story. The author does not hide the Israeli involvement in the Suez conspiracy of 1956, but he sanitizes it by carefully explaining that the British and French proposals "put Israel in an awkward position": an attack on the Suez Canal was not part of its plans, but it went ahead—obviously, with great reluctance—only because of great concern over Egypt's "air threat to its population centers" (p. 199). This was of course "a preemptive strike" (p. 200). "Apologists for Nasser" in 1967 are dogmatically dismissed as myth-makers (p. 221), but at least their opinions get mentioned. One could cite example after example of such skewed, argumentative passages.

The general reader or student for whom the author presumably intends this book would be lucky not to discover it. Considering both its uneven coverage and its blatant bias, there are many much better accounts of all the subjects it deals with, whether one is looking for introductory materials or something more thorough. I would not even recommend that libraries spend their money on it.

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WARWICK P. N. TYLER, *State Lands and Rural Development in Mandatory Palestine, 1920–1948* (Brighton, U.K.: Sussex Academic Press, 2001). Pp. 271. \$75.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY GEREY FORMAN, Department of Land of Israel Studies, University of Haifa

Mandatory Palestine experienced changes in land tenure and land administration that had tremendous social, economic, and political impact on the state and its transformation after 1948. Warwick Tyler's *State Lands and Rural Development in Mandatory Palestine* reflects a growing interest among historians in the Mandate period. It is the first book to focus on British policy on "state land," an issue that was hotly debated by Palestinian leaders and proponents of Jewish colonization at the time.

Based largely on three detailed case studies, Tyler's work focuses on the use of state land and how government policy and performance stood up to the 1922 Mandate Charter. As its title indicates, the book also addresses the issue of rural development. Although the author himself never explains his decision to examine these two (and only these two) components of British land policy in the same volume, his line of argument throughout the book provides a rationale. The Mandate government accepted "dual obligations" in its charter: facilitating the



"close settlement" of Jews on state and "waste" lands and, at the same time, safeguarding "the rights and positions of other sections of the population". Based on the League of Nations' Covenant, the government also undertook to foster Palestine's economic "development," which, according to Mandate officials, would necessarily be agriculturally based and rurally focused. Tyler presents these "obligations" as pivotal components of state policy toward rural Palestine and therefore addresses them together. He concludes that, because of the nature of Palestinian land-tenure relations, land's increasing politicization in Arab-Jewish relations, and state mismanagement, the British failed to fulfill these obligations.

We can applaud Tyler for undertaking a historical account of these closely linked and critical, yet under-researched, subjects. He relies largely on extensive research in British and Zionist archives and addresses the major issues that emerge from the archives themselves. By nature, however, these archives present only certain issues—those deemed important by the state and Zionist organizations at the time. Tyler does not integrate other issues that emerge from a broader, more thorough examination (such as those discussed later).

The book's bibliography includes a long list of English-language sources, but it does not include Arabic and Hebrew secondary literature and therefore does not benefit from a number of relevant studies of the past decade. Also missing are studies on the cultural and ideological underpinnings of property and land-use rights, specifically the Western assumptions underlying Mandatory land policy and the different ideas underlying the Ottoman land system. Literature addressing the impact of colonial rule on the economy, agriculture, and land-tenure relations of indigenous societies would also have been a helpful addition.

These bibliographic gaps are indicative of the book's overall weakness. Tyler uncritically adopts Britain's Mandatory obligations as his analytical yardstick, incorporating Western assumptions and a colonial perspective squarely into his own analysis. He focuses entirely on whether the British fulfilled these obligations—the reasons it did or did not and who was to blame—and not at all on the dynamic of imposing colonial rule and a colonial ideological system on Palestine. An analysis of this dynamic is central to a sound understanding of state land and rural development during the Mandate.

Expressions of this weakness appear throughout the work. For instance, Tyler overlooks the significance of the 1921 "Mawat Land Ordinance." This ordinance transformed the legal status of *Mawāt* (a class of waste land owned by the state) by prohibiting its reclamation and cultivation, which had formerly constituted a legally sanctioned means of access to auxiliary land for rural population growth. Along with numerous other steps, this legislative action brought Palestine's land regime more in line with Mandate priorities and Western conceptions of ownership. According to Tyler, however, the ordinance was simply an example of state action "to protect its estates against Arab encroachment" (p. 22). Although this assessment is true, it is only part of the picture.

The reader should also take into account Tyler's tendency uncritically to adopt elements of traditional Zionist and colonial analyses. For example, when quoting Ya'akov Shimoni's assessment that "the *Mushā'* system damages Arab agriculture since it necessarily maintains the backwardness", he fails to note that Shimoni was an official of the Jewish Agency's Political Department. He also omits discussion of the unique role played by this form of communal landholding in Palestinian society. Tyler espouses the view that "Palestine was in a sorry state when the British assumed control. This 'good and spacious land . . . flowing with milk and honey', 'the most beautiful of all lands', promised by God to the ancient Israelites, had suffered over the centuries from misrule, misuse, neglect and the depredations of man, beast and war" (p. 152). This cursory assessment, here replete with Judeo-Christian biblical imagery, permeates the work as a whole.

In short, *State Lands and Rural Development in Mandatory Palestine* does not deliver the thorough, balanced treatment that the issue deserves. Tyler's case studies will be of some value

to those interested in the land-related interactions of the Mandate government, the British government, proponents of Jewish colonization, and representatives of Palestine's indigenous population. The book's overall contribution to contemporary scholarship on the subject, however, remains limited.

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HEINZ KRAMER, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2000). Pp. 293. \$18.95.

REVIEWED BY M. HAKAN YAVUZ, University of Utah, Salt Lake City

The scholarly attitudes toward the socio-historical diversity of Turkey vary from benign neglect or indifference to confusion and tension. Quite common among state-centric scholars (e.g., Bernard Lewis, Stanford Shaw, and Feroz Ahmad) is insensitivity toward religious, ethnic, and regional differences, as well as a general lack of interest in the connection between domestic and foreign policy. These attitudes have recently been tempered by the work of new scholars such as Nilufer Gole, Jenny White, and Michael Meeker.

Heinz Kramer's brilliant analysis of contemporary Turkish politics is a welcome addition to this burgeoning scholarship that reads Turkey from the bottom up. His empirically sound, conceptually challenging book contains a number of policy suggestions. No book has examined the connections of Turkish domestic and international politics as clearly as this one.

Kramer offers a rich and nuanced socio-political analysis of Turkey. His well-written and comprehensive book comprises three sections. The first section examines the socio-political transformation and widening ethnic and religious fault lines. Turkey confronted questions of social justice and the emergence of Kurdish and Islamic identities that caused the erosion of the Kemalist model that had been in place for seventy-eight years. Kramer aptly argues that "the cleavages are the direct results of the original republican sociopolitical synthesis, or social contract, based on Kemalist secularism, Turkish nationalism, and moderate Sunni Islam" (p. 86). The Kemalist model—homogenization of the population to create a secular and Turkish nation-state—is inherently anti-democratic and not "the way out of Turkey's domestic dilemma" (p. 90). After setting the causes and implications of the Kemalist model, Kramer develops an argument for the construction of a new social contract to accommodate emerging Kurdish, Alevi, and Islamic actors in Turkish politics.

The book criticizes the policies of the Turkish state that criminalize identity-based demands and proposes an integrative approach to expand the legitimacy of the state by stressing liberal democracy, the rule of law, civil society, and recognition of diversity. For Kramer's approach to succeed, the Turkish state need not demonize Islam. It must realize that more, not less, freedom is the cure to authoritarian trends in the society.

The second section deals with Turkey's foreign and security policies after the Cold War. Kramer's main conclusion is that Turkey lacks a grand strategy to pursue a rational policy toward Central Asia, the Middle East, the Balkans, Greece and the Cyprus question, and Europe. For instance, in recent years, the confrontation between the Europhiles and nationalists has been sharpened. The Europhiles, who include industrialists, some intellectuals, and some politicians, see Turkey's main identity as European and believe that Turkey's interest are best served if Turkey achieves prosperity and democracy through the European Union. This group wants Turkey to make all necessary changes in accordance with the European Union's demands. The second group, which includes nationalist intellectuals, the Nationalist Movement Party of Devlet Bahçeli, the Democratic Left Party of Bulent Ecevit, and the military, stresses Turkey's national sovereignty, seeks closer relations with the Turkic republics of Central Asia, supports "special ties" with Israeli, and calls for closer ties with the United States to substitute for

Turkish–European relations. Although the Islamists have a different orientation, they are fragmented and have become more supportive of the Europhiles. So long as Turkey does not come to terms with its multiplicity in terms of recognizing its socio-cultural diversity, it will be a battleground between diverse domestic and international forces.

The third section analyzes American and European policies toward Turkey. During the Cold War, these policies were guided primarily by security concerns. After the Cold War, American and European policies toward Turkey gradually diverged. Kramer identifies four interests that shape U.S. foreign policy toward Turkey: the containment of Iran and Iraq, bolstering Turkish–Israeli relations for the stability of the Middle East, circumventing Russia and Iran by bringing Central Asian and Caucasian energy to market, and U.S. regional interests. Although cultural and religious factors do not hinder U.S.–Turkish relations, they become the source of suspicions in Turkish–European relations because of anti-Islamism in Europe. Europe sees Turkey as both a bridge to a greater Muslim world and a barrier against Islamic radicalism in the region. Kramer examines the benefits and liabilities of Turkey's membership to both the European Union and Turkey at the same time. Indeed, for economic and cultural reasons, Turkey has no option but the West. Neither the Islamic nor the Turkic option is viable. Turkey could develop close ties with these regions, but they do not have the same civilizational appeal to the Turkish state and society that Europe does.

Kramer offers the best and most comprehensive analysis of Turkish opportunities and challenges in the current international system. The only neglected issue in the book is the rise of the nationalist movement and the potential impact of Alevi identity formation in Turkey. The rise and rigidity of Turkish nationalism is a response to the politicization of the Kurdish identity and the exclusionary treatment of Turkey by the European Union and the United States. The book is also thin when it comes to examining the impact of political economy. For some years now, Turkey has been edging toward financial collapse as investments and lending have dried up. As a result, tax receipts have shrunk in the depressed economy, and the state has become incapable of fulfilling its basic obligations to maintain its legitimacy.

Despite these shortcomings, the book offers a comprehensive analysis of Turkish politics and foreign policy. It should be read by those who want an objective and quick understanding of current Turkish politics.

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PAUL RIVLIN, *Economic Policy and Performance in the Arab World* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2001). Pp. 247.

RAY BUSH, *Economic Crisis and the Politics of Reform in Egypt* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1999). Pp. 195.

REVIEWED BY CLEMENT M. HENRY, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin

From rather different perspectives Paul Rivlin and Ray Bush sound alarm bells about the economic plight of the Arab world, which may contribute to serious political instability and—after 11 September 2001—to more recruits for the Usama bin Ladens of this world. Both authors raise serious criticisms of the economic-reform programs propagated in the region by international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Rivlin is a mainstream economist from an Israeli university who is sympathetic to the latest strands of World Bank thinking, whereas Bush is a more radical skeptic from a British university who is grounded in the details of the political economy of Egyptian agriculture.

As Rivlin carefully documents, the IFI programs are moving targets, for the so-called Washington consensus of the 1980s has undergone some revision in the 1990s away from uncondi-

tional neo-classical affirmations of market forces to a more discriminating set of prescriptions calling for selective state intervention. Governments in the region are now told not to cut their budgets across the board but to invest in education and infrastructure and develop transparent regulatory mechanisms before divesting their public-sector enterprises. The World Bank's *World Development Report 1997* pointed to a new emphasis on governance in the region to regulate markets properly rather than simply to privatize and deregulate. Indeed, since these books were written, the United Nations Program on Development has initiated a Program on Governance in the Arab Region (see <http://www.pogar.org>) that may interest some readers.

In the spirit of the new IFI thinking, Rivlin implies that he will "pay more attention to the complex political, social, and cultural realities of the region" (p. 2) while presenting his analysis of Arab economic policy and performance in the 1990s. At one point, he does try to specify the various domestic interest groups involved in the economic policy-making process, but the categories of the state, the military, labor, the middle class (where he confuses the capitalist class with the new middle class; p. 80), and foreign interests are too blunt to show up in the case studies. The country studies simply outline the respective performances, documented by World Bank studies and standard journalistic sources such as the *Middle East Economic Digest* and the *Economist Intelligence Unit* country reports. They are careful descriptions that could be used in undergraduate courses about the economies of the region, but there is no original research. The discussions of Egypt and Syria are more extensive than the others, and his comparisons between Egypt and South Korea are instructive—not that any experiences of Asian tigers, taking off in the relatively friendly international environment of the 1960s and 1970s, will be of much use to Arab countries today. South Korea's development state nurtured and worked closely with private-sector conglomerates, whereas Nasser smashed his business groups to pre-empt the development of any contending centers of power. The Asian tigers benefited from stronger states, a Confucian work ethic, a more egalitarian social structure, and better-educated workforces.

It is this last point that sounds the alarm bells for the Arab region. Despite wages that may have fallen in real terms by as much as 30 percent from 1985 to 1990 (p. 36), labor tends to be considerably more expensive than in much of Asia when productivity is taken into account. With the exceptions of Lebanon, Jordan, and some of the smaller Gulf Cooperation Council states, education in Arab countries is inadequate. For Tunisia, economically the most successful reformer in the region, Rivlin notes a literacy rate among women age 15 and older in 1995 of only 55 percent forty years after independence. The other, more populated countries of the region are all in even worse shape, and Rivlin observes that "large-scale resources need to be devoted to improving literacy rates in the future" (p. 38). The region's economic prospects are scary, because states must walk a fine line between making the necessary investments in education and infrastructure to generate growth and attract foreign direct investment (more of which is needed today than in the 1960s and 1970s, when the Asian tigers could roam freely with greater protection against foreign competition) and keeping their budget and balance-of-payments deficits under control. In the absence of rapid growth, Rivlin warns, "conventional stabilization and structural adjustment programs will not produce the right results . . . [and] the economy may get stuck at an equilibrium with high unemployment" (p. 201). Most countries in the region have suffered the pains of adjustment without reaping enough benefits to break out of the dilemma and generate enough employment to keep up with their young and growing populations.

Whereas Rivlin offers general information based primarily on World Bank reports, Ray Bush zooms in on Egypt's agricultural sector to offer a penetrating critique of the IFI recipes for modernization. His analysis of Egyptian agriculture is based on original field research that leads to provocative conclusions that will interest feminists as well as political economists. He argues, for instance, that "[t]he IFIs and [Government of Egypt] assume all economic relation-

ships are solely structured around tradable activities . . . and therefore fail to recognize the wide range of activities done by women and the way in which they are incorporated into markets” (p. 4). Reforms designed to promote production by rationalizing agricultural markets for land, inputs, and products unintentionally discriminate against women living on small holdings. The reforms discourage the growing of *berseem*, for instance, to feed cattle cheaply. Yet it is mainly women who raise the cattle, with a higher livestock density on small than on large farms (p. 43).

Bush documents the human devastation wrought by Egypt’s market-oriented reforms in the agricultural sector. Law 96 of 1992, reversing Nasser’s earlier reforms, allowed landlords to raise rents and evict tenants after a transition period of five years, in which the rent was more than tripled from an average of 20 Egyptian pounds per *feddan*, and owners could buy back the contract from the tenant (p. 46). For Bush, it is clear that the principal beneficiaries of the reform, whom “the World Bank calls ‘progressive farmers,’ . . . are those with landholdings of more than 5 *feddans* [1 *feddan* equals 1.038 acres or .42 hectares]. There are the middle or kulak class and those farmers in whom both hope and resources have been invested during adjustment” (p. 48). But in 1990, “almost 96 percent of landowners have holdings of less than 5 *feddans* covering 56 percent of the cultivated area with average holdings of less than 1 *feddan*” (p. 40). Liberating the market has meant that many of them were obliged to relinquish their leases on other holdings or to sell their small holdings. From 1990 to 1995, households below the poverty line more than doubled, to 44 percent, and rural income fell more than urban income on average (p. 61). Bush’s own surveys in two pilot villages shed further light on the tragedy by documenting the diminishing diets of the straitened households.

Bush condemns the IFI and Egyptian strategy as the outcome of either “the ignorance of agencies that have not done their homework, or a deliberate policy to promote agricultural modernization that excludes helping the majority of rural people” (pp. 29–30). Wealth indeed may be enhanced by the economies of scale of the “progressive farmers” who can afford to pay off the landlords with higher rents (p. 144), but at a social cost that has also been accompanied by increased political repression, or the “deliberalization” of Egyptian politics, and violence in the countryside (pp. 145–47). Bush argues instead for more carefully targeted state intervention to counter growing inequality, including land reform to “promote a ceiling [with some exceptions for new land and for cultivation where there are real economies of scale] on landholdings above 5 *feddans*” (p. 155).

Although Bush is far more critical of IFI-inspired structural-adjustment policies than Rivlin, Rivlin’s message may ultimately be more alarming. Even if reform teams continue diligently to pursue their IFI programs at the cost of increasing political repression, there seems to be little hope from this mainstream economist that any of these states can engage in sustainable development. Both books are competent scholarly contributions to the political economy literature. They complement each other and are of sufficiently general import to deserve inclusion in undergraduate curricula.

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ALI SHAKOORI, *The State and Rural Development in Post-Revolutionary Iran* (New York: Palgrave, 2001). Pp. 217. \$65.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY AMIR ISMAIL AJAMI, Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Arizona, Tucson

Agrarian issues and rural development have been among the most controversial themes of scholarly studies in contemporary Iran, especially in the post-revolutionary era, when dramatic

restructuring of the socio-economic and political order, often dominated by intense ideological debates and political fiction, has largely impeded critical examination and empirical investigation of the issues. This makes Ali Shakoory's sociological enquiry a timely contribution to the understanding of rural politics and development during the past two decades. The book's primary objective is to explore the socio-economic impact of state rural-development policies and programs at the societal level, as well as at the village-community level. The author contends that, despite various development efforts initiated by the state and considerable improvements in the rural economy and its infrastructure, the revolutionary goal of increasing peasant participation in decision-making, with progress toward a more equal distribution of income and wealth, is yet to be realized.

The book contains six chapters. The first four chapters provide a review of the main theoretical works on rural social change and historical background for agricultural modernization and rural development in Iran. They also provide detailed information about the reorganization of the pre-revolutionary agricultural administration and the new regime's rural-development policies, along with a discussion of the effects of these policies on agricultural output and rural conditions at the macro level. Chapter 5 presents the findings of Shakoory's empirical investigation of the impact of rural-development programs on peasant life in six villages in eastern Azerbaijan. The final chapter offers a useful synopsis of the macro issues as well as the results of the micro-analysis.

Shakoory argues that Iran's post-revolutionary rural and agricultural policies were adopted primarily in reaction to the failure of the pre-revolutionary growth-based strategies designed to eradicate rural poverty. After a detailed examination of the Shah's land-reform program, agricultural-development policies, and the agricultural sector's share of the gross national product (GNP), he concludes that the pre-revolutionary policies were unsuccessful and "caused the agricultural sector to fall into what could be called a deep crisis" (p. 124). Although the shortcomings of the former regime's agricultural and rural-development policies have been demonstrated by a number of scholars (e.g., A. Ashraf, A. Najmabadi, F. E. Moghadam, A. Schirazi, and M. G. Majd), the author's gloomy picture seems to subscribe largely to the revolutionaries' early slogan, which claimed that the Shah's industrial policies ruined Iranian agriculture. One might argue that the performance of the agricultural sector must be evaluated in the context of the sector-structural problems, major institutional change, and mismanagement of government investments, as pointed out by Massoud Karshenas in *Oil, State and Industrialization in Iran* (Cambridge, 1990). According to Karshenas, the average annual rate of growth of value added in agriculture between 1959 and 1977 (in constant prices) was 3.9 percent. This is a reasonable growth rate by world standards. True, agriculture's relative share of GNP had declined; the migration from rural areas had been rapid; and Iran's food imports had increased substantially. But one could argue that the increase in food imports had been largely due to a rapid rise in population and living standards, not to the failure of agriculture. In addition to land-reform issues and agricultural-sector performance, Shakoory presents detailed discussion and evaluation of various rural-development policies implemented by the Islamic regime. The Centers for Rural and Agricultural Development Services were established as a principal strategy to decentralize the Ministry of Agriculture and to provide comprehensive technical and infrastructural services, as well as training, credit, marketing, and other related services, at the district and village levels through active rural participation. Shakoory maintains that, although the centers have largely made positive contributions to agricultural development, they have not promoted rural participation in local decision-making, and most of the planning has been imposed from above; it has not come from the village level (p. 75). The Development Crusade (*Jihād-e Sāzandigī*) was created as a revolutionary organization to recruit volunteers to carry out development projects and to propagate Islamic culture and revolutionary zeal in rural areas. The

crusade expanded rapidly and became a government ministry, with a bureaucratic structure and functions that largely overlapped those of the Ministry of Agriculture. As the author notes, the competition between the two ministries deteriorated into intense conflict (the two ministries were ultimately merged as *Jihād-e Kishāvarzī*, or the Ministry of Agricultural Crusade, in 2001). Another Islamic government measure was the creation of a new form of rural cooperative known as *Mushā'* to replace the existing cooperatives and farm corporations. The *Mushā'* cooperatives were specially promoted among the peasants, who received titles to the confiscated land after the revolution. According to the 1986 Islamic Land Reform Law, ownership of the land would be collectively transferred to the peasants, who would work the land cooperatively as a team. As official statistics indicate, 12,399 *Mushā'* cooperatives with 87,243 members had been established by 1993. Based on his examination of a number of case studies, Shakoori observes that *Mushā'*s did not generally succeed primarily because the members preferred to parcel the land out among themselves. The government did not provide adequate technical and financial assistance, and collective work was gradually confined to just a few tasks (pp. 94–95). The new regime also promoted further development of the pre-revolution village council, now referred to the Islamic Village Council. The councils were designed as a key tool in the planning and implementing of the Agricultural Service Centers' programs. They were intended to act as a link between the government and the rural population and to enlist the cooperation of the villagers for the governments' programs. The author maintains that the councils often have failed to carry out these functions mainly because of the over-centralized government administrative structure, inadequate local participation, and lack of clarity in the councils' mission statement and objectives.

Throughout the study, Shakoori uses primary and secondary sources extensively to provide insight into the inner workings of the post-revolutionary regime's rural-development policies. It is, however, his empirical research in six villages in eastern Azerbaijan that provides original data and systematic analysis of the impact of government rural-development programs on peasant life. The research examined five variables: participation, social mobility, income, wealth, and well-being. Shakoori's analysis reveals that only half of the sample households participated in village-development decision-making, while his data on social mobility show that the majority of the respondents did not change their status and occupied the same position that they had before the revolution. The analysis of data on annual income, wealth, and expenditures on food, clothing and living expenses (as a proxy for well-being) reveals that all these variables were higher in the villages with the most development programs and developmental potential. Shakoori concludes that, in spite of the government's distribution policies and programs targeted specifically at the poor, "on the whole the higher social groups benefited most from the process of rural change" (p. 170). The pre-existing geographical, natural, and socio-economic structures still predominate and make the equal distribution of the benefits of rural policies difficult in the post-revolutionary era.

Shakoori's work is an important contribution to understanding the socio-political forces driving rural-development policies at the macro level, as well as these policies' impact on rural population in the villages under study. The author makes the fullest possible use of available sources, especially Persian works, and of data obtained from his interviews with sample villagers. The book's shortcomings are few and minor. Its contribution, in my opinion, would have been enhanced if some of the critical agrarian and rural-development issues (land reform, agriculture production and productivity, overlapping administration of agriculture and rural development) discussed at the societal level had been incorporated into the empirical investigation in the six villages studied. Further, interviews with key agricultural and rural-development policy-makers on the critical issues under review would have added to the books' value. Nevertheless, these are suggestions for improvement, not a significant problem with the book.

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DAVID C. JACOBSON, *Does David Still Play Before You? Israeli Poetry and the Bible* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997). Pp. 283. \$34.95.

REVIEWED BY SHALOM GOLDMAN, Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Emory University, Atlanta

David Jacobson's 1997 study, written in the early 1990s, was completed before the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. In his author's note, he states that "if I had not completed the manuscript before the assassination, I would have referred to it in parts of the book that deal with this theme"—the chapter on the Arab–Israeli conflict and the section on secular Israelis and religious faith. Although the author cannot be faulted for the intrusions of history into scholarly inquiry, one wonders whether today's reader might not agree with his assertion that Rabin's murder is "not representative of mainstream trends in religious Jewish thinking in Israel". Many observers of contemporary Israel would disagree.

The subject of Jacobson's study is what he terms "Biblical allusion poetry," or short lyric poems that "convey a concentrated response to the biblical text". Claiming that "there is no country in the world where as widespread a familiarity with the Bible may be found"—surely a contestable claim—Jacobson focuses on the work of Israeli poets who began publishing in the 1940s. He has chosen "fifty poems by twenty Israeli poets that were published throughout the period of Israeli statehood, from the 1950s through the early 1990s" to represent what he sees as the intimate relationship between the biblical text and the work of modern poets. Useful in this study is Jacobson's discussion of allusion, in which he incorporates the critic Ziva Ben Porat's observation that allusion engages "the simultaneous activation of two texts—the alluding text and the evoked text".

The book is organized around four themes: the Arab–Israeli conflict, the Holocaust, relations between men and women, and relations between God and humanity. Jacobson's working assumption is that only through recourse to biblical allusion can modern Israeli poets grapple with these weighty issues. Although a literary study free of much of the jargon that taints contemporary literary criticism is useful, more sophistication would have been welcome. Despite the invocation of the names of stars of the critical firmament, such as Kristeva, Culler, and Riffaterre, few of the analyses can be thought of as "theoretical." The writing and much of the analysis is too simplistic, and the organization of each separate treatment of a poem is too directed. Often the text of a poem is preceded by explication. When it is not, the stanzas of each poem are separated by commentary, which does not give the reader the opportunity to reflect on the poem and reach his or her own conclusions. What is not problematic is the selection of poems. For the most part, they are both representative and of high quality. Although they all allude to biblical narratives, I cannot agree with the grouping of these stylistically and thematically diverse texts as "biblical." The allusions may be biblical, but does that create a new category of poetry?

Although the author makes passing reference to the role of biblical allusion in Western literature (p. 20), this is no more than a nod to an important question. I would make the claim that England and the United States in the late 19th and early to mid-20th centuries were as imbued with biblical knowledge as is contemporary Israel—or even more so. Jacobson overestimates the role of the Bible in Israeli culture and underestimates its role in general Western culture. This criticism relates to a larger problem: the persistence of the assumption that "contemporary Israeli events are analogous to Biblical events." Although many religious nationalists within Israel would endorse this assumption, those outside the religious national camp might not. In fact, many secular Israelis, who still make up the majority of the Israeli population, would heartily disagree with this "persistent assumption."



Writing about the developing culture of the modern Israeli state, Jacobson correctly points to the centrality of the Bible in the early decades of Israeli culture. But I would vigorously take issue with his claim that “the Bible continues to have a prominent place in the curriculum of Jewish Israeli religious and secular schools” (p. 47).

The lack of sophistication about the complexities of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict is striking. About the 1956 Sinai campaign, Jacobson writes, “In the period between the end of the War of Independence and Israel’s next major war with an Arab enemy, the Sinai Campaign of 1956, Israel’s vulnerability was felt keenly during Arab terrorist attacks over the borders between Israel and the West Bank and Israel and Gaza”. Surely one can say more about the war than that.

Jacobson’s analysis of Israeli “biblical allusion poetry” is an outgrowth of his first book, *Modern Midrash: The Retelling of Traditional Jewish Narratives by Twentieth-Century Hebrew Writers* (1987). In that book he views the work of European and Israeli Hebrew writers who used biblical themes as “an effort to interpret the crises of Jewish modernity and often to justify the kind of radical changes in Jewish culture which they believed to be necessary in the modern period.” In *Modern Midrash*, Jacobson sees this new Hebrew writing as a response to crises and the role of Israeli poets (Golboa, Kevner, Pagis) who “continue the literary tradition of modern midrash” as “adding a meaningful dimension to what each author wishes to say about the crises of Jewish existence in the twentieth century.”

The key to Jacobson’s view of modern Hebrew literature is found in the statement: “Jews in the post-Holocaust world have a very different relationship with god than did the writers of the Bible.” Did the Jews and Christians of the first Christian centuries not have radically different approaches to a biblical text that was by then a millennium old? Theologizing the Nazi murder of European Jewry has become so commonplace we do not even notice it. One wishes that literary critics would leave the theologizing to the theologians.

Jacobson sees the writers under discussion as “inventors of the biblical tradition that gave the Western world so much faith and hope” (p. 81). This claim, surely at odds with Western literary tradition, claims an intimate relationship with the Bible and strikes me as a statement of hubris that none of these poets has articulated.

This is a valuable book, but its value is somewhat diminished by its insistence on the creation of “biblical allusion” as a new category of analysis. Allusion is but one arrow in the poet’s quiver; it does not define a body of work. Throughout the study, the Israeli connection to, and reliance on, Jewish tradition is over-determined. The emergence of an Israeli literature with few points of reference to the biblical is barely remarked.

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KATHRYN KUENY, *The Rhetoric of Sobriety: Wine in Early Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001). Pp. 198. \$57.50 cloth, \$18.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY GEERT JAN VAN GELDER, Oriental Institute, University of Oxford

Most Muslims will maintain that the Islamic prohibition of drinking wine or any alcoholic beverage is clear and unambiguous, based on the Qur’an and the hadith. It is true that some Qur’anic passages seem to mention wine as one of God’s blessings, but a later revelation “abrogated” these and called wine an “abomination” from Satan. Without wishing to undermine this belief, Kathryn Kueny sets out to investigate the various early Islamic discourses that helped to shape the general condemnation of wine and to point out the ambiguity of the issue. She uses Mary Douglas’s concepts of purity and impurity, draws parallels with Jewish and Christian traditions, and discusses the debate about wine as it is found in the Qur’an, in the “canonical” hadith compilations, and in (mostly Arabic) poetry.

She distinguishes among five types of discourse, or genres, which she calls the prophetic, the analytic, the narrative, the poetic, and the mystical. A chapter is devoted to each of these, with a short final chapter titled, "Conclusions and Future Comparative Directions." The slim volume, some 134 pages of text followed by 36 pages of endnotes, has a bibliography and a general index.

The "prophetic" discourse of the Qur'an (which orthodox Muslims would perhaps call "divine" rather than "prophetic") depicts wine as essentially ambiguous, because in the heavenly realm it is praised, whereas on Earth it is incompatible with impeccable behavior. The Judeo-Christian tradition had to be adapted: the Qur'an refers neither to Noah as planter of the first vineyard and indecently exposing himself unwittingly after drinking, nor to Lot being made drunk by his daughters who are determined to have offspring. Both the analytic mode and the narrative mode are found in the hadith and roughly correspond to what, in rabbinic terminology, are called Halachic and Haggadic, respectively. The former is concerned with rules, often by means of making lists and making distinctions and taxonomies: lists of substances or the various vessels and containers for fermented liquids. A variety of rhetorical patterns are employed, such as repetition, formulas, and parallel or symmetrical constructions, to construct a "perfect world." The latter, narrative mode provides the human interest that is lacking in the former through anecdotes and stories. By emphasizing human emotions, poetic discourse serves to mitigate the severity of the prohibition; it is a rich source of equivocation on wine and intoxication. Finally, in mystic discourse the absolute prohibition is further assuaged, this time by stressing not the social inter-relationships among humans but man's relationship to the divine. The five types of discourse are not interchangeable, nor are they equal. Obviously, there is a hierarchy, with prophetic discourse, although ambiguous, ranking as the most authoritative, and the poetic and mystic forms at the bottom. The five types complement and clarify one another.

*The Rhetoric of Sobriety* is structured clearly, and the author is able to show how such an apparently unequivocal Islamic rule is shaped by the subtle interaction of very different kinds of texts. This shaping is presented not diachronically but more or less synchronically. Wine serves merely as an example, though certainly one of the more interesting ones, of interpretative strategies in the Islamic tradition. Instead of wine, "such mundane topics as 'facial hair' or 'urine' or 'bells' would serve equally well," Kueny says. Incidentally, when she quotes in this connection a hadith about five recommended practices and notes that in fact only four are listed (p. 122), she should not have relied on the translation of al-Bukhari that she uses there but on the Cairo edition that she uses in the rest of her book, for there the fifth practice (removing the hair of the armpits) is duly given.

The neat division into five discourses, itself somewhat resembling the second, analytical mode, provides clarity but runs the risk of oversimplification. The prophetic, or divine, discourse of the Qur'an is not devoid of analytical and narrative elements. A fundamental problem in the book is that it treats hadith as a body of authoritative rules (e.g., "The Hadith lay [*sic*] down strict rules" [p. 36]), rather than as a repertoire of statements that could be used for legal rules and regulations. For some reason, Kueny does not use the texts in which such rules and regulations are formulated: the many handbooks of Islamic jurisprudence and law. Fiqh—in a sense, the core of Islam—is ignored. Further, the distinction between the poetic and the mystic mode is not without problems.

In fact, it is with the chapters on these two modes that I am least happy. As the book's subtitle indicates, Kueny is concerned with early Islam. Yet for the "poetic mode" she relies almost exclusively on pre-Islamic poetry, quoted mostly in the unsatisfactory renderings of Christopher Nouryeh. One could argue, it is true, that these poems were still very popular in early Islamic times. The same could be said of some anecdotes in the "narrative mode" in prose and poetry dating from pre-Islamic times: see, for instance, the chapter in Ibn Habib's

*al-Muhabbar* on “those who declared wine and intoxication forbidden in the Jāhiliya” and similar stories preserved in anthologies. Kueny does not mention them; nor did she use the several monographs on wine, such as those by Ibn Qutayba and al-Jai, or the literary anthologies devoted to wine by al-Rāqiq al-Qayrawani and al-Nawaji. Including all this would not have fit into the narrow compass of the present book.

However, it is nothing short of astonishing that early Islamic wine poetry is virtually absent from Kueny’s book. Abu Nuwas is mentioned in passing in a note (p. 159, n. 2). Ewald Wagner’s monograph on Abu Nuwas is not mentioned probably because it is in German, which may also explain the absence of Peter Heine’s monograph on wine in Islam. But it is very strange that Philip Kennedy’s recent *The Wine Song in Classical Arabic Poetry: Abu Nuwas and the Literary Tradition* (Oxford, 1997) is ignored, even though his extensive discussion of the ambiguity inherent in wine—far more interesting in an Islamic context than in the non-Islamic *Jahiliyya*—could have been used to underpin Kueny’s argument. Abu Nuwas and his precursors and followers were not just antinomian sinners; they often demonstrated a subtle mixture of the libertine and the pious, the rebellious and the repentant. Ignoring the early Islamic *khamriyya* is all the more odd because Kueny makes a jump from pre-Islamic poetry to the mystic verse of Ibn al-Fāri and, briefly, the Persian poet Rumi, who both lived in the 13th century. It is as if the author thought that, because mysticism is such an important and essential element of Islam, she needed to include it in the framework of the book. Unfortunately, there is no early Islamic mystical bacchic verse, although the author seems to suggest that there is, when she speaks about pre-Islamic and Umayyad times in one sentence and about mystic wine-imagery in the next (p. 102). *The Rhetoric of Sobriety* is interesting but unbalanced and incomplete, paradoxically as a result of the author’s attempt to present a balanced and complete structure.

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JACK G. SHAHEEN, *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* (Northampton, Mass.: Interlink Publishing Group, 2001). Pp. 582. \$25.00 paper.

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In its incessant focus on the universal battle between good and evil, the Hollywood film industry has traditionally regarded Arabs as a source to provide the dark side of the equation. Jack Shaheen’s recent book *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* is an encyclopedic attempt to catalogue and document all Hollywood films that include Arabs, exposing the sheer magnitude of the film industry’s bias against Arabs. For film after film, listed and discussed in alphabetical order, Shaheen provides plot summaries and brief examples of how these films have libeled Arabs, from classics such as *The Sheik* (George Melford, 1921) to more recent films that include *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (Stephen Spielberg, 1989) and *The Siege* (Edward Zwick, 1998).

Shaheen’s dedication to dispelling stereotypes of Arabs in American film and media is praiseworthy. He has devoted a great deal of his work to exposing the widespread negative typecasting of Arabs in American media and film and has worked as a consultant to various producers and to the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR). His vast knowledge of the subject and determination to promote a positive image of Arabs and Muslims in these media undoubtedly have helped in the Arab American community’s relentless effort to bring these issues to the forefront of the media’s attention. Shaheen’s previous book, *Arab TV*, was devoted to exposing Arab-bashing in popular television programs; in this new book, he tries to do the same in American-made films. According to Shaheen’s findings, only 5 percent of the roughly 900

films that have been produced in Hollywood since the film industry's inception and that include Arab characters depict Arabs positively and humanely. That unfortunately leaves an alarming number of films that bash Arabs explicitly—films in which Arab men appear greedy, violent, and backward, and Arab women are depicted as exotic and sexual, yet muted, beings.

Ultimately, however, a sheer volume of films and details of plot summaries are not enough to deconstruct this intolerable phenomenon of stereotyping Arabs. For Shaheen, the negative image has essentially remained unchanged since the early days of American cinema. He writes, "[f]rom 1896 until today, filmmakers have collectively indicted all Arabs as Public Enemy #1" (p. 2). But important shifts in this image have occurred over the years and must be addressed with more than simple mentions of the 1973 oil crisis or the Palestinian struggle for independence. A 1932 film in which Arabs appear as folkloric, tribal, backward characters is dramatically different from the image of the Arab terrorist sweeping contemporary Hollywood films. If we were to take Edward Said's argument that the West's production of negative imagery of the East played a dominant role in its domination of the non-Western world, then what could we learn from the evolution of this imagery over time? Simplifying the equation into a clear-cut division between the good guys and the bad—Americans and Arabs, Hollywood producers and Arab cinematic images—is insufficient to answer this important question and to combat the constitution of such stereotypes. Only when we understand how and why stereotypes are created can they be deconstructed. Shaheen further suggests that the American film industry intentionally undertakes the vilification of Arabs by employing repetition of negative stereotypes as a teaching tool for audiences. But, as Homi Bhabha and others would argue, the stereotype is also subliminal, unconscious, and it offers the comfort that comes with the familiar repetition of the recognizable and known. A more thorough discussion of this phenomenon would ask, What need does the production of such images address, and why do Arabs fit this need? Without this kind of discerning, broad context—one that does more than merely identify common themes and examples of Hollywood production—*Reel Bad Arabs* misses an opportunity to understand and to make an insightful analysis of a persistent phenomenon.

Arabs are not alone in the uphill battle against stereotyping and negative imagery, even though Shaheen arguably regards the negative depiction of other groups as a trend of the past. Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and other minority groups have been—and, in many cases, continue to be—victims of stereotypical, uninformed misrepresentation. Moreover, during the long years of the Cold War, Russians frequently occupied villainous positions in Hollywood films. The stereotypical depiction of Arabs certainly has unique characteristics, and a number of filmmakers and scholars have addressed this issue. Elia Suleiman and Jayce Salloum's shrewd film *Introduction to an End of an Argument* (1991) and Robert Stam and Ella Shohat's book *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (New York, 1994) are two examples. Suleiman and Salloum expose the mechanisms of the stereotype by cutting and splicing one denigrating image after another. The fragmented nature of the montage and rapid repetition of the disapproving image create an effective framework that exposes and displaces the stereotype. Shohat and Stam tackle the Eurocentric disposition of contemporary media representations, which enforces the notion of the inherent superiority of European-derived cultures and people.

Seeking to break down sweeping negative generalizations about Arabs in his introduction to the book, Shaheen tends to replace Hollywood's essentializing process with one of his own. "Reel Arabs," Shaheen's name for the negative Arab characters in Hollywood films, are replaced by his perception of "Real Arabs." For Shaheen, there is an accurate portrayal of Arabs out there that Hollywood simply fails to acknowledge. Hollywood films "portray Arabs by distorting at every turn what most Arab men, women, and children *are really like*" (p. 1; emphasis added). Had Shaheen focused on scrutinizing stereotypes instead of giving examples of what "ordinary Arabs are really like," his argument would have been more successful. Instead, his examples border on the banal—Arabs contributed to the development of astronomy and mathe-

matics; Shaheen's travels throughout the Middle East have convinced him that the region "accommodated diverse, talented, hospitable citizens" (p. 3); "Mideast Arabs—and Arab-Americans—are more than a bit like you and me" (p. 4).

Overall, Shaheen sporadically discusses the historical trajectory and the political and cultural context in which stereotypes of Arabs could develop and thrive and bases his argument on the presupposition that Hollywood is simply bad. For example, Shaheen argues that Hollywood producers were bent on "falsifying geopolitical realities" of World War II by making films that depict Arabs supporting Nazi Germany as early as 1942, which he counters with the information that many Arab nations actively supported the Allies during the war (p. 21). This kind of approach does not provide a nuanced discussion of World War II, in which some Arab nations supported the Allies and some did not. Obviously, the realities of that era, when the entire region was embroiled in a struggle to rid itself of colonial rule as war was breaking out in Europe, are more complex than Shaheen is willing to concede. By ignoring that aspect, however, Shaheen ultimately serves to undermine his otherwise important argument about Hollywood's production of negative images of Arabs. Similarly, to dispel Hollywood's practice of presenting Muslim women as mute, faceless, and clad all in black, Shaheen schematically presents women as lawyers, doctors, and engineers, thus avoiding delving into the intricacies of gender issues in the Middle East. In his efforts to present women in the Middle East as modern and progressive he misses the opportunity to discuss more complex issues of gender.

By the time Shaheen gets to the letter *T* and to a discussion of the recent film *Three Kings* (1999), which includes a more humanist and complex Arab point of view, the reader has no way to understand how or why that transformation in the depiction of Arabs happened. As Shaheen mentions, the mega-production company Warner Brothers went to great lengths to address his concerns as a consultant on the film with regard to the portrayal of Arabs and adapted the script accordingly. Is this the result of an exceptionally sympathetic vision of an individual executive? Perhaps Warner Brothers' approach must be analyzed as part of a larger trend in which the profit-making potential in growing Arab markets might be examined. This and other more difficult and urgent questions remain largely unanswered by this book.

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SHERIFA ZUHUR, *Asmahan's Secrets: Woman, War, and Song*, Middle East Monograph Series No. 13 (Austin: University of Texas, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 2000). Pp. 257. \$15.95 paper.

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The well-deserved success of Virginia Danielson's consummate monograph *The Voice of Egypt* within an English-language academic culture largely devoid of Arab musical biography has (unintentionally) resulted in the overestimation of Umm Kulthum's centrality in the Arab world within that academic culture. Although Umm Kulthum's mythical reputation has continued to grow since her death in 1975, her legend today is larger than her sound space. Likewise, Umm Kulthum faced stiff competition during her lifetime, particularly in the earlier portion of her career, when her legend loomed less large. Of her competitors none was more formidable than the brilliant and beautiful Druze Princess Amal al-Atrash (1917?–44), better known as Asmahan.

Into the relative vacuum of English-language works on Arab music history *Asmahan's Secrets* thus emerges as a most welcome contribution. Like Danielson's work, this book is much more than biography, using Asmahan's life story to illuminate political and social history. But whereas the Umm Kulthum story, in accordance with her self-composure, propriety, modesty, daughter-of-the-Nile roots, and straightforward rags-to-riches success, naturally represents modern Arab culture as a complex but largely harmonious whole, Asmahan's life, her elite genealogy, subsequent poverty, immodest public behavior, multi-culturalism (Levantine, French, Druze,

Egyptian), migrations, alleged espionage, and psychological instability point to the socio-cultural clashes, divisions, and contradictions of the Arab world during the same period. Where Umm Kulthum's story suggests solidarity, optimism, and progress, Asmahan's points to conflict, depression, and disharmony, all pushed to the snapping points of war, or suicide, because her life was like that, too. These two books are, correspondingly perhaps, totally different.

Classification is difficult; perhaps unnecessary. *Asmahan's Secrets* breaks genre conventions through daring juxtapositions of political and social history, biography, ethnography, musicology, even autobiography and historical fiction—it is none and yet all of these, a heady collage of techniques that can, however, occasionally confuse. Danielson's meticulous scholarship is essentially modernist, solidly grounded in empirical facts, objectively focused on a verifiable public sphere, moving inexorably toward firm conclusions. By contrast, Zuhur's is self-referential, tracing contradictions, probing psychological depth, accepting conflicting versions. Zuhur's stated goal is modernist (to "recover Asmahan"). Yet her method is distinctively post-modern, contextualizing multiple voices, playing with genres and styles, and reflexively displaying (and critiquing) ethnographic and historiographic frames of research. Following Seyla Benhabib's post-modern notion of a "web of narratives," Zuhur says that Asmahan's tales, and those of her critics, form "a story about the formation of popular discourse. I write of her and of myself in the writing" (p. 6). Sometimes this technique almost requires non-linear, hyper-textual reading. The sharp stylistic contrast between Danielson's and Zuhur's biographies echoes the contrast in the lives they traced—or, perhaps, the research they lived.

*Asmahan's Secrets* consists of an Introduction followed by seven chapters. In the manner of post-modern ethnography, the meandering Introduction reflexively positions the author in her field, problematizes the research, and provides a range of goals, including "disentangling" Asmahan, examining her agency, gendering her biography, and refuting Middle Eastern stereotypes, especially by depicting Arab culture of the inter-war period. Chapters 1–5 trace Asmahan's life story, set within contemporary history, all framed by Zuhur's research process. Portions read like historical fiction, including suspenseful prose, quoted speech (p. 79), and psychological description (p. 82), although sources are often not cited. Personal lives abruptly about world events. The details of Asmahan's birth; her family's flight to Egypt in 1923; the Egyptian musical scene; Asmahan's personal, social, and professional life; and her migrations and political intrigues are recounted, juxtaposed with political and social history, local and global politics, portraits of Cairo and the Druze, and the biographer's sleuthing. Special attention is given to Asmahan's two films, shown to represent and construct her own biography. The mix is complex; the technique is inventive—a literary challenge to the modernist task of reconstructing *the* history. In the spirit of Benhabib's post-modern "web of narratives," Zuhur presents many of Asmahan's life events in multiple versions (reminiscent of Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*, or the multiple endings in John Fowle's novels), culminating in the tetralogy of her 1944 death in a car accident. One imagines these textual movements retracing Asmahan's own reckless and restless life, its multiple public representations. But despite such elegant homologies, the style can be bewildering.

The final two chapters examine Asmahan's musical production and socio-cultural positioning. Although they are ambitious, they are also too short to complete what they set out to accomplish. As a consequence, perhaps, they can seem jumbled. Although they may find some theoretical justification, the tendency to interrupt prematurely interesting lines of inquiry with digressions; the refusal of ideas to coagulate into conclusions; and the jumping among historical biography, ethnographic present, Middle Eastern generalities, and cross-cultural banalities ("a deep-seated sexism pervades most industries"; p. 219), is frustrating.

Chapter 6 reviews Asmahan's texts, genres, repertoires, and musical styles. As in her life story, contradictions constantly appear to muddy the waters, making firm conclusions impossible. Although confronting the complexity of musical reality is salutary, better chapter subheads

might have helped to organize this material. Zuhur usefully deploys the post-modern perspective in critiquing the standard classification of Asmahan as “Western” and in demonstrating how her musical meanings invoke diverse cultural identities. However, too many concepts (“classical,” “Eastern,” “Western,” “modernism”) are used uncritically. Some digressions seem irrelevant (e.g., the Platonic quotation on p. 174), and one wishes that other information about musical production had been included (e.g., how she acquired her command of Arabic in French Catholic schools). Accompanying transcriptions and recordings would have helped to make her points clearer (but see the web site at <http://www.asmahan.com>).

Chapter 7 treats a melange of gender, culture, and political issues. Here Asmahan is definitively situated as a symbol of transitions and tensions of her time and place. But elaborations of this perspicacious insight within a broader social history are unfortunately overshadowed by darting digressions (some relevant, some banal, some misleading) to related issues. In a typical sequence (p. 210), her gendered historiography; contemporary tensions between Islamists and entertainers (the “puritanization of the Middle East” [?]); demographics of contemporary Arab popular culture; sources of Asmahan’s controversy; Asmahan’s musical achievements; musical modernization in her era; the general status of music as “symbolic . . . sensuous” (p. 214); objections to music in the Muslim world; musicians’ special status across cultures and in the Middle East generally. After a brief return to gender issues in Asmahan’s era, another digression to the status of Arab entertainers today explains why Asmahan’s family rejected her career, followed by a turn to questions centered on details of her life and psyche (e.g., “why did she waste her energy in gambling?”). Although Zuhur asks many intriguing questions, her discussions sometimes founder in digressions between details and generalities. Asmahan’s story could have better been used as a springboard for a more focused discussion of tensions and transformations in gender, culture, and politics of the early to mid-20th century.

Some reorganization, bringing related sections together and emphasizing the principal conclusions, would have helped to highlight important insights that the reader is otherwise likely to miss. Many more facts should be accompanied by dates. Far too few statements are attributed, and the sources are not always clear. There are numerous small errors in transliteration, translation, and musicological detail. To take four examples: Farid al-Atrash’s song “al-Mahmal al-Sharif” (“The Noble Palanquin,” formerly sent to Mecca on the occasion of Hajj) is transliterated “al-Muhammad al-Sharif” and translated “the carrier of the holy places” (p. 175). Tawasih were performed by a soloist with a chorus, not two choruses (p. 55). In the famous Egyptian folktale, Goha leaves a nail (*mismar*), not a reed pipe (*mizmar*) (p. 71). “Qada’ and qadar” (different aspects of divine decree) are wrongly associated with free will and fate (p. 220—could Zuhur have been thinking of the Qadariyya?). More careful editing would have greatly increased this work’s scholarly value.

Zuhur’s work is ethnographically rich and includes invaluable oral history based on interviews with Asmahan’s family. But one wishes she had expanded her research to include more archival sources, especially popular periodicals from the 1920s–50s. Too much of the book is a translation and retelling of posthumous Arabic biographies, principally Fumil Labib’s *Qissat Asmahan* (1962) and Muhammad al-Taba’i’s *Asmahan tarwi qissataha* (1962). Given the kaleidoscopic treatment, a timeline, a glossary, and a better index (at three pages, the present one is virtually useless) would be welcome navigational tools. Thankfully, many evocative photos have been included.

Asmahan’s short life was extremely rich. Despite its limitations, this book succeeds in conveying that richness and its multi-faceted relationship to Arab culture, society, and history. Further, there is no doubt that the book helps to fill a vital need for English sources about modern Arab social history that are sensitive to contemporary scholarly concerns about gender, affect, and social conflict. For all scholars and students of the modern Middle East this book is a step in the right direction. If more work remains to be done, this one will surely help to set future researchers on their way.