BOOK REVIEWS


REVIEWED BY AVNER GILADI, Department of Middle Eastern History, University of Haifa

With the series of critical editions and studies of Arabic medical texts from the Middle Ages he has published in recent years, Gerrit Bos has made a significant contribution to the history of medicine in the Islamic world. He has dedicated special attention to the work of Abu Ja’far Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid ibn al-Jazzar of Qayrawan, a 10th-century physician and prolific author of medical texts. Ibn al-Jazzar was famous and influential not only within his own Arabic–Islamic cultural domain but also—thanks to widely circulated translations of his works into Greek, Latin, and Hebrew—among Christian and Jewish physicians in the East as well as the West. (For Bos’s publications on Ibn al-Jazzar’s writings see p. 406).

In the book under review, Bos offers a critical edition of the Arabic text and an English translation of Book 6, “On Sexual Diseases and Their Treatment,” of Ibn al-Jazzar’s Zad al-musafir wa-qut al-hadir (Provisions for the Traveler and Nourishment for the Sedentary). A systematic medical handbook, remarkable for the lucidity of its style, comprehensiveness of its contents, and originality of its observations and influential in Arabic–Islamic as well as Western medicine, this may well be Ibn al-Jazzar’s most important work partly also for the way it has preserved ancient material that otherwise would have been lost to us. In a Latin translation by Constantine the African, early in the 12th century, commented on a century later by the Salernitan masters, it became one of the most useful medical textbooks in medieval European universities.

In his Introduction, Bos deals briefly with the biography and literary activities of Ibn al-Jazzar (pp. 5–11), as well as the surviving manuscripts of Zad al-musafir, four of which (Berlin, Oxford, Tehran, and Dresden) he has used to reconstruct the original text of Book 6 (pp. 11–16). He then surveys and evaluates Book 6’s contents (pp. 17–68), which consists of an Introduction and twenty chapters dealing with sexual diseases affecting men (chaps. 1–8) and women (chaps. 9–18). In this context Bos presents some of the medieval Arabic medical theories of sexuality and reproduction, including prevalent notions of the anatomy, physiology, pathology, and treatment of the relevant bodily systems. Throughout his survey, Bos draws the reader’s attention to the Greek origins of these theories, beginning with Hippocrates and Aristotle through Galen (Ibn al-Jazzar’s main source) to Paul of Aegina, and provides useful examples of his argument by using occasional textual comparisons of Arabic and Greek excerpts. Bos also comments on the relationship between Ibn al-Jazzar’s theories in this regard and those of other early Arabic–Islamic physicians, such as Qusta ibn Luqa, Muhammad ibn Zakariyya’ al-Razi, ‘Ali ibn ‘Abbas al-Majusi, Khalaf ibn al-‘Abbas al-Zahrawi, al-Husayn Ibn Sina, and ‘Ali ibn Rabban al-Tabari.

This survey introduces to the reader the development of scientific concepts, physical and psychological, concerning sexual functioning—for instance, sexual arousal and different ways to achieve it, impotence, the origin of sperm, the functions of male and female(!) testicles, the
origin of menstruation and its role both in maintaining women’s health and in causing women
to become ill, pregnancy, childbirth, different pathological phenomena in men and women and
their treatment. Here Bos ably points to an interesting process involving an exchange of ideas
among several cultures, central among them always the Arabic–Islamic one: from Greek (either
directly or through Syriac) to Arabic, then back to Greek and also to Latin and Hebrew.

Thus, what is offered here is a highly professional critical edition of a demanding Arabic
text and an English translation that on the whole is clear and fluent with the author demonstrat-
ing his profound understanding of the Greek foundations on which this text is based. Inevitably,
there are a few places where, in my view, the translation is not entirely satisfactory (for in-
stance, p. 239, l.9; p. 240, l.5–6; p. 240, the title of the first chapter, qillat al-bah, would be
better translated as “the lack of venereal passion”; p. 242, l.8, where the translation of hammala
’alā nafsihi as “he masturbates” should have been corroborated by other texts; and p. 263, l.3,
“reducing regimen” as a translation of tadbīr mulattaf is not convincing). A few inaccuracies
are found in the transliteration of Hebrew terms (e.g., p. 10, l.1–3), and the use of italics is
inconsistent here (cf. p. 24, l.1, 4, and ibid., n. 61). It is a pity that no list is included with
explanations of technical vocabulary—the “glossaries” of Arabic and English terms (pp. 337–
76, 377–97) are in fact no more than indexes—so as to enable the unprofessional reader also
to find his or her way in those parts of Book 6 that deal with materia medica.

My main criticism, however, has to do with context—that is, there is a whole series of
contextual themes that Bos ignores but that should have found a place here. Some are related
to the history of Arabic–Islamic medicine and are vital for a full understanding of the text.
They should have been dealt with, in my opinion, in the Introduction or, if not there, then at
best in footnotes. Other, broader themes, are related to the social history of medicine and to the
history of sexuality, gender, and women and should have been formulated, if only as sugges-
tions for further research. What follow are a few examples:

1. The ways of transmission of medical notions from their Greek origins to Ibn al-Jazzar’s
   treatise and related problems, concerning, for instance, the translation of sexual terms from
   Greek into Arabic (cf. D. Jacquart and C. Thomasset, Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle
   Ages [Cambridge, 1988], 4).
2. The original contribution of Muslim physicians to the development of the theory and prac-
tice of Greek medicine, an issue that looks very relevant to our text. Against the background
of Ullmann’s statements that “the doctor [in medieval Islamic societies] when dealing with
the phenomenon of illness was not trying to discover new knowledge, or to reinterpret the
processes which go on in the human body, or to develop new and more adequate therapies”
and that “[F]or him the literature of the ancients is both example and authority” (M. Ull-
mann, Islamic Medicine [Edinburgh, 1978], 23–24), it is remarkable to find in Ibn al-Jazz-
zar’s text what look like some original pharmacological developments by Muslim doctors.
For instance, a decoction of roots created by Ibn Masawayh (p. 135, l.9, trans., p. 266) and
a powder prepared by Ishaq ibn Imran (p. 136, l.9, trans., p. 267) are both mentioned in the
chapter “On the Retention of the Menstrual Blood.” Moreover, Ibn al-Jazzar refers to a pill
he himself composed and experimented with for the same purpose (“I have tried it and
approved of it”: p. 138, trans., ibid.).
3. The reciprocal relationship between scientific concepts of the female body, on the one hand,
and cultural views on gender relations, on women, and on their status in society (as con-
ceived by men) on the other. For instance, on page 24, where Bos mentions the Galenic
idea, popular in the Middle Ages, that women’s “testicles”—namely the ovaries—are not
only smaller but also less perfect than those of men. (cf. R. Barkai, Les infortunes de Dinah:
ou la gynecologie juive au Moyen-Age (Paris, 1991), 21–24.)
4. Bos’s remarks on the awareness of Muslim doctors of the role of psychological factors in
sexual arousal and the comparison with Polemon (p. 30) in this regard could have been
much enriched when set against different cultural attitudes toward sexuality within the Mediterranean world in ancient and medieval times (see, e.g., B. F. Musallam, *Sex and Society in Islam* [Cambridge, 1983], 10–13).

5. The relationship between medical theories and religious concepts. For instance, if we compare Ibn al-Jazzar’s statement concerning the first appearance of menstruation in women with Islamic legal views about the onset of puberty and the minimum age below which marriage is not allowed, we find a significant gap. Interestingly, according to Ibn al-Jazzar (following Paul of Aegina) “women [usually] begin to menstruate when they become fourteen years old” (p. 39), whereas the traditional shari’a age limit for marriage is nine for girls if sexual maturity is proved (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 8:29, s.v. “nikah”). Illuminating also from the viewpoint of family and demographic history is Ibn al-Jazzar’s statement that the “retention of the menstrual blood . . . is natural when a woman becomes 50 years old, in the case of some women when they become 60 years and others 35 years” (p. 39). If we accept that such statements are based on everyday experience and trustworthy observations, this would seem to indicate that, in the medieval Middle East, the fertility period of women could be as long as it is in industrial societies today. In other words, a short fertility period will no longer do as an explanation for the practice of child marriage.


To sum up, this finely edited text of Book 6 of *Zad al-musafir* and the reliable English translation will give scholars with a wide range of interests access to one of the earliest and most influential Arabic medical–sexological treatises. Together they offer the reader a firsthand impression not only of the scientific knowledge accumulated in ancient and medieval Mediterranean societies on the anatomy, physiology, pathology, and physical treatment of the sexual organs, but also on prevalent psychological and cultural attitudes toward one of the central aspects of human relations. For this reason, Bos's work will unquestionably stimulate and serve as an important tool for further research into these subjects.


REVIEWED BY JAMES A. MILLER, Department of History and Geography, Clemson University, Clemson, S.C.

Geographers study places, and the geographer Joseph Hobbs has studied a place that holds sanctity in the three monotheistic religions, has been caretaken by Greek orthodox monks in the Egyptian wilderness, is replete with a microscopic landscape of holiness, and is now subjected to thousands of tourists each year. Mount Sinai, the Jebel Musa of the southern massif of the peninsula, has attracted hermits, ascetics, and pilgrims since the earliest generations of Christianity. Hobbs’s story is a disquisition on Mount Sinai, which is, above and beyond its dramatic physical setting and curious human characteristics, a place of no small spiritual dimensions.

This journey through the Sinai begins with a portrait of the elements of nature—land,
weather, water, and plant and animal life—that combine to create what in Deuteronomy is
called “this terrible and waste-howling wilderness,” and which Hobbs clearly loves as a keen
observer of the desert environment and the bedouins who live there. We learn that the Sinai-
mountain bedouin, the Jabaliya from whom Hobbs has learned much and reports with ease,
live in a world remarkably different from the rest of the peninsula: an environment of winter
snow and bitter cold; of flash floods and vest-pocket gardens on the slopes of Egypt’s highest
spot; a land rich in bird life and surprisingly diverse in its fauna—at least until recent years.
The detail of floral and faunal observations presses onward throughout the book, which never
leaves the environmental basis of human life behind. Hobbs’s field observations of natural
phenomena deserve careful attention, for they form a record of the array of what is and has
been but may be no more as a greater human presence closes upon the area.

What happened here of note, and what has made the highest peaks and surrounding lands of
the Sinai massif sacred, is the covenant between God and His people established at Mount
Sinai: Horeb, the mountain of God; Jebel Musa. The story describing the geography of holiness,
largely in Exodus and Deuteronomy in the Christian and Jewish traditions, is also prominent
and widespread in the Qur’an and is developed in many Jewish midrashim, elaborations, in this
case, of the story of Moses as found in the Bible. In flight from Pharaoh, having killed an
Egyptian, Moses went into the desert for most of his adult life, apparently, only to return to the
Nile at age 80 to convince the Pharaoh to release the Israelites of Egypt, “groaning in their
slavery,” and the rest is . . . history? Chapter 2 examines the biblical sources, relaying to us the
journey of the Israelites to the mountain and outlining the events surrounding the covenant.

Hobbs then takes on the difficult task of how places in the Sinai have been attached to the
story in the Bible. A “Heavenly Citizenship” (chap. 3) took hold in the Sinai, and in early
Christian history, the wilderness was filled with recluses and eccentrics; a monkish way of life
evolved that took form in the Monastery of St. Catherine (chap. 4), lying today, as it has likely
been since the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian, at the foot of Mount Sinai. Of course,
what has emerged, as Hobbs documents so carefully, is nearly a completely “Christian Land-
scape” (chap. 5); there is also a sacred Muslim Sinai landscape, interestingly imbricated among
the Christian, that also reflects what God did: “We made a covenant with you on the holy
mountain’s side” (Surah Ta Ha, 80). Hobbs reveals this small-scale Muslim mirror image in
chapter 6, “The People of the Mountain,” woven into a broader discussion of the Jabaliya, their
relationship with the dominating Monastery of St. Catherine, and their reputation over time.
But the detail of the Christian landscape in the Bible is far greater. Christianity reigned here
first; Judaism never did; Christians have from the earliest years been led to attach biblical detail
to real places, deservedly or not. The entire question of whether Mount Sinai is the actual
sacred locale, appropriately addressed here, is beside the point. What is believed is held sacred;
the desultory attempt to prove other places the real “God-trodden mountain” is the domain of
the actuary and not the spiritualist. Humanity has long since decided.

We see both sides of this isolated spiritual wonder through Hobbs’s access to the people who
live here today. He is able to slide from being a guest of the monastery, conversing with Father
Makarios like a student and colleague of Western knowledge (although the belief system of the
Crete-based Greek Orthodox faith that maintains the monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai has
tended to avoid appeals to Christian ecumenism; the visit of the Pope in early 2000 may have
signaled a decisive change) to visiting the high-altitude oasis gardens that the Jabaliya maintain,
arguing the shape of the modern world with Mahmuud Mansuur. Real people, honest and be-
lievable, live in Mount Sinai. They are attached to history through the images and echoes
recorded by pilgrims throughout the centuries, carefully documented here. St. Catherine’s
monks’ own sources—their library—remain off limits to all but themselves.

What emerges is a picture of a people, Christian and Muslim, wedded at the Sinaitic hip,
living in a world of their own, for a very long time, in a place that gives meaning to the shape
of the Middle East. It is worthy to note here that no other Christian monastery has such a penetrating historical pedigree. Often described as “the most perfect relict of the 4th century left in the world” (p. 74), St. Catherine’s inventory of icons is often described as the world’s oldest and largest (p. 83).

This small holy place, however, is changing. Big hints begin in chapter 7, “The Bedouin Way of Life,” as we learn that the Jabaliya must now be prodded to remember many of the “old ways” of a generation ago; that economic changes, demographic growth, and cultural adaptation have been sharp over the past thirty years. The 1967 Israeli occupation of the Sinai, never adequately described here, brought profound and unstopping changes to the life of the bedouin—and the good fathers, as well. Their lives, particularly welded together over the upkeep of holy sites and the everyday life of the monastery itself, began to take different directions, and the singular culture of the mountain began to unravel. At the same time, the new life of the region took hold, which has come to focus on tourism as a powerful agent of change.

Hobbs sets the scene by discussing the nature of visitation to Mount Sinai before the 1970s (chap. 8, “The Pilgrim,” and chap. 9, “The Traveler”). The book is in many ways recast at this juncture, and a new kind of energy charges across the page. We know that the latter-day traveler (David Roberts sketched Mount Sinai in 1839; the Cook office in Cairo first arranged tours of the Sinai, for sixteen days, in 1912) was already different from the age-old pilgrim; what begins to matter is what the age of “The Tourist” (chap. 10) is doing to pave over paradise—or in this case, attempt to run a télephérique up the slopes where God walked and Moses grasped the commandments and those who worshipped the Golden Calf were smitten. So much is happening at once—a new tourist town emerging, roads being laid, problems of water supply and sewage—that the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) detachment observing the Israeli–Egyptian peace process has performed its “Sinai Sweep” of trash from Mount Sinai twice a year since 1983. The monastery literally groans at the overload of tourists and the relationship with the government of Egypt is uneasy for the Greek monks. Unsuitable, unsightly, and unsustainable development lands in the lap of holiness. The project for a 1,000-foot cable car leads a life of its own, compellingly written in chapter 11, “The New Golden Calf.” The world becomes involved in a very small place, and the project whimpers to death.

Mount Sinai is a forceful argument for the kind of research that geographers and other social scientists can perform. Here, history, ethnography, ecology, and religion converge into a humanities tour of the horizon, focused on a single place and the human interactions with it. The density of detail revealed concerning the fundamentals of this place—the environment and bedouin life; pilgrimage and the minutiae of the human landscape—are not overwhelmed by the biblical epic that it has claimed. Hobbs selected his place well, however: there is no other Jebel Musa. One hopes that in works such as this lie the ingredients of its salvation.


Reviewed by David C. Champagne, U.S. Army, Fort Bragg, N.C.

One could assume from the misleading title of this work that it is a new analytical history of the fall of the Safavid empire and the nine-year Afghan usurpation of the Safavid throne. More than forty years after Laurence Lockhart published his monumental work, The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia, a new study based on subsequent research would be a major contribution to the field. But Willem Floor has made a different, yet extremely significant, contribution. He has performed a yeoman’s service by annotating, translating, and compiling primary source materials from the archives of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), or the Dutch East Indies Company, that someday will assist such an effort.
In his Preface, Floor makes the unassailable statement that in order to have a more complete understanding of Safavid Persia it is necessary to have “access to the richly documented experiences of Europeans living and working in Safavid Persia.” He then argues that because these documents are geographically widely scattered in archives and are written in Portuguese, Italian, French, Dutch, German, Russian, Turkish, and English, many serious researchers are deterred from using them. Floor, who is a native speaker of Dutch, explains that in order to assist other scholars interested in the Safavids he has begun to make available in English “information contained in unpublished Dutch documents.” In fact, Floor has both translated selected sections of the records of the VOC and provided information from these documents in summary form. He also mentions that although much of the information contained in VOC documents is commercial in nature, there are exceptions. Documents from Dutch VOC traders in Iran dealing with the period between 1720 and 1730, when the Afghans occupied a large part of Iran, predominantly describe and provide many eyewitness accounts of the traumatic military and political events surrounding the collapse of the Safavid empire. Floor has made available all the records concerning the activities of the Afghans in Iran during this period.

As Floor points out, the VOC had commercial representatives in three different Persian locations: Isfahan, Bandar Abbas, and Kerman. Thus, the documents describe events from three geographical perspectives. In the work, Floor states that he has made available all the information in the VOC archives between 1719 and 1730 regarding “the Afghan occupying force, led by Mahmud Khan Ghalzai and later by Ashraf Khan Ghalzai, their opponents and other relevant materials.” He also provides the reader with a helpful description of the organization of the VOC in Persia between 1700 and 1730 and those who were in charge. Floor is careful to point out that although the Dutch reports were circumspect and avoided reporting rumor as fact, these reports are from a Dutch perspective and therefore serve as only “one element for a more accurate and complete study” of this traumatic period in Persian history.

The main body of the work is divided into three sections. Part 1 contains an introduction in which Floor paints a picture of conditions in Persia during the reign of Shah Sultan Hosein (1694–1722). He also describes the character of this affable and religious, but ill-prepared, indolent, and unlucky ruler, using, along with information more commonly available in Laurence Lockhart’s *Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, facts gleaned from the Dutch archives. He also thoughtfully provides, in this opening narrative, definitions of Persian honorific terms and titles used in the text. He moreover discusses Iran on the eve of the Afghan occupation, Mahmud Khan’s early career, and his initial incursions into Iran. Part 2 contains an unabridged translation of the Diary of the Siege of Isfahan (pp. 83–172). This section and translated portions of parts 2 and 3, which cover events described in the Gamron (Bandar Abbas) Diary (pp. 205–360), are very valuable primary source materials. Part 3 covers Persian under Ashraf Ghalzai (1725–29) and other relevant topics.

The text also summarizes a series of descriptive accounts of events in Bandar Abbas in 1721 and the Afghan occupation of Isfahan between October 1722 and April 1725. Other summaries describe conditions in the Port of Bandar Abbas and the city of Kerman between March 1722 and April 1725 and in Bandar Abbas in 1728 and 1729. A separate section focuses on Sultan Muhammad Mirza Safavi, a pretender to the Safavid throne who claimed to be the eldest son of Shah Sultan Husayn. This imposter created havoc around Bandar Abbas between 1726 and 1728. All these sections are intentionally presented as disjointed chronological narratives (summaries) based almost exclusively on the VOC records. Floor provides footnotes to identify sources and to explain further references and events. He concludes the text with appendixes that provide descriptions of the island and fortress of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf that were sent to the leaders of the VOC in Batavia.

One cannot read this work without contemplating the deplorable state of the Safavid monar-
chy at the time of the Afghan (Pashtun) challenge. Much of the misery endured by the Safavid rulers was self-generated. Arrogance, indecision, and indolence combined with negligence of the affairs of state and unwise policies, especially Shi’i fanaticism, alienated their Sunni Afghan and Baluch ethnic minorities as well as converted ethnic Arabs. The Zoroastrians and Armenians were also victims of Shi’i fanaticism. Many members of these groups assisted the Afghans during their march across eastern Iran. Some fought in battles against the Safavids during the siege of Kerman and at the battle of Gulnabad outside Isfahan. Abandoning the policies of Shah Abbas the Great toward Afghan subjects in eastern Khurasan invited rebellion. By continuing Shah Abbas’s policy of confining potential heirs to the harem, Shah Sultan Husayn assured the ruination of his dynasty. The sons of Sultan Husayn performed miserably when pushed out of the harem to face the new Afghan threat. Eventually, a Turkmen from the Afshar tribe, Nadir Quli Khan, would push the Afghans out of western Khurasan.

In addition, Shi’i religious fanaticism, fanned for more than a generation by theologians such as Muhammad Baqir Majlisi, was met by powerful Ghalzai Afghan tribal solidarity and reactive Sunni fanaticism. Iran was ripe for the picking. As Floor’s documents clearly demonstrate, Ghalzai Afghans were more than willing to provide the coup de grace.

It has always been facile to blame the Afghans for the fall of the Safavids since they delivered the final blow. The Dutch records, similar to the other primary sources of the time, clearly indicate that the Safavids had become intolerant, corrupt, and incompetent. If the Ghalzai Afghans had not rebelled, some other group would have played a similar role. Unfortunately, the subjects of the Shah bore the brunt of suffering caused by the Ghalzai siege of Isfahan, and the resultant famine, pestilence, and death. They also were the victims of incompetent and extremely cruel and despotic rule by Mahmud Khan, then by his cousin Ashraf. The Dutch account of preparations for the battle of Gulnabad that ended in a victory for the Afghans is instructive: “March 6. We heard that the Persian army has decamped from Shahrestan and advanced one mile. However, all the sardars (serdaars; generals) are separated from each other, and that each one of them separately, would give battle to the Afghans to obtain rewards from His Majesty commensurate with their services” (p. 86). When describing Mahmud Khan’s preparations for the battle the documents record that on March 4, an Afghan captive had told the Safavids that when the Afghan soldiers were complaining about hardship and weakness, Mahmud had ordered the burning of all their acquired loot. “This was done at once and then Mahmud told his troops: ‘What do you want to do with these goods now?’ and that it was better that they were unburdened [by goods] so that they could fight the more courageously, and that it was his intention to conquer Isfahan and to destroy everything or be defeated totally himself” (p. 86). The ill treatment of the Sunni Afghans at the hands of the Safavid Georgian surrogates had come back to haunt Shah Sultan Husayn. The difference in leadership and motivation was disastrous for the Safavid dynasty and for Iran.

There are a few minor typographical errors in the text (for example, “pople” instead of people [p. 285]), and a few strangely translated passages (for example, “Batavia could only miss 50 European and 50 Balian soldiers” [p. 13]). What does “miss” mean in this context—“muster,” “provide,” or “locate”? The most difficult problem, however, is in the summarized sections that are a compilation of direct quotes from the VOC documents with Floor’s narrative and opinions. Sometimes it is difficult to know which is which. One egregious example can be found in an apparent narrative in which Floor states that in a battle, between the Ottomans and the Afghans, the Ottomans lost 30,000 troops and the Afghans only 14 (p. 247). One would think that an analytical comment would have been justified at this point, or, at least, a footnote identifying the source of such a questionable assertion.

Despite problems, the book is a major contribution and belongs on the shelves of all Iranian and Afghan specialists dealing with the 17th and 18th centuries. This book would be of value.
to research libraries. The general reader interested in Iranian, Afghan, or even Dutch history would also find sections of the work enlightening, amusing, sometimes appalling, and often fascinating.


REVIEWED BY ZOUHAIR GHAZZAL, Department of History, Loyola University Chicago

In Waqfs and Urban Structures, Richard van Leeuwen gives a clear and coherent thesis regarding the evolution of Damascene waqfs throughout the Ottoman period. Since the takeover in 1516 of Greater Syria by the Ottomans, “waqfs were an integral part of imperial policy and were used as a mechanism to foster the cohesion between the centre of authority and the conquered provinces” (p. 148). A number of phenomena point in that direction, all of which seem to confirm the thesis of the strengthening of ties between Damascus and Istanbul. A number of sultans, beginning with Selim, who entered Damascus in 1516, erected their own waqfs within the city. Ties were strengthened with local families either through iqtâ’ grants or prestigious appointments to religious positions. Positions of judges, muftis, and administrators to major public waqfs, were all intermittently infused with elements from outside the city—or, at least, with elements known for their loyalty to the “center.” These elements were not exclusively from within the hierarchy of dâ’ân and ulama, and the local would be mixed with loyal elements from other provinces. Above all, the local governors were for the most part—with the notable exception of the A’zms—Turkish, or at least from non-Arab provinces. Van Leeuwen argues—and that is his main thesis—that such phenomena constituted a clear indication of “centralizing tendencies” (p. 114) whose aim was for the imperial state to interfere in and control some of the major local institutions, among them, of course, the waqfs. Even though van Leeuwen makes it plain that such practices of “interference” did not imply that “waqfs were appropriated by the central government” (p. 87), there was nevertheless a deliberate urban policy of spatial control (the way waqfs were distributed). Control was imposed either through resource management (how rents and leases were granted) and appointments to major religious and judicial positions or through a reframing of the law to buttress the imperial grip over the city. Van Leeuwen’s main thesis is indeed far broader than a study of urban waqfs. It uses the example of waqfs to show that, contrary to many theses of “decentralization” in which the “center” is portrayed as losing its grip over the provinces (the so-called peripheries), the state did its best not to relinquish control over major urban institutions. In short, the “centralizing efforts” (p. 115) of the imperial state is the motto of this study.

Because the process of centralization was vast and complex enough and not limited to a single domain, van Leeuwen’s arguments could prove convincing, or less so, depending on the area under scrutiny (appointments to offices, the law, shari’a courts, urban infrastructure, etc.). The main drawback of the book, however, remains its main thesis—centralization. In fact, van Leeuwen borrows an already confusing theme from the Ottoman historiography of the past few decades without subjecting it to much scrutiny. The corollary to centralization—namely decentralization—is what usually fuels the debate, considering its political undertone. Since the provinces of the empire had become autonomous nation-states after World War I, if not earlier, attempts to prove their quasi-“autonomy” prior to colonial rule have become quite popular. This is particularly the case when contemporary concerns over the nation-state are at stake: if Ottoman control proves minimal, then those “societies” did not achieve their independence through colonial rule. Rather, they did it on their own, because “it was all there” in the first
place. In his centralization thesis, van Leeuwen does not seem to have any political motives, and his enterprise aims no more than toward historical objectivity and the search for reliable criteria. The problem, however, resides not in his sources (even though they are not always systematically scrutinized) but in the concept of centralization itself. Initially, this concept emerged first in the Western literature to describe a process of central control over regional institutions by creating a unified set of norms. The purpose was to show that historically the Western nation-states were able to survive only by controlling and homogenizing all kinds of societal institutions, a process that Max Weber described as a systematic and formal rationalization of the life-world (*lebenswelt*). Thus, and to pick up on the example of the birth of the English common law, a concerted effort was deployed throughout the 12th and 13th centuries with the sole aim of establishing one national feudal law—not Roman or canon law—that would pose itself over all the local and regional customs. There was one corps of itinerant royal justices, the “eyes,” to administer and develop it. Moreover, procedure would be by writ, which meant that a complaint had to fit within a well-defined formula. To be sure, and in hindsight, that was a model of centralization and rationalization of the legal and political resources at its best, one that would ensure the dominance of England until the early 20th century.

When we come to the strategies of centralization that van Leeuwen describes in his book, they indeed turn out to be of a totally different nature. For one thing, appointments of “loyal” people to fill the positions of judges, muftis, administrators, preachers, and teachers only manifest attempts to ensure “loyalty” and do not point in any way to structural modifications of such positions, however crucial and visible they might have been. Moreover, even though shari’a, in its Hanafi version, might have been permeated by opinions that point to the state’s interference, it remains to be seen how all this had affected judicial decision making in the courts or other institutions. Hanafi practice shared a heavy tradition of *taqlid*, and even if we scrutinize the *shurāh* and *fatāwā* texts, it is hard to discern any radical change in doctrine, at least one that would point to the fingers of the state and its desire to centralize. In fact, unless there are indications to the contrary, there was no desire to homogenize (or centralize) Hanafi practice, and appointing a loyal judge or mufti, or reframing fatwas to make them congruent with some of Ebu’s-su’ud’s opinions (p. 115), were definitely not exercises in state control. In fact, Ebu’s-su’ud’s fatwas look in hindsight much more radical in their perspective than anything Greater Syria had ever produced (an indication of how much the bureaucratization of the ulama corps was successful at the imperial center). A careful examination of the *fiqh* literature only shows that the *fuqaha* manifested no concern for integrating the Istanbul mufti’s opinions within their own work. As the English example shows, state control and homogenization need much more drastic efforts to be fully operative and meaningful than the sporadic labors described by van Leeuwen. Such a concerted effort would only begin late in the second half of the 19th century, and the Ottomans had to learn the merits of rationalization the hard way.

It would be more appropriate to describe the Ottoman measures as partial attempts toward rationalization, with the primary aim of controlling the fiscal revenues of the conquered territories. Obviously, in the meantime, such measures did have symbolic returns, as all economic performances do, but their main purpose—besides granting the loyalty of elites and their subjects—was to impose a new system of rent control. In effect, with the measures deployed by the state to enforce the propagation of some public waqfs, the waqf system became the main competitor to the *mi‘ūr* (both the early *timār*, and the *iltizam*) in managing taxes and rents, assuming, of course, that a distinction between the two fiscal categories proves relevant. If we posit the “rent” as the amount (in kind or cash) that the tenant-farmer or peasant paid to the landlord, then the *mi‘ūr* system, whether in its early militaristic form or in its later more competitive formula, had definitely contributed to an overall decline of the value of rents. In fact, considering the large sums that *timār*-holders and *multazims* had to pay the state, in addition to
the surplus they extracted from the peasantry, the whole mīrī system became an abusive corvée labor in which rents were minimal and taxation a meaningless category. As a result, waqf rents declined for the simple reason that they became uncompetitive vis-à-vis the mīr, and up to the 19th century, jurists complained about the harshness of the mīr and its lowering of the rents. Thus, Ibn 'Abidin, whose work constituted a closure to Hanafi practice, had to accept willy-nilly that the “tax” on the waqf’s rent be paid by the tenant rather than the administrator, simply because rents had rested on such low levels that no taxes could be afforded on them anymore—a perfect example of custom imposing itself on the norms of the fiqh.

Considering, then, that the primary aim of the state was to ensure the implementation of its mīrī system, which at its core was a hegemonic rent-control formula, what was behind its “interference” in the waqf system? Even though jurists tend to date the origins of waqfs to the time of the Prophet, the system that the Ottomans had inherited from the Mamluks probably goes back to what Marshall Hodgson had labeled the “Shi‘i century” (pp. 945–1118), when in the Seljuq period the custom of putting landholdings into waqfs so as not to subject them to government seizure became common. In other words, it was under the rule of the small, militarized bureaucracies, and the a‘yān-amīrs system, that waqfs had flourished. In fact, waqfs, together with shari‘a law and Sufi orders, had become the sole domain of the a‘yān and ulama as a protective shell against the excessive militarization of public life and landholdings. But it was under the Mongols, and later the Mamluks, that courtly control of waqf endowments became the norm. Besides attempting closer links with the ulama, what was the economic significance of such an approach? With the peasantry being trapped in corvée labor, and the value of rent for both milk and waqfs in disarray, courtly control over a domain that kept the a‘yān-ulama factions quasi-autonomous would only create a balance between state iqtaw and the waqfs, whether public or private. And the Ottomans were no different: “by the end of the 16th century the state had taken almost total control of the field of waqf” (p. 117). It was indeed that imbalance, due to the excessive assignments in landholdings among various types of rents, that gave the imperial state a golden opportunity to intervene. That investment in public waqfs, however, seems to have receded throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, while the traditional grip that the ulama maintained over the shari‘a courts persevered, and the dismal rents only contributed toward more procedural fictions in the courts (marṣad, long leases, dismemberment techniques, etc.). It is therefore a gross error to conceptualize the language of the courts, as van Leeuwen does, as a discourse of the state (p. 153). But they are not anti-state, either. A centralization of the court system would have implied far more sophisticated and costlier methods of domination than those deployed by the Ottomans.

Waqf systems have been generally described as tools to protect private property in the face of large state landholdings. However, the late Mamluk scholar Burhan Tarabulsi (apparently assassinated in the first year of Ottoman rule in Syria) noted that most lands converted to waqfs were originally “possessed” by their “owners.” If strict ownership was to be followed as a rule, the majority of waqfs would cease to exist. Clearly, then, if individuals were converting “possessed” rather than “owned” properties to waqfs, it could be either that those possessed properties felt much safer as waqfs (to transfer them to future generations related to the founder) or it could have been a “rent-control” mechanism. Properties that were part of a compendium would survive better the hegemony of the rent system controlled by the state.

To conclude, a city such as Damascus was kept with its major institutions running without much control from the imperial center. But the socio-economic ties with the rest of the empire—and, in particular, the rent-control mechanism (both in its militaristic and non-militaristic patterns)—did not help to create a homogeneous bourgeois culture within the city. Thus, even though waqfs contributed to creating an urban culture, they nevertheless represented more a sign of resistance to structural socio-economic problems than a healthy indication of an urban cultural renewal.

REVIEWED BY STEFAN REICHMUTH, Seminar für Orientalistik und Indologie, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Bochum, Germany

For a closer understanding of Islamic legal practice and for the application and social function of Islamic fiqh, medieval al-Andalus offers some highly fascinating source materials. Apart from a wealth of legal textbooks of the Maliki madhhab that originate from that region and a wide range of biographical and historical texts covering the different stages of the history of Islamic Spain, al-Andalus provides some of the earliest surviving collections of reported court cases (nawazil and ahkam) whose coverage of decisions in some cases reaches well back into the 9th century.

Müller has used the most complete and comprehensive of these early collections, al-Ahkam al-kubra by the jurisconsult and qadi ibn Sahl (d. 1093), to assess the incorporation of Islamic law into social and public life in Cordoba. By choosing fifty reported court cases of various categories from Cordoba dating from 1064 to 1072, the author focuses on the period that followed the final downfall of the Cordoban caliphate in 1031 and left Cordoba as a city-state ruled by its patriciate, first under the leadership, and later the autocratic rule, of the Banu Jawhar. The choice of this period has been fortunate, as the source shows remarkable continuity and stability of Islamic legal consultation and jurisdiction at all levels of social and economic life, illustrating the role of the town as a center of Islamic learning and literary culture. Ibn Sahl himself, who spent important stages of his training and his professional career in Cordoba, had been involved in most of the cases that he reported, which adds a unique flavor to his account.

The reported court cases cover a wide range of civil and commercial matters but also some spectacular criminal affairs, such as the murder of a famous scholar (probably by his own wives) and the execution of a fugitive condemned heretic from Toledo who had been discovered and arrested by some self-styled “guardians of religion” (muhtasibs) with connections to the militant ribat settlers fighting against the Christians, an act reflecting the radicalization of Muslim religious sentiments faced with the reconquista (in 1072—i.e., only thirteen years before the final fall of Toledo in 1085). Ibn Sahl’s reports frequently focus on procedural matters, reflecting a highly refined and complex handling of court procedure that could be mastered only by well-trained specialists. The recognized jurisconsults (mushawarun) of the town, whose opinion was to be sought in any question of importance, come out as the central actors in the arena of litigation and jurisdiction in Cordoba. Their legal opinions, which more often than not were strongly contradictory, were covered extensively by Ibn Sahl, much more so than the actual judgments of the cases themselves.

The legal arena was highly diverse. Apart from the courts of the qadi i-jama’a and the sahib al-shurta wa-l-suq (the Western equivalent of the eastern muhtasib), cases were heard and decided by the governor of the town (sahib al-madina) and by the appellate judge (sahib al-mazalim), who found solutions to legally difficult cases of public interest. Although these courts were not all bound to the same degree by the rigid procedural norms of the qadi court, they all based their decisions on a recognized body of Islamic legal opinion and were all advised by the same group of mushawarun from which the judges of the different courts were also largely appointed. It is this central role of the jurisconsults in a highly complex Islamic judicial system that can be regarded as the major finding of this book. It corrects the traditional concept of Islamic law as a more or less inflexible body of sacred and ethical norms without much influ-
ence on actual juridical decisions. It shows instead some very important developments, especially in the written documentation of witnesses and evidence of all kinds (by a kind of notarial document, 'aqr al-istikra') and in the important role of the ikhtilafl—that is, of the divergence of legal opinion that is so frequently expressed in the reported cases (in each of them, at least two opinions were sought) and that in fact seems to have kept the whole system flexible. One of the remarkable conclusions drawn from the presented legal opinions is that they refer mostly to madhab opinions, in rare cases to the Qur'an and hadith, but hardly ever to the body of the usul al-fiqh principles, which was already fairly well developed at the theoretical level at that time. Whether this reflects a general attitude of the Maliki madhab, not restricted to this period, is not specified. Flexibility and such a down-to-earth outlook cannot be seen with similar clarity in later collections, such as that of al-Wansharisi (d. 1508), who gathered fatwa material from a much wider range and from much longer periods. He cut out much of the specific background information of the cases involved and thus kept a high level of abstraction.

In his concluding section, Müller tries to explain his Cordoban findings within the framework of Niklas Luhmann's sociology of law. Law, in this approach, is neither grounded in the creation and maintenance of justice nor in the functions of social control and integration. It is rather seen as an autonomous social system geared to stabilizing expectations of social consequences for personal action in terms of temporal, social, and normative arrangements. Within this system of law, normative expectations are further identified with a specific group of legitimized persons administering it and with a social consensus about sanctions against violations. Law thus stabilizes the development of an increasingly complex society as a whole. With this model in mind, Müller sees Islamic law “not as an inherent part of society but an autonomous system providing structure for society.” This, however, requires incorporation of the available norms—even if not stated by the author, integrative concepts of law seem to come in here again. The author proposes a three-layer model of Islamic law, which includes the shari'a as the divine source, commonly taken as synonym of Divine Law itself; fiqh as the authoritative interpretation of the law by the jurists; and, finally, the application and use of the sacred legal norms in court proceedings and negotiations. Though not stated explicitly by the author, the role of the sacred law as a safeguard to the autonomy of the legal institution itself is obvious enough.

The tension between sacred norms and day-to-day requirements was apparently solved by a strict separation between normative interpretation and application. The legal opinions produced for contemporary cases were generally not regarded as developing the law itself, although gradual adaptation and change undoubtedly did take place. By keeping the layers apart, Islamic law in Cordoba remained both a Sphere of the Sacred and a “Law of the Society” (the title phrase is adopted from one of N. Luhmann’s books). Whether fiqh and istinbat—that is, the derivation of opinions to be applied in actual cases—can be distinguished so neatly is open to further inquiry. It can also be remarked that there is a danger in statements that take a well-integrated society too easily for granted and tend to downplay its inherent tensions and contradictions. After all, this was not a harmonious time for al-Andalus; nor was it for Cordoba or most other places. The borders and stratifications within society and the heritage of the “overwhelmingly foreign character of the politico-administrative structure” of the late Umayyad Caliphate (P. Guichard) would seem to have deserved more explicit treatment, especially with a view to the emerging semi-republican city-state of the ta'ifa period. The sources admittedly reflect only those legal institutions and cases in which Muslim jurists were involved, and the wide range of their legal activities is impressive enough. This may indicate a pervasive role of Islamic law and learning within society, but it could also hint at an increased closure and inward turning of the patrician elite of the town. Did urban society become more integrated under these circumstances, or did its cleavages deepen even further?

This rich, comprehensive, and carefully documented study breaks fresh ground both in the study of the history of Islamic legal institutions and in the social and cultural history of al-
Andalus. As a historical study of an exemplary and, in some respects, unique case of Islamic law in context and practice, it can be regarded as significant also for contemporary discussions about Islamic law and its socio-political functions. This would hold for the refined procedural and institutional framework but also, in a more sinister way, for the emergence of freelance hisba activists in times of social and political crisis (cf. the Abu Zeid case in Egypt).


REVIEWED BY ALI ABDULLATIF AHMIDA, Department of History and Politics, University of New England, Biddeford, Maine

With few exceptions, Orientalist polemics and nationalist inventions of history have dominated the study of nationalism in the Arab Middle East. The lack of a critical framework and historical analysis has led many scholars to doubt the very existence of nationalism in the region. Nationalism has been treated either as a political instrument of ambitious leaders and intellectuals or an insignificant phase in Arab history, soon replaced by political Islamic movements, regionalism, and tribalism.

Ralph Coury’s work provides a refreshing contribution to the literature. By focusing on the early career of Abd al-Rahman Azzam Pasha (1893–1936), Coury finds an ideal case to examine the social, intellectual, and political forces behind Egyptian Arab nationalism. The first secretary-general of the Arab League from 1945 to 1952, Azzam was the most distinguished advocate of Arab nationalism in the first half of the 20th century.

Coury demonstrates that the rise of Arabism in Egypt during the inter-war period was a response to social, political, economic, and cultural realities. Azzam’s Arabism, shared by a growing number of the Egyptian elite, was firmly grounded in his commitment to several major objectives: (1) to strengthen Egypt’s position against the British; (2) to promote Arab unity as a solution to Egypt’s unemployment problems; (3) to expand the export of Egyptian goods to other Arab markets; (4) to address the impact of the Palestine problem and Zionism (both the intellectuals and the ruling elite opposed Zionist claims to Palestine); and (5) to encourage an alliance with non-Egyptian Arab activists in Egypt favoring Egyptian leadership of Pan-Arab policies (pp. 2–3, 436–51).

As a general thesis, Coury argues that non-Western nationalism plays a positive role as a community-mobilizing ideology to fight colonial oppression. He is sympathetic to Azzam and the kind of nationalism and the bourgeoisie that Azzam represents. Only in the last chapter does Coury become critical of what he describes as “an effort to promote a self-exalting image for the Egyptian ruling class” (p. 420).

Coury’s huge volume synthesizes more than thirty years of research drawn from a wide range of sources. He draws on primary and secondary written sources and oral history. Published sources include newspapers, periodicals, parliamentary records, Arabic and English archives, Azzam’s writings, and writings of his contemporaries. Coury’s unpublished sources cover official papers and private documents focusing on Azzam’s memoirs in Arabic and English. Coury also makes good use of oral history. Along with interviewing Azzam himself forty times between 1969 and 1971 while collecting data for his Ph.D. dissertation at Princeton University, Coury interviewed many of Azzam’s relatives, friends, and colleagues (p. 509).

*The Making of an Arab Nationalist* starts with Azzam’s birth in 1893 and ends with his appointment as Egypt’s minister plenipotentiary to Iraq and Iran in 1936. The biography is divided into two main periods, beginning with “Becoming an Egyptian Arab Nationalist.” Here we follow Azzam’s childhood in a prestigious Arab family, his education in Egypt, his medical
Int. J. Middle East Stud. 33 (2001)

studies and activism in England, his volunteer efforts in Ottoman causes in the Balkans of 1913, and his involvement in anti-colonial resistance in Tripolitania (Libya) in 1915.

The second part, “Egyptian Arab Nationalism in Thought and Practice,” analyzes Azzam’s activities in Egypt as a member of the Wafd Party and member of Parliament, and as a representative of the Egyptian government in journeys with Hamad al-Basil to Hijaz in 1928 and to the 1931 General Islamic Congress in Jerusalem. The study describes Azzam’s tenure as minister to Iraq and Iran from 1936 to 1939, the politics of the Ali Mahir Ministry of 1939–40, the caliphal politics of Egypt’s King Farouk in the 1930s, the activities of non-Egyptian Arab communities who promoted Arabism in Egypt in the inter-war period, the Arabism of Talat Harb, and the economic impact of Bank Misr in the larger Arab world throughout the 1930s.

Azzam grew up with a strong interest in Arab history and culture. His family was proud of its origins in Arabia, encouraged his education, and provided a forum for encounters with educated intellectuals at home in their upper-class neighborhood of Hilwan. Azzam furthered his political education in Istanbul and Europe under the influence of exiled Egyptian Nationalist Party leaders, especially Shaykh Abd al-Aziz Jawish and Muhammad Farid. Coury breaks new ground by giving readers a detailed analysis (123 pages) of the most crucial period in Azzam’s early life when he joined Libyan anti-colonial forces in Tripolitania, where he spent 1915 to 1923 as an adviser and supporter of the resistance. In Tripolitania, Azzam viewed the weakness of the Ottoman Empire and took the opportunity to express some of his ideas about Arab history and nationalism in Al-Liwa al-Tarabulsi, the newspaper he helped found in 1919 as a mouthpiece for the Tripolitian Republic.

It is here that Coury reveals new evidence on Arab nationalism that refutes influential Orientalist arguments by Elie Khedourie, Nadev Safran, P. J. Vatikiots, and others that Egypt did not turn to Arabism until the late 1930s, and that Arabism was basically a tool used by the palace of King Farouk. A direct quote from Azzam captures the significance of the fight for the Arab cause in Libya at a much earlier date: “When I was a boy, I was an Egyptian Muslim. Being an Egyptian and Muslim didn’t change. But from 1917 on, with Syria and Iraq gone, I started talking of Arabism. Living with the bedouin, et cetera, worked to make me a supporter for something Arabic. The Tripolitania Republic decisively marked the shift to Arabism. But it was a different Arabism from that of the Ashraf [Sharif Husayn of Mecca and his sons]. That was a bitter intrigue. We never hated the Ottomans” (p. 173). This quote not only demonstrates the impact of Libya on Arabism on nineteen-year-old Azzam; it also provides a definition of how Egypt and the rest of the Maghrib viewed Arab nationalism. Sharif Husayn and his Syrian allies revolted against the Ottomans. In contrast, Azzam and the modern Maghrib view Arabism and Islam as two faces of the same coin. Azzam considered himself an Egyptian, a Muslim, and an Arab nationalist. This is another significant point ignored in many scholarly debates about Arab nationalism in the United States, which focus on the Syrian, secular school of Arab nationalism as the only trend in the region. Coury’s study shows that, barring a crisis, most Egyptians saw their identity as multifaceted—Egyptian, Arab, and Muslim.

Coury’s work has some minor errors in translating names. For instance, Al-Jabal al-Gharbi is a mountain, not the western mountains (p. 102); Azizziya is spelled Azin (p. 114); the mosque of al-Majabra is spelled al-Mujabirah (p. 151); and the Libyan notable Ali Ben Tantush is not from the Jabal but Azizziya (p. 157). The use of the term “bedouin” to refer to Libyans, even if used by Azzam, is a vague Orientalist reference. These mistakes can be easily remedied in subsequent editions.

There are two methodological problems and omissions in this work. First, Coury states that his theory of nationalism is shaped by the Marxist critic Frederic Jameson (p. 470, n. 158), but he cites the liberal historians Jacques Berque and Albert Hourani and the Egyptian scholar Hamed Ammar without clarifying the reasons for mentioning them. Second, he approaches nationalism from a materialist and critical perspective but focuses on Azzam as a member of
the Egyptian elite. How is it possible to study nationalism today focusing exclusively on the elite without exploring the reactions of the non-elite majority, especially the peasantry? The absence of non-elite actors encourages the persistence of traditional Orientalist and colonial assumptions about Arab society.

These problems aside, it is clear that Coury has written the most comprehensive scholarly biography we have on the early life of Azzam Pasha. The author’s rigorously researched work provides readers with a major corrective critique to existing accounts of Arab nationalism in Egypt.


REVIEWED BY ELLEN L. FLEISCHMANN, Department of History, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio

As Margaret Meriwether notes in her Introduction to this well-crafted study, until recently there has been little history of the Middle Eastern family. There were “histories of families,” which is not the same as a solidly researched sub-discipline within the broader field of Middle Eastern history, because these “did not deal with the family as an institution, its evolution over time, nor the relationship between family and society” (p. 2). The difficulty derives in part (as it does for other sub-fields of Middle Eastern history, particularly social history) from problems of sources that are partial, limited, or sometimes non-existent, and often where they do exist are unavailable. There are few written records on certain subjects, particularly private lives. Scholars of social history and anthropology have relied increasingly on the use of Islamic court records as sources for social history. The growing body of works produced from this scholarship has been highly sophisticated, nuanced, and exciting, opening windows into the history of private life in the Middle East. This book is a welcome contribution to this growing field of scholarship.

Meriwether’s focus is on household formation, marriage practices, and inheritance among Aleppo notable families in the early-modern period. Examination of these three aspects of the family reveals major insights about family and the law, the relationship between the family and the gender system, and ultimately “what constituted the family”—that is, “what the family meant to people at the time,” the three themes of her study (p. 10). The author raises questions that attempt to clarify the definition of family according to these Aleppo notables: Who married whom? Which family members lived in the same household? Who was linked as heirs or beneficiaries of religious endowments? How was property left? How was family structure defined? In other words, who were the “kin who counted”?

The book contains an Introduction, Conclusion, and five chapters that cover family and lineage, family and household, marriage bonds and marriage partners, inheritance and family structure, and endowment and family structure. The Introduction is a useful, thorough, and clear discussion of the framework, sources, and methodology of the book. It also includes an admirably concise and lucid explanation of the historical context of mid-18th to mid-19th-century Ottoman Aleppo. The discussion of sources is an elegant essay that deals with the issues and complexities inherent in using Islamic court records. Meriwether raises the questions every scholar using these records must ask: how extensively were they utilized? In other words, were they used primarily by those with easiest access to literacy and knowledge of Islamic law, the upper classes, thereby raising the issue of potential class bias? Can they be representative in any meaningful way? Another important issue she discusses is to what extent the recorded records reflected reality. Her self-consciousness in raising these questions, explaining how she
uses the sources, recognizing and analyzing both their strength and limitations, strengthen the scholarship. Her own focus in utilizing court records is to reconstitute the family in order to answer basic questions concerning household size and inheritance. She engages in historical ethnography to track the behavior of individuals, then situate them within a larger context. As she puts it, her goal is to see families “in action” (p. 15). She does this by paying careful attention to, and attempting to ferret out, praxis as reflected in the records.

One of the themes of the book, amply and empirically illustrated throughout, is that the tension between the ideal and the reality of the family led to a remarkable diversity, fluidity, and flexibility in the family structure of Aleppo’s elite. Family structure adapted to change, and the institution of the family did not exist in some timeless, unchanging reality unaffected by material, social, and political transformations. Ideals were constrained by material and physical limitations such as mortality, for example: the cultural preference was for large, extended family households, but short life expectancy of people in their reproductive years was a major factor in limiting family size. Throughout the book, Meriwether is careful to note the importance of situating data within specific historical and geographical contexts. She warns against making assumptions and generalizations about the “Islamic” or “Middle Eastern” family, advocating “firmly anchoring discussions of the family in a particular region or time” (p. 5). This work effectively, and in some respects quietly, undermines prevailing myths of a uniform “Middle Eastern” family (large, patriarchal households, young marriage age) by doing just that.

Chapter 1 examines the concept of lineage, which Meriwether defines as “all who shared the family name, including distant relatives,” against which is counterposed the “conjugal” and “residential” family (p. 11). As she notes, there were multiple and changing ties of kinship that sometimes blurred the lines among these family groupings. In this chapter, she traces how certain elite lineages rose to power and prominence, consolidating their position, over time constituting a group that was integrated through ties of marriage and kinship. Chapter 2, “Family and Households,” focuses on different kinds of households and how they were formed; the relationship between the actual and ideal; and connections between household patterns and the distribution of power and authority within households. Chapter 3 deals with the significance of the marriage tie. Among the elite, she concludes, marriage was not an economic partnership or a love relationship between individuals, but fundamentally a relationship between families to broaden kinship networks. It was “an important strategy for achieving familial goals—from basic survival and reproduction to consolidation of vast family fortunes and political power” (p. 111). In Chapter 4, “Inheritance and Family Structure,” Meriwether posits that the devolution of inheritance can tell much about family structure and strategies—particularly the way that particible property was divided and the timing of the division of the property. She finds that among the Aleppo elite, inheritance patterns strengthened the elementary family at the expense of the lineage. She also discovered that the final distribution of inheritance and the breakup of the joint household appear to have been closely connected. What comes across most clearly is how families were able to manipulate Islamic inheritance laws to fulfill their goals, demonstrating the flexibility of these laws. Chapter 5, “Endowment and Family Structure,” builds on the previous chapter in detailing how families used small and large endowments (waqf) to pursue different goals with each. Her findings reject the assumptions in some scholarship that waqf was used to disinherit women or to create primogeniture among legatees. Instead, she concludes that it primarily defined an economic network among a fairly narrowly delineated circle of kin and that its use was often associated with the consolidation of one branch of a lineage, signifying the breakup of a larger family group into branches with growing disparities of wealth and status among them. In other words, it often reflected significant changes in family structure and the history of a lineage.

One of the biggest strengths of this book is Meriwether’s integration of gender into the subject. Although family history tends to be associated with women’s history, thus relegating it
to the ghetto that is still, regrettably, erected around women’s history, Meriwether’s holistic and seamless incorporation of gender is a model of how social history, the history of women and gender, and family history can be woven together to provide us with a much deeper and comprehensive understanding of a crucial subject that was central to all people’s lives and, indeed, encompassed all aspects of people’s lives, including the political. Another distinction of this work is the author’s frequent comparisons with other Ottoman cities, which helps provide the broader historical and cultural context of which Aleppo was a part.

The writing in this book is admirably lucid—particularly in explaining concepts of Islamic law, but also in clarifying other specialized terminology and concepts that could confuse non-specialist readers. Yet it is a challenging work in its very comprehensiveness and complexity. I highly recommend it for scholars, graduate students, and sophisticated undergraduates, but it could prove to be too specialized for a more average student or general audience.

This book contributes to a number of fields within Middle East studies: social history, the history of women and gender, and family history. Although it does not shatter prevailing theories or revolutionize the field of family history, what this study does achieve is just as, if not more, important and valuable. It deepens and broadens our historical understanding of the institution of family. The quality and richness of the data, and the comprehensive and lucid discussion of complex and variegated factors that defined “the kin who count[ed],” make this a most welcome addition to the field.


REVIEWED BY JAMES A. REILLY, Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto

Eugene Rogan’s book on Transjordan in the later Ottoman period offers a narrative and an analysis that will interest Middle East historians in various fields. Using central Ottoman archives, local Jordanian records and memoirs and European accounts, Rogan paints an intriguing and nuanced picture of a frontier society’s experience of incorporation into the modern state. The book frames its material in a way that allows historians in other fields to compare the Transjordanian experience to their own specialized areas. The author’s major thesis is that the modern state was introduced into Transjordan by the Ottomans and their associates in the 19th century, laying the groundwork for the redefinition of the country as a political entity by the British and Hashemites after World War I. In arguing his thesis, Rogan is sensitive to regional variations in local society and politics. Each of the ’Ajlun, Salt, and Karak districts is finely drawn, allowing the reader to understand the distinct features of each district’s engagement with late-Ottoman modernity. The book explores the indigenous population’s relationship with newly arrived immigrants, colonists, merchants, and missionaries. Themes of general historical interest include state formation, population movements, integration into regional markets, crystallization of modern identities, and the creation of new forms of consciousness. The icing on the cake is Rogan’s fluent prose and nimble use of character sketches, which together make this one of those rare scholarly books that is also a pleasure to read.

In his discussion of the extension of the modern Ottoman state into the frontier region of Transjordan, Rogan defines his terms and does not beg the question regarding concepts of frontiers, frontier societies, and tribal society. The same is true of his discussion of his treatment of the concepts of state formation and modernity. The author combines conceptual clarity and methodological self-consciousness with rich empirical descriptions of Transjordanian society. The narrative is organized around three agents of change: the Ottoman state, Nabulsi and Dama-
scene merchants, and European missionaries. Rogan also takes note of counter-missionary work undertaken by Hanafi emissaries, who themselves were missionaries of a kind trying to inculcate new forms of religious and political consciousness among a population they deemed ignorant and backward. In this sense, Rogan’s book offers a concrete case study of themes adumbrated in Selim Deringel’s recent work on Hamidian propaganda and self-representation.

Ottoman modernity included the establishment of regular administration, the development of infrastructure, and the establishment of security. Ottoman policies of colonization and settlement and of land registration receive dedicated chapters. Rogan offers a well-documented treatment of the local impact of the oft-discussed Ottoman land laws. He concludes that tribal shaykhs undertook land registration partly as a defensive measure (to secure their title against other challengers), and partly in recognition of their new opportunities for profit from agricultural activities and partnerships.

The chapter on merchants focuses on the town of Salt and its relationships to Nablus and to Damascus. The decades after the 1860s saw the extension of internal and regional markets and the consolidation of a merchant notability whose interests were bound up with extension of state authority and institutions. The growth of Salt and its merchant notability are well illustrated by diagrams of new-style merchant houses of the period, and (most dramatically) by two panoramic photographs of the town taken some decades apart, demonstrating how much had changed between 1867 and 1921. The juxtaposition of these photographs alone belies any prejudiced caricature of Transjordan as an unchanging backwater prior to the arrival of the British.

In his chapter on missionaries, Rogan discusses the impact of European Christian missionaries on local society and the proselytizing efforts of the Ottoman state as Islam became a legitimizing ideology for Sultan Abdulhamid. The book describes and analyzes the role of missionaries in creating demand for modern institutions and services (medicine, schools) and in heightening sectarian consciousness and conflict. This account argues that heightened confessional awareness was a product of modernity rather than an atavistic holdover from earlier times, a development that invites comparisons to other Middle Eastern regions (e.g., Mount Lebanon) where sectarianism and modernity emerged as fraternal twins.

Further chapters deal with people’s accommodation and resistance to these developments. Accommodation was marked by the responses of people in ‘Ajlun and Salt to the new Ottoman order, whose laws and institutions acknowledged local interests through a system of inducements and alliances (with the threat of punishment lurking in the background). Resistance was most dramatically illustrated by the Karak revolt against Ottoman rule in 1910. By this time, the old, “corrupt” Hamidian regime had been replaced by that of the Young Turks, who were impatient with the piecemeal efforts of their predecessors and sought to bring Karak quickly and rapidly within the sphere of regular administration. Not wanting to be turned into mere Ottoman functionaries, local elites in Karak encouraged an ill-fated revolt that was crushed by an army sent by rail from Damascus. Here Rogan advances an arresting argument: despite an initial lack of sympathy for the tribal rebels among state-oriented urban Arabs (particularly Damascenes), the Karak revolt became a defining moment in Ottoman–Arab relations and served as a kind of antecedent to the Arab Revolt of 1916–18. During the revolt, urbanites engaged in nervous discussion of the potential power of Arab tribal forces. Afterward, Damascene Arabists offered the defeated rebels political support when the Ottomans imprisoned and executed their leaders and sought harsh economic reparations from the rebellious districts. Urban Arabists eventually came to see the Karak rebels as fellow Arabs who were suffering from the exactions of an oppressive government.

The book culminates in an illuminating survey of Transjordan in World War I. The author’s conclusion is that most Transjordanians sat on the fence or supported the Ottomans during the war. They viewed the Hijaz-based Arab revolt with mistrust and did not wish to risk Ottoman retribution by participating in an unsuccessful uprising. (At the same time, however, the close
ties that had been established between French and British missionaries and Transjordan’s Christian communities placed the latter in danger, because the missionaries showed little compunction about exploiting their communal ties on behalf of Allied spy networks.) The chapter on World War I serves as a corrective (as if another were needed) to the Arab nationalist narrative of events between 1916 and 1918.

The book concludes with an examination of the process by which the Faysali administration, then the British, attempted to establish local governments in Transjordan once the Ottomans were gone, culminating in the decision to render the country an emirate under Abdallah ibn Husayn. The new state of Transjordan arose on foundations that had been laid during the Ottoman period, and the character of these foundations had been determined through a dynamic interplay of local, regional, and international forces. Rogan’s book is likely to be the standard work on the subject for many years to come, and it is a rich source for considering a number of salient issues in the history of the modern Middle East as well as of the accidental Jordanian kingdom. The author’s empathy for the people of the country and his interest in their participation in their own history make this a laudable example of committed yet critical humanist scholarship. Instructors may wish to consider adopting it for use by their third- and fourth-year students.


REVIEWED BY WILLIAM OCHSENWALD, Department of History, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Despite the long-standing political and practical difficulties of doing research about Iraq, the scholarly world has recently witnessed the publication of several outstanding historical works on the Ottoman period. Hala Fattah and Dina Rizk Khoury in particular have set in their books a high standard of thorough research, careful analysis, and thoughtful conclusions. Now, in this long-awaited book, Sarah Shields lives up to her predecessors’ standard by making her own excellent contribution to the study of Ottoman Iraq.

Shields examines the history of the city of Mosul and the surrounding region from about 1835 to 1914. She discusses historical sources, geography, political organization, and social structures, but places primary emphasis on regional trade, with separate chapters showing the interactions of merchants, peasants, and nomads.

The goals of the book include demonstrating how local people had agency; they did not simply passively accept change that was imposed from outside. Instead, the population of northern Iraq actively took part in the Ottoman Empire’s Tanzimat reforms, as the empire attempted to centralize. As the developing world economy increasingly affected northern Iraq, the local population actively moderated the process by which the area became more closely incorporated into international trade patterns. Shields wants to show that changes ordered by the central government were locally modified and adapted, and she seeks to describe the intricate and changing ties linking the city of Mosul to its vicinity and nearby regions. Another of the author’s goals is reflected in the striking subtitle of the book. There and in many arguments found throughout the text the author responds to the claim of a French observer in 1896 that Mosulis were more adaptable than the French commentator believed, despite the need for difficult labor to overcome many local obstacles to innovation.

The author succeeds admirably in reaching all her goals. In addition, this book is important
because it makes a substantial contribution to debates on general models of historical change. Shields demonstrates that such approaches as modernization theory and world-systems analysis need to take into account more systematically local variations when reaching sweeping conclusions.

Starting with the re-establishment of direct Ottoman rule in 1835, the author describes the city and province of Mosul, including physical arrangements, political and economic elites, institutions, housing, textile production, and the standard of living. Although there is substantial discussion of Kurdish groups in the province, it would have been useful to expand this treatment for a longer period of time. Similarly, a systematic discussion of Sunnis and Shi'is and their mutual relations would have added to the value of the book.

Shields traces the role of the Ottoman government in the city and properly emphasizes the consequences arising from the short two-year term of office which most valis enjoyed. The rapid turnover in provincial governors often resulted in a heightened role for local leaders. In discussing the anti-foreign and anti-Christian riots of 1854 and the 1908–1909 reaction to the overthrow of the sultan, it becomes clear that groups in Mosul were able to modify orders coming from the central government. Nevertheless, the Ottoman Empire and its officials remained of greater consequence than Europeans, whose influence chiefly resulted in adding options to the range of possible elite actions rather than directly imposing changes.

Perhaps the most important sections of the book describe and analyze the actions and interactions of merchants, peasants, and nomads. Shields shows in a very convincing way that local resistance to and modification of the Anglo-Ottoman 1838 Commercial Convention was successful. Earlier Iraqi and foreign historians emphasized the crucial role of international commerce in the Iraqi economy, but Shields corrects this picture to prove that regional trade within the Ottoman Empire was far more important for Mosul than was international trade outside the empire. Instead of an analysis showing rapid changes in agriculture brought about by modernization or incorporation into the world economy, the author convincingly argues that most peasants and landlords changed their behavior quite gradually. Shields contributes substantially to the vigorous debate about the long-term results of the Ottoman 1858 Land Law. This legislation had different consequences in northern Iraq compared with the south, with Mosul’s notables buying some land rights but also limiting access by foreigners and other merchants.

Shields joins most anthropologists and historians who for some time have emphasized the mutual interdependence of nomads, peasants, and urban dwellers, rather than concentrating on conflicts among these groups. Her new contribution to this discussion revolves around the phenomenon of city merchants purchasing sheep and entrusting them to nomads for care and shearing. The author carefully traces the consequences of this change for government administration, taxes, wool exports, and security issues. Ironically, as Mosul’s merchants increased wool exports to Europe, the result was to encourage nomads to stay nomadic rather than to settle down and become villagers.

Very often, historians who write studies of late-Ottoman Arab provinces end their accounts with the beginning of World War I rather than discuss the consequences of the war and the dissolution of the empire on the province. Shields usefully continues her story beyond 1914, arguing in a short conclusions and suggestions chapter that the peace settlements at the end of World War I disrupted Mosul’s economic patterns and therefore drastically affected its future. Only with the development of oil did the Mosul region finally become fully incorporated into the global economy as Iraq became dependent on exports. The old economy and the old identities formed in the Ottoman era were destroyed or severely strained, and it was difficult for the new Iraqi nation-state to construct workable economic and political patterns to replace them.

In constructing these arguments, the author has used a wide range of sources. Too often earlier books on the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire relied chiefly on Western diplomatic archives and travelers’ accounts. The authors of more recent studies have added Arabic-language chronicles. Shields has carefully surveyed all these kinds of sources, but she has also
productively used the Ottoman archives and Turkish-language books, thereby constructing a well-rounded and carefully balanced account. Her narrative is also enhanced by occasionally comparing the case of Mosul and northern Iraq with that of Ottoman Syria, which has been studied in far more detail by many historians. Shields is constructively engaged in this book with a broad range of scholarly bibliography and argumentation, as, for example, when she compares her own research with that of Donald Quataert on Ottoman economic history.

This book is written in an engaging style that makes it broadly accessible. Shields has been able to make complex subjects remarkably clear, as in a discussion of tax systems in Chapter 4. Ample footnotes provide detailed discussions that specialists in the field will want to read carefully. The appeal of the book is also increased by several maps, illustrations, and detailed appendices. Unfortunately, there are a number of typographical errors that should be corrected in a second edition.

By carefully focusing her research and writing on regional trade, the author has been able in a relatively short space to construct an important, nuanced, and sensitive account of the lived experience of the inhabitants of Mosul and its region in the late-Ottoman period. The reader is left with only one major unsatisfied wish by the end of the book—that the story of Mosul and northern Iraq would be continued onward by the same author, through the post–World War I era, and up to the extraordinary events of the past decade.


REVIEWED BY RIAD BAHJUR, Department of History, Ohio State University, Columbus

Susan Slyomovics’s *Object of Memory* explores the ways in which Arabs and Jews (primarily Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews) narrate the Palestinian village, focusing on the pre-1948 Palestinian village of Ein Houd, located in the Carmel Mountains south of the city of Haifa. The Palestinian inhabitants of Ein Houd were displaced during the 1948 war and prevented by the Israeli government from returning to their homes there. Most of them became internal refugees, designated “present absentees” under Israeli law. Others became refugees in surrounding Arab states and in the part of Palestine that became known as the West Bank. Their properties were confiscated by Israel under the Absentee Property Law.

Ein Houd, like 418 other depopulated Palestinian villages, was slated by the State of Israel for destruction during the period between 1948 and 1953. Unlike the other villages that were demolished, it was saved from destruction by the Romanian Jewish artist Marcel Janco and his group of Dada artists, who were drawn to Ein Houd’s old Arab stone houses and the natural setting of the village. The Israeli government granted the Dada artists possession of Ein Houd, which they renamed Ein Hod, despite pleas from the former Palestinian residents of Ein Houd for permission to return to their homes. The new Israeli residents of Ein Hod established an artists’ colony there that became known worldwide as a center for Dadaist art and exhibition. The old Palestinian stone houses were preserved in many cases, in keeping with the Dadaist principle of preserving “native” or “primitive” art and architecture. The Palestinian landscaping of the village, designed to take full advantage of water resources and climate as well as to delineate social space, was uprooted and replaced by European-style landscaping, which was inappropriate for the local environment. Ironically, the Dadaists both preserved traditional Palestinian vernacular architecture and simultaneously advanced the settler–colonial project of the State of Israel.

At the same time, many of the former Palestinian residents of Ein Houd managed to hold on
to a small plot of land a few kilometers from their village. They founded a new Ein Houd, called Ein Houd al-Jadida, which is characterized by modern Israeli-style architecture. From the new Ein Houd, the people of Ein Houd watched the transformation of their old stone homes into a Dadaist artists’ colony and even passed their former homes on their way to work, and in some cases were employed to work in them as laborers. The added irony of Ein Houd al-Jadida is its status as an “unrecognized village,” meaning that the Israeli government does not officially recognize the legality of Ein Houd al-Jadida. The village does not receive government funds for utility services or infrastructure, and as an unrecognized village its residents face the prospect of relocation or demolition. Some residents of Ein Houd al-Jadida are at the forefront of a movement of unrecognized Palestinian villages in Israel called the “Association of Forty,” which advocates for the recognition of scores of affected villages.

Slyomovics is interested in looking at ways in which Arabs and Jews represent and memorialize Ein Houd/Ein Hod through memorial books, poetry, architecture, maps, photographs, social institutions, tourism, plays, and other forms of expression. She asserts that memory, even individual memory, occurs within a social, collective framework. She compares the Palestinian memorial books for the destroyed villages to those written by Bosnians, Armenians, and Jews memorializing lost villages and communities. These acts of memory emerge from a loss of the object being remembered, leading to the expression of what Pierre Nora calls a “symbolic topology” of memory. Memorializing lost villages and homes is a kind of release for a burdensome memory, as well as ensuring that the destruction of evidence of the lost object does not translate into killing the memory of that loss. Slyomovics discusses Freudian and Jungian theories of the home or house, pointing to the vital centrality of the home and the consequent trauma of loss of home. In cases in which evidence of the destroyed home is non-existent, testimony and remembrance are the only options for releasing the burdensome memory of trauma. Slyomovics recalls Carolyn Forche’s assertion that a poem may be the only signifier that an event has occurred.

Slyomovics invokes the idea of a palimpsest, a canvas on which layers of painted realities reveal underlying layers through the dominating, top image. Ein Hod is currently an Israeli Dadaist colony, yet Arab Ein Houd is evident beneath Ein Hod’s official representations of itself. Ein Houd is also apparent in the new Ein Houd al-Jadida, perched as a witness to Ein Houd’s transformations, as well as in the structures of the guesthouse (madafah) in exile, particularly in the Palestinian refugee camp in Irbid, Jordan, which Slyomovics visits. The madafah re-creates the original village madafah of Ein Houd, yet reinscribes its functions in exile as an institution for maintaining remembrance of the usurped village. Chapter 4 delves into the function of madafas in Palestine, Israel, and Jordan.

Chapter 5 touches on the poetics of Palestinian memory, focusing on Palestinian poets in Palestine and in the diaspora. She includes poets from Ein Houd who have written about their village and poets and writers who have written about the experiences of loss and sacrifice and about commitments to redemption and liberation. Chapter 6 is subtitled “The Gender of Transposed Spaces” and considers the gendered representation of Palestine, the old stone house, sacrifice, and al-awdah (the return). Questions of poetics and social relations and representations (such as gender) are dealt with throughout the book, yet these last two chapters are essential in bringing together many of the contradictory (and often absurdist) threads explored earlier.

In a responsibly engaged fashion, Slyomovics’s meticulously documented study itself acts as a memorializing book for Ein Houd. Throughout, she is careful to specify the various houses and other structures in Ein Houd, their current residents and uses, and the names of previous residents and owners of the houses. In Appendix 2, all the structures of Ein Houd are listed, including a breakdown of the houses by hamula or clan, their current Israeli residents, and the Palestinian owners, indicating their current residences (or in cases in which they are deceased,
place of death). Slyomovics treats both the current and former residents of Ein Houd/Ein Hod with respect and value, situating their narratives within an ethical framework that recognizes the dynamics of power between them. This book is an excellent addition to the field of Palestine–Israel studies. It is well researched and written with passion and elegance. It is a necessary addition to any library on Middle East studies, folklore, memory, representation, and colonialism, and it is a good introductory or advanced student text explicating the complexities of the Palestinian experience and the Palestine–Israel conflict.


REVIEWED BY DON PERETZ, Political Science Department, State University of New York, Binghamton

The principal focus of Zeev Sternhell’s screed is Labor Zionism, although like other Israeli so-called new historians, he touches on relations with the country’s Arabs, tensions between the Ashkenazi elite and Sephardi under-class, the Yishuv and the Holocaust, and attitudes toward and perceptions of Diaspora Jewry. The author, whose professional field has been European history, mainly France and Italy, was motivated to undertake this study by “serious doubts” (p. ix) about the generally accepted ideas sanctioned by Israeli historiography and social science. Using his skills as a professional historian, he probed Zionist and Israeli government archives and reread original texts to compare what he perceived as social and political realities with the ideology guiding policies. Sternhell is critical of traditional Israeli historiography because of the damage it has caused by separating Jewish history from general history. The consequences, he asserts, are “truly appalling” (p. x), resulting in paralysis of any real critical sense and perpetuation of “myths flattering to Israel’s collective identity” (p. x). This has led many historians of Zionism “to lock themselves up in an intellectual ghetto” (p. x), leading to ignorance and emotional blindness.

Labor Zionism, the foundation of the Israeli State, is portrayed as a militant movement whose ideology Sternhell repeatedly refers to as “nationalist socialism,” far more nationalist than socialist, if socialist at all. He questions whether the “unique synthesis” (p. 3) of socialism and nationalism was ever achieved in Palestine–Israel. From the beginning of the Labor Zionist movement early in the 20th century, the founders realized that the two were incompatible and therefore failed to achieve the social objectives. Many of the early leaders, including David Ben Gurion, deliberately sacrificed the social objective to attain their goal of a powerful national state. According to Sternhell, Aaron David Gordon, one of the founding fathers of Labor Zionism, regarded socialism as the diametrical opposite of nationalism and its greatest enemy. Berl Katznelson, another of the founders, perceived socialism as a myth that mobilized the masses. Sternhell asserts that the Histadrut, Israel’s massive labor federation, and kibbutzim aimed to conquer the land and build the nation rather than improve living conditions of the working class or create some form of ideal socialist community. Although Ben Gurion, one of the founders of Mapai (Israel Workers’ Party) and the first prime minister, sought to preserve unity of the labor movement at all costs, he regarded subordination of all social values if necessary for recognition of the nation’s primacy. His fundamental ideology was called in Hebrew mamlachtiut (statism—derived from mamlacha—kingdom) emphasizing the centrality of the nation and supremacy of the state over civil society. The concept derived from Ben Gurion’s self-perception as the founder of a kingdom, “an armed prophet, not a social reformer” (p. 35).

Although Sternhell credits Ben Gurion with “greatness as a realistic visionary and statesman”
(p. 331), he charges the founding father and most of the early leaders of the Labor movement with major inconsistency, if not hypocrisy, in their lifestyles compared with the living standards of the workers they supposedly represented. Leadership of the movement “did not hesitate to provide for itself a standard of living out of all proportion with that of manual workers” (p. 197). Ben Gurion and others who benefited from the situation “turned a blind eye” (p. 197) to the situation. They saw no reason to object to the huge gap in income between kibbutz members and Tel Aviv office workers. Sternhell presents extensive documentation on wage and living-standard differences between the Histadrut leadership and the workers it represented. While agricultural workers often barely survived on their incomes, leaders of the movement sent their children to prestigious schools and were beneficiaries of large loans from the organization. Ben Gurion, Sternhell states, saw no inconsistency in his relatively spacious house and the large amounts of money he spent on books, and the sparse living conditions of Jewish laborers. Ben Gurion represented “the most flagrant example” of the “self-righteous preaching of equality” (p. 294) among political leaders in Tel Aviv whose standard of living was “light-years away from that of pioneers in remote parts of the country” (p. 194).

Any trace of Marxist ideology disappeared during the early years of the Labor Zionist experiment in Palestine, according to the author. The major purpose of the Histadrut was not to confront the bourgeoisie or capitalist class; national objectives were to be achieved through a division of tasks between the workers and the bourgeoisie. The capitalist dynamic was seen as the key to progress. Only through “rapid and constantly expanding capitalist development” (p. 117) would the Zionist experiment in Palestine succeed. “An inflow of capital in quest of profit, a ferment of private initiative, an expansion of the internal market, and an increase in markets—only these could bring real progress” (p. 118). Ben Gurion considered the well-being of the worker less important than building the national economy. The worker’s function in society was to redeem the land through labor.

According to A. D. Gordon, land ownership in Eretz Israel was contingent on its redemption through labor. He wrote that the Jewish inalienable historical right to Palestine was “confirmed by the inability of the Arabs to cultivate and settle the country…. Our land… has become more poor and desolate, and abandoned than any other civilized country, and it is almost uninhabited…. the land awaits us” (p. 69). Although Gordon recognized that Arabs had rights in the country, “our historical right is undoubtedly greater” (p. 70) because of the workers’ redemption of the neglected land. Ben Gurion believed that exploitation of Jewish farmworkers at the bottom of the wage scale was less shameful than employment of Arabs who constituted a threat to Zionism. A major objective in creating a wholly Jewish workforce was to end dependence on Arab labor, a goal that was never achieved. Even during the 1930s, there was more than one Arab hired worker in agriculture for every Jewish hired worker. To this day important sectors of Israel’s economy depend on low-paid Arab labor.

Sternhell maintains that nobody fought against the Arab worker more vigorously than the Histadrut, despite the organization’s red flag and slogans of worker solidarity and international brotherhood. Arab opposition to Jewish settlement was regarded as unjustified. Katznelson recognized the right of individual Arabs to compensation for property obtained by Jewish institutions; however, as a national entity, they have no right to the land, he argued. “We do not regard the fact that they live there as a right of permanent occupation” (p. 175). He labeled the Arab uprising in 1929 the unruly behavior of “an incited rabble, thirsty for blood and spoil” (p. 174). Because the Arab population had no ownership rights as a national entity, the transfer of Arab population was for Katznelson a basic principle of Zionism.

Sternhell observes that there has been little difference between Labor Zionism and other Zionist national movements regarding Jewish claims to Eretz Israel. The only difference between socialist or Labor Zionism and the revisionism of Jabotinsky and Begin was in their methods. Labor leaders as recent as Golda Meir “appealed to history as proof of the legitimacy,
morality, and exclusivity of the Jewish people’s right to the country, to the entire country” (p. 332). Her denial of the legitimacy of Arab nationalism “was not a form of blindness” (p. 332), but perpetuation of a worldview that began with early Labor Zionists such as Gordon and Katznelson. Labor governments have been no less supportive of Jewish settlement in the Occupied Territories than the governments of Begin, Shamir, or Netanyahu, the author argues. Yigal Allon, a prominent Labor Party cabinet minister in the Eshkol government, was the chief protagonist of Jewish settlement in Hebron and a supporter of Rabbi Levinger’s group, among the most extreme elements of Gush Emunim.

Sternhell concludes his analysis on a semi-optimistic note. He credits the Palestinian Intifada between 1987 and 1993 with bringing to many Zionists a realization that there are ways to affirm their national identity other than by denying Palestinians the right to self-government. Rabin and Peres agreed to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization because it was the most rational solution from the point of national interest rather than because of their belief in a just and fair settlement of the conflict between the two nationalisms. Until Oslo, “all branches of Zionism were guided by more or less the same principles. The differences between religious and secular Zionism, between the Zionism of the Left and the Zionism of the Right, indicated a difference of form and not an essential difference” (p. 340). Since Oslo, Israel has become divided, and “a truly liberal tendency began to manifest itself in the labor-Zionist camp” (p. 343). Despite this note of optimism, Sternhell warns that continued settlement in the conquered territories endangers development of a free and open society. The uncertain factor, he warns, is the moral and political price Israel will have to pay to overcome the resistance that the hard core of Jewish settlers is bound to show to any just or reasonable solution.

Sternhell’s treatise, among the more iconoclastic works of Israel’s “new historians,” is bound to spark controversy. He has directly and sharply confronted several of the country’s leading scholars for what, he maintains, are their distortions or misrepresentations in the conventional heroic portraits of Labor movement icons, in their visions of the Jewish State, and in the events and circumstances leading to establishment of Israel. His targets include Anita Shapira, historian of the Labor movement; Shabtai Teveth, Ben Gurion’s biographer; and Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, the doyen of Israeli sociologists. But Sternhell’s critics will be hard put to refute his arguments, which are extensively documented with primary sources from Zionist and Labor movement archives and from the written works and correspondence of the Zionist leaders that the author cites.


Reviewed by Lamia Radi, Cabinet du Secretaire d’Etat aux Affairs Etrangeres et a la Coopération, Rabat

This work seeks to portray the reality of the “Maghribi woman” (the Maghrib of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) using a gender-studies approach. It therefore has both the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach: its multidisciplinarity allows each contribution to enrich the others by analyzing women in turn through their legal status and economic and political role. At the same time, however, this exclusive focus on women at times overlooks important aspects of women’s social relations with their broader environment.

The contributions to this volume fit well in the context of the political and social transition that the countries of the Maghrib have been undergoing by showing, through numerous examples, how women may come to embody individual men’s anxieties. Throughout this work, one idea appears again and again, unfortunately without ever being thoroughly formulated: that the
drama of the Arab Muslim woman is that men (whether fathers, brothers, or husbands) locate their honor in women’s sexuality. It is this logic that keeps women under the domination and strict control of all the men of the family group.

These works clearly demonstrate how, since the beginning of the century, the “woman question” has symbolized, and continues to symbolize, the most important political stakes on the national level, whether during foreign occupation or periods of national governments, or in the discourse of the opposition—notably, the Islamist opposition (Charrad, Mayer, Waltz). In this way, women have been the hostages of social, political, and identity-related battles in which they are not directly implicated, but of which they are systematically victims.

The authors also show how the marginalization of this “Maghribi woman” has increased, paradoxically, precisely where processes of modernization were put in place in the wake of national independence. Thus, agricultural mechanization led to the sub-proletarianization of rural women (Ferchiou); the emigration of men to the West increased the confinement of women in semi-urban areas (El Harras); and educated women have often been condemned to celibacy, since marriage largely remains a means for men to exercise an authority that the intellectual and financial autonomy of these “new women” calls into question (Adel).

However, certain contributions leave the reader unsatisfied, by advancing hypotheses or explanations, but then not fully developing them. For example: powerful women in the Maghrib have all been daughters or wives of powerful men; there are no cases of “self-made women” in either the political or economic realms; Maghribi women have led armies and formed and restructured alliances with numerous tribes and groups of ulema who have accepted them as leaders, but only in periods of deep political and religious crises. Should one then conclude that periods of crises are particularly favorable to the emergence of women’s power? This volume contains a wealth of intellectually fascinating propositions, many of which unfortunately are addressed cursorily and often only in anecdotal form (Tamouh).

In addition, as is often the case with collections of essays, the work suffers from the lack of a guiding coherent methodology. The approaches as well as the central questions are very different, with everything being applied to diverse micro-level problems. This makes comparison less useful and a more comprehensive understanding impossible. It is particularly regrettable that the remarkable historical-legal analysis of the statute of women’s citizenship in Algeria under both colonization and the socialist regime (Sai) was not replicated for the other Maghrib countries. Parallel studies would have helped provide a more complete picture of the varying legal status of women and the evolution of that status over the past fifty years. The numerous editorial errors are also unfortunate, as is the fact that the bibliography makes reference to many works from the 1960s through the 1980s, but seems to ignore the literature of the past decade.

That said, this volume is an important and provocative contribution to the growing body of literature on women and women’s issues in North Africa. For a broad overview of the situation of North African women in all their diversity, however, the seminal work remains that of Zakya Daoud, *Feminisme et politique au Maghrib* (Casablanca: Eddif, 1996).


REVIEWED BY AVRIL MAKLLOUF, Institute of Christian Oriental Research, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

In the Preface, Fadwa El Guindi states that her book is a study “born out of fieldwork on the contemporary Islamic movement” and represents “an original synthesis of ethnography, history, Qur’anic text, Hadith, and Tafsir.” But the book is also exhortatory. In a preliminary sentence
that takes the place of a dedication, El Guindi expresses the hope her book will reach those
who have made the decision to veil, those who have refused, those who have always veiled,
and those who have never veiled. It is clear that El Guindi’s main audience is Muslim women
and men, whom she invites to understand the religious, political, and sociological origins of
their current stances for or against veiling. Yet the non-Muslim reader, who feels graciously
invited into the audience to observe and learn, easily understands her arguments.

The veil, which is not limited in the discussion to a face cover, is shown first as an article
of clothing. Like all garments, it both conceals and reveals, for it draws attention to what is
hidden. It indicates boundaries as well as social and religious status. Because the present-day
Islamic world is strongly influenced by Western culture through the visual media and by mod-
ern Western fashion in dress, El Guindi understandably allots considerable space to the differing
interpretations of dress codes in Western and Islamic countries. One might observe, however,
that many—perhaps most—Muslims make use of many items of clothing that are of Western
origin, such as the ubiquitous genderless and classless garment commonly known as “jeans.”
Yet the meaning of these and similar items varies according to the religious eye of the beholder,
so that a well-cut sleeveless summer dress of conservative length that did not reveal the cleav-
age of the breasts would seem decent and attractive in Europe or the Americas to all but the
most conservative, while it would be interpreted by many citizens in the Middle or Near East
as demonstrating an insensitivity to Islamic values. Similarly, the heavily veiled appearance
of Muslim women in the streets of a Western metropolis could be seen as quaint or excessively
guarded.

El Guindi brings to light important points in the early chapters of her book. She notes that
veiling, as a metaphor for appropriate dress for the religious person, has not always been con-
fined to women. In a historical account of veiling in ancient Egypt and the Middle East until
the present day, she shows how different religions interpreted their use of various forms of the
veil according to their attitudes about the body and about gender. These attitudes brought about
markedly different anthropological interpretations of the same item of dress.

For the Western reader, El Guindi is at her best when she describes the Islamic notions of
privacy and sacred space, and how in her opinion these differ even from those ideas she attri-
butes to the Mediterranean and Balkan worlds. Her arguments are well founded and carefully
developed. Thus, her view is that for centuries in the latter milieu, honor and shame have had
more to do with what might bring honor or shame to individual men in a male-centered society.
In the Islamic world, the family rather than the individual is the primary unit of society, and
honor and shame have more to do with the viability of the family, in which women have the
most important place as rulers, actual or potential, of the home. Their dignity and rights in
Islamic law devolve from this perspective.

The notion of privacy, which in the West is linked primarily to individual rights and to the
ownership of one’s space and time, is seen very differently in the Arab milieu. Here privacy is
relational and public, for it has to do with women and men and their role in the family, and
therefore in society. El Guindi discusses the various Arabic terms for these concepts. Principal
among these are rahm, huur, and hishmah, all of which have unbreakable links to Islamic
religious concepts such as sanctity and self-respect. Connected with the concept of privacy is
the idea of profane versus sacred space. In the Islamic milieu, sacred space is created not so
much by the physical locus as by the intent of the person. Thus, a Muslim at prayer actually
creates sacred space by his or her posture and intent. In public situations, women in particular
indicate the sanctity of their central position in the home by their bearing, gait, and clothing.
Their modesty in dress has nothing to do with their supposed subjugation in sexual matters, for
they are aware that sexual pleasure is God-given to both women and men.

All these aspects are presented with erudition and appropriate references to other studies,
and they demonstrate a grasp of anthropological and sociological issues, as well as a thorough
grounding in Islamic sciences. El Guindi goes on to discuss what is for her, and probably for
most of her readers, the most important issue of her book—that is, the function of the head veil worn today by many Muslim women and girls in Islamic countries and in secular states.

The religious and political factors involved in this phenomenon are described in the last chapters of the book. Chapter 9, which is concerned with theological issues, appears to interrupt the flow, yet brings the reader back to a realization of the interaction of the sacred and the profane.

The crucial years are 1967 and 1973, years of defeat and then victory for the Arab people. The defeats suffered in 1967 caused many Muslims to doubt their growing reliance on secular views of the state as primarily an economic and political entity. A movement began among young middle-class women and men, which took the form of small groups who took their religious heritage seriously. One way in which women in these groups could show their disagreement with the direction taken by their countries’ leaders was to adopt the face-revealing head veil. This was undoubtedly a respectable way to show political dissent in public and among one’s own kin. Official religious leaders were frequently at a loss as to how to comment on these manifestations, especially as the groups took Islam seriously both in theory and in practice. Parents who had brought up their girls to be well informed in secular matters were often bewildered, especially as the two previous generations had struggled to secure the abolition of many of the older gender-based restrictions on the public activities of women and girls. These restrictions had certainly not been limited to the Arab East. In fact, women once admitted to professions in the Arab world were often given greater respect in their public roles than was the case at that time in the West. One of the most interesting byproducts of the movement was that through their studies of Qur’anic sciences, Muslim women gradually became religious leaders, although they were not officially recognized as such.

El Guindi ends her absorbing book with an evaluation of how veiling is affecting the growth of feminism in Islamic societies. Women in Turkey, for instance, are demanding the right to wear the veil, a practice that had been forbidden since the time of Atatürk.

Having concentrated her field studies and observations on women in Egyptian, Algerian, and Palestinian societies, El Guindi is understandably reticent about the type of veiling current in Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan and about the motivation of those who enforce this practice. Her silence speaks volumes about the great differences between these societies and those in which the modern veiling option is now prevalent. El Guindi raises important issues and discusses them with authority. Her book certainly belongs in the library of any university department concerned with anthropological and social studies.

My own observation, based on more than forty years of long and short stays in Arab countries as a scholar, professional employee, and family member is that perhaps a gentle reminder could have been added to this instructive book that too strictly observed codes of dress might actually work against religious objectives. Familiarity with nomadic and semi-nomadic women of the Gulf states taught me early that some styles of face veiling can be used by the wearer for provocation, in much the same way that net-decorated hats were worn by Western women as late as the 1950s.

The most serious points are often best made with the lightest possible touch.


REVIEWED BY LAURENCE MICHALAK, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California, Berkeley

The Muslim woman—secluded, oppressed, and either longing for liberation or ignorant in her false consciousness—has been an enduring topos in the Western imagination since the spread
of Islam. Right? Wrong. Mohja Kahf explains that in fact “the question of the liberty, or lack thereof, of the Muslim woman” does not appear until around the 17th century, and the image of the subjugated Muslim woman, with its trappings of harems and veils, does not reach full fruition until the 18th and 19th centuries. If we go back to the 8th century, even after the Muslims had conquered Spain and part of France, there was a lack of European curiosity about Muslims and a tendency to see them as just another enemy who was not particularly different from the pagans of Europe. Orientalism and its gendered images came much later and were based on and helped to justify Western domination over the East, especially during the rise and heyday of colonialism. What, then, was the European image of the Orient—in particular, of Muslim women—during the many centuries before Orientalism, when the Muslim world was as powerful as, or even more powerful than, Europe? Kahf answers this question by introducing us to a series of fictional Muslim women from European literature of the Middle Ages through the late Romantic period.

The author begins with Bramimonde, the wife of the Saracen king of Spain in *The Song Of Roland* (ca. 1100). Bramimonde is the “termagant,” or shrew, in the book’s subtitle; in the end, she converts to Christianity, turns the Saracen treasure over to France, becomes quiet and passive, and is renamed Julienne. Bramimonde is not unredemingly nasty, nor is she erotic or exotic. Other Muslim women from the literature of the Middle Ages—with such names as Melaz, Josian, Floripas, and Orable—are not termagants at all but noble and virtuous women, albeit with a penchant for handsome Christian captives. A notable exception is the sultan of Syria’s mother in one of the *Canterbury Tales*. She is a “well of vices” who feigns conversion to Islam, then holds a treacherous feast at which she has the Christian crusaders and Muslim apostates hacked to pieces—although Chaucer puts this tale into the mouth of the Man of Law, a misogynist for whom there is no real difference between Muslim and Christian women. Kahf generalizes that these tales of the Middle Ages are relatively benign, tending to make the Orient the same as the West rather than different, inferior, or subhuman.

During the Renaissance, Europe began to assume a gradual ascendance vis-à-vis the Islamic world, but the author calls attention to differences from country to country, as well as ambiguities in the literary representations. At one extreme, we have what was to become Italy, where various principalities allied with the Ottomans at different times in “intimacy with the Islamic Other” (p. 59). That the Muslim was not necessarily an enemy for the Italians is reflected in Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, in which the daughters of the sultan of Babylon or the king of Tunis are no different from Christian princesses. At the other end of the spectrum is Spain, where the Moors were expelled and demonized. The *reconquista* is reflected in a character from *Don Quixote*—the Moorish noblewoman Zoraida, who helps the Christians against her fellow Muslims, then unveils, converts, and changes her name to Maria—although Cervantes tells the story with cryptic and humorous hints that he may not share the anti-Muslim politics of his time.

During the Enlightenment, the Western image of the Muslim woman changed from one of assertiveness to one of passivity, and the theme of the seraglio emerged. Instead of the spirited Muslim princess, we have the Odalisque—the “woman of the room,” looking languidly toward the door, awaiting the arrival of her master, like the woman in the painting by Ingres. The author examines discourses about imagined harems by Montesquieu, Samuel Johnson, Daniel Defoe, Rousseau, and Mary Wollstonecraft. Of course, none of these authors had any experience of the Orient. For them, the harem was only a metaphor for discussing women in Western society. The only author with any actual experience of the Orient or of harems, Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu, defended the Turks and minimized the distinctions between the Orient and the Occident. The last fictional Oriental women to whom the author introduces us are from late Romantic literature. They include Leila from Byron’s *The Giaour*, a harem beauty drowned for her liaison with a Christian lover, and the unnamed Muslim woman in Hugo’s *Le Voile*, stabbed to death by her brothers in an honor killing. From the imagined harems of Byron and Hugo, it is only a short step to modern Orientalism.
Western Representations of the Muslim Woman is a corrective to the tendency to project Orientalism backward in time to periods in which it did not exist, examining European images of the Middle East during earlier periods that are interesting in their own right. The author is an enthusiastic reteller and analyst of tales. Her literary examples are numerous and her analyses nuanced, and it is not possible to do justice to them in a short review. The book gives more than the title promises. Beyond the topic of Muslim women in pre-Orientalist literature, it provides short, useful overviews of European attitudes toward the Muslim world, European–Middle Eastern relations, and changing gender relations in Europe from the 11th to the 19th centuries, not only in literature, but also in other domains. This book will appeal to scholars interested in what came before Orientalism, as well as to a broader audience of those interested in gender, literature, history, and the Middle East.


REVIEWED BY EBRÂHIM MOOSA, Department of Religious Studies, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

In this book-length essay, Muhammad Sà’id al-Àshmawy, the former Egyptian judge turned writer on contemporary Islam, engages with issues that have occupied Muslim communities for much of the 20th century. He addresses Islam’s encounter with the “Other” (Jews and Christians), the role of religion in politics, and the application of Islamic law in modern Muslim societies. The author, whose writing was produced in English with the assistance of Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban in the capacity of editor, seeks to combat what he terms the phenomenon of Islamic extremism from which the book derives its title.

Before the addressing the theme of the essay, Àshmawy argues that the common thread to the three Abrahamic faiths is that they are salvific in nature. The purpose of religion is to save the totality of humankind, with the ideal motto for salvation being: “Live as One in All, and All in One” (p. 66). However, ‘Ashmawy also tries his hand at being a comparativist and spends a considerable part of his argument championing the cause of ancient Egyptian religions, going to great lengths to show that Judaism is mainly derived from these religions. After cataloging a number of correspondences, he states that “it is quite certain that Judaism began in Egypt and was developed through much of Egyptian mythology, ideas and words. Most historians and scholars do not know, or neglect, the Egyptian elements in Judaism, looking for and mentioning only, the Mesopotamian influence [sic]” (p. 47). This novice-like effort may be grist to the mill for polemics about the origins of Judaism. But ‘Ashmawy may be overstating his case in trying to interrogate the historiography of Judaism. Most scholars would readily agree that there are parallels between some Old and New Testament narratives and Egyptian wisdom literature. But to take that resemblance any further requires much more detailed argument and cogent evidence than what this author provides. The imprint of borrowing from Egypt is less visible on Christianity and Islam. But ‘Ashmawy finds parallels between Christianity’s claim of Jesus being the “word” turned flesh and the Egyptian deity, Osiris, who, like Christ, had a dual nature—divine and human—and was also called the “Great Word.”

Two authorities govern human life, according to ‘Ashmawy: spiritual authority and civic authority. The former is in the hands of the clergy, who mold religion, and the latter is the realm of politics in order to regulate human conduct. Of the two, he privileges governance by means of civic authority. “Politics should be practiced unfettered by religion but on the basis of [a] civil code. At the same time religion needs to be protected from political distortion or
corruption and unimpeaded by earthly disputes or conflicts” (p. 71). Religion, if mixed with politics, turns into a fatal ideology. For this reason, religious parties should be excluded from politics by the “civil state.” Politics is the big culprit that is unable to grasp the significance of faith. Instead, politics turns faith into dogma and results in deviance from the noble tenets of “original” faith and, finally, fails to universalize ethics. “True” religion is open to all human-kind. Ashmawy argues, and the “original” purpose of religion is to integrate all human beings. How one attains a non-ideological religion and how exactly one unites humanity with non-ideological ideas remain unexplored.

In the case of Islam, only the governance of the Prophet and that of the second caliph, Umar, were exceptional periods. On these rare occasions, there was an effective administration of justice, which he believes is the meaning of the Qur’anic term for “government.” On this basis he is much opposed to describing the past and present Muslim political authority as “Islamic government” (pp. 73, 79). At this point, Ashmawy’s arguments become almost telegraphic in their brevity, then rapidly regress into gross generalizations of history. Almost all of Islamic history is cast as a massive distortion of disturbing proportions. Ironically, Ashmawy’s bête noire, the Muslim extremists, also deem much of Islamic history to be a distortion of the elusive ideal. Muslim modernists and fundamentalists share a proclivity to be selective with history. Both groups have to prove much of Muslim history to be wrong, lapsarian, and an aberration from the norm—with a few periods being exceptions, of course. The implication is that only in modernity do we rediscover “true” Islam once again. Ashmawy does not hesitate to state that political jurisprudence in the past was the self-serving work of jurists in league with the rulers. One is reminded of that “enormous condescension of posterity,” in E. P. Thompson’s now famous words, to avoid making such sweeping judgments. Few would argue that there were some jurists who were willing to please their rulers. But to tarnish the entire legal record with the flaws of a few, and without adequate evidence, is a different story altogether.

To explain his position, Ashmawy says that the “liberal, intellectual and enlightened movement” in Islam distinguishes between “Islamic law” as the perfect ideal and “Islamic jurisprudence” as the aberration of that ideal (p. 125). In the vein of the liberal movement, he offers a corrective understanding of jihad and some of the more problematic features of Islamic law and specifically responds to the constructions of some Islamists on these topics. He argues that not all of the rules stated in the Qur’an are permanent, the best example being that the rules regarding slavery have been rendered redundant. He also discusses the penalty for theft and the special conditions that must prevail before a thief’s hand is amputated, such as freedom from need and that the stolen property must have a personal owner. For this reason, Caliph Umar suspended the penalty when there was widespread famine; because public funds did not have an individual owner, theft and embezzlement of such funds was not punishable by amputation (p. 100). With this tantalizing nugget of information from the corpus of traditional Islamic law, Ashmawy is trying to show that the severe penalty was not applied without discretion, but he leaves us wondering what the liberal view would advocate as a penalty for such crimes.

Ashmawy’s reformist method creates binary relationships: original Islam versus distorted Islam; true versus false; Islamic law versus Islamic jurisprudence; and Islam versus Muslims, with the second category always representing the lesser element and prefiguring its opposite. However, reality does not lend itself to such neat compartmentalization. The idealism of modernists as well as traditionalists is at times stifling, to say the least. Can one seriously distinguish between “Islam” and “Muslims,” a rhetorical apologetic to which modernists, Islamists, and traditionalists frequently resort? Such a pure realm is of course only possible in the angelic world, God’s mind, or at the level of pure abstraction. Because such a distinction is meaningless, we have to acknowledge that Islam is a phenomenon that occurs within history and that one ignores it at a cost. Ashmawy’s reformist sentiment and his efforts at that are laudable, but his method of reform does not offer an intervention that we have not heard of before. Reformist
projects are ideological in nature, and it might have been easier had he admitted that all efforts at reconstruction are ideological, including his project as well as those of his opponents. Of course, they will differ at the level of sophistication, complexity, and efficacy, and these will also be the features that will make them attractive or repulsive as intellectual projects. The text would also have profited from a more rigorous scrutiny of transliterated terms.


REVIEWED BY MEHDI MOSLEM, European Business School, London

Arguably, the most distinguishing facet of Iran’s post-revolutionary regime has been the plethora of institutions and competing power centers. The myriad religious and revolutionary bodies are constitutionally empowered to subdue and duplicate the functions of the central government and the republican institutions. This structural enigma is exacerbated by the existence of political factions dispersed throughout the Iranian polity. Although they maintain their allegiance to the tenets of the Islamic Revolution and the ideological legacy of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, factions provide divergent renditions on policies in different realms. For this reason, political outcomes in the Islamic Republic of Iran depend largely on the faction that controls the relevant organization or ministry.

Buchta’s book is an attempt to shed light on the Islamic Republic of Iran’s multifarious state and the role of powerful factions in it, with a particular focus on Iran since the election of Muhammad Khatami as president in 1997 and the fate of the reform movement. The author’s pronounced goal is to provide “a systematic overview of the different power centers and competing ideological wings and individuals” (p. 4). Consequently, this book seems to have been conceived more as a lengthy report-like publication on Iranian current affairs than as a well-researched academic book about the highly ephemeral politics in the republic. With the possible exception of his account of Iran since Khatami’s election, Buchta’s book is largely a narrative exposé of politics and instrumental personalities in present-day Iran.

The first part of the book, “Iran’s Maze of Power Centers,” discusses Iran’s religio-political and revolutionary institutions: formal and informal power structures, the competing factions, the president, the leader, and the revolutionary bodies. The major theme—explored previously and far more thoroughly by others, particularly by Asghar Schirazi in The Constitution of Iran: Politics and the State in the Islamic Republic—is that real power lies not with the president but with the supreme leader (faqih) and various religious bodies, such as the Guardian Council and the Assembly of Experts. This explains the difficulties Khatami has faced in implementing his reforms since his election. Although Buchta accurately identifies the basic views of factions and provides some insightful information about the institutional powers of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and his entourage, this part is basically a summary of Iran’s complex political system, and it oversimplifies the Iranian polity to a great degree. For instance, Buchta characterizes Iran’s power structure as “quasi-feudal,” where “upper level […] posts are assigned exclusively to immediate relatives and friends of the individuals in power” (p. 6) but gives little significance to the “modern,” quasi-democratic components of the regime that have challenged this so-called feudal system. The Iranian state does have institutional “filters” such as the Guardian Council, among others, to ensure the compatibility of laws with Islamic precepts and the suitability of candidates running for Parliament and the presidency. It is also true that cronyism, nepotism, and corruption are often rampant among what Buchta refers to as clerical “patriarchs.” However, prominent officials of the regime, including the supreme leader himself, are elected di-
rectly or indirectly by the people from among those who survive the filters. The election of the reform-minded Khatami to the presidency despite the wishes of the conservative “establishment” illustrated that the role of society in Iranian politics is indeed quite significant and that the patriarchs cannot act with total disregard for the general will.

Part 2, “The Iranian Opposition,” identifies various groups opposed to the rule of vilayat-i faqih both inside and outside of the country. A very brief survey of the views of two of the religious-nationalist currents (the Iranian Freedom Movement and ‘Izzatullah Sahabi’s cluster), as well that of as the influential Islamic intellectual Abdolkarim Soroush, is provided. Buchta argues that because of their religious convictions, this group favors a peaceful democratic transformation of the regime, not its destruction. The chapter that follows deals with the challenges faced by Khamenei from the reform-minded clerics in Qom’s seminaries who oppose the current interpretation of vilayat-i faqih by the conservative hard-liners, which grants unbridled powers to the supreme leader. It also notes how more senior ayatollahs, such as Hussayn Ali Muntaziri, question Khamenei’s precarious mandate as the most qualified faqih in the country.

In chapter 11, Buchta maintains that two armed groups could pose serious threats to the ruling regime: the Sunni minority in Iran and the Mujahedin-i Khalq Organization. What is conspicuously missing in this part is a discussion of various student organizations, particularly the Office to Foster Unity (Daftar-i Tahkim-i Vahdat). Only a brief mention is made late in the book of this pro-Khatami organization, whose current pressure on the regime for more political and cultural freedom could greatly undermine the authority of the conservative establishment.

The remaining part of the book deals with the “The Internal Political Power Struggle, 1997–2000.” This part is a useful summary of the main events during Khatami’s three years in office, embellished periodically with good analysis. The main argument, again, is that the institutional make up in Iran, and the conservatives’ hold on major power centers, leaves little room for Khatami to maneuver. However, Buchta asserts that despite having suffered numerous setbacks at the hands of the hard-liners, Khatami has been successful overall in making inroads into the system and has not given up on his pledge of creating a more democratic Iran. The author is correct in believing that Khatami and his message still enjoy immense popularity among the population at large, and this could tip the balance in favor of the reformists in the future. Buchta is also optimistic that the victory of pro-Khatami groups in the parliamentary election of winter 2000 could be a needed boost for the reformists, as they now control both the executive and the legislative branches.

Who Rules Iran? contains extremely useful diagrams that explicate the structure and membership of various institutions, political groups, and associations. The book’s biggest shortcoming, one that undermines profoundly its potential merits, is its sources. Far more than two-thirds of the citations are to German and Arabic secondary sources. What also impairs the credibility of the findings of the book is that much of the “insider” information disclosed about nepotism, interpersonal relationships within the clerical establishment, and the widespread corruption in the Iranian Republic was provided to Buchta by the Committee for the Defense of the Shi’i Marja’iyyat’s (source of immulation) Right, a Kuwait-based organization “committed to peaceful resistance to the rule of the political clergy in Iran” (p. 5). The book could benefit from extensive editing, as there are a number of inaccurate translations and transliterations, as well as contradictory information. For example, the Traditional Right faction is translated as rast-e sonnat rather than sonnati (p. 11); on page 7, Buchta reports the number of clerics as members of the Society of Teachers of the Qom Theological College as thirty but six pages later, this membership drops to twenty-three; Ali Akbar Muhtashami-pur’s first name is given as Ahmad (p. 13); nazarat kardan (to supervise, supervision) is translated as supremacy (p. 51); the Assembly of Experts has eighty-three members, not eighty-six, as Buchta claims (p. 59); and the Supreme Leader, not the president, has the power to dismiss the head of the Revolutionary Guards (p. 71).
As a historian interested in Shi'i communities in Arab countries, I could not help but be disappointed by the lack of social and cultural history in this study. However, this is not a negative reflection on the book. What may at first seem like a weakness to readers such as myself, who are more interested in social and cultural history, is actually a necessary part of the authors' formulation of their argument. The book is intended to be a very practical representation of the Arab Shi'i with political analysis that has immediate policy implications for the Shi'i themselves, the Arab regimes that rule over them, and the United States. As a monograph dealing with policy issues related to the Arab Shi'i, this book is very successful and is of special interest to scholars, activists, and policy-makers dealing with issues related to the Arab Shi'i.

This book is an important addition to our knowledge of the Shi'i in that it provides a comparative analysis of five Arab Shi'i communities. Although the Shi'i are not exactly an understudied group, this monograph represents a new perspective in studying them. There are several good studies of Shi'i communities in individual Arab countries, such as Augustus Richard Norton's book *AMAL and the Shi'a Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon* and Yitzhak Nakash's *The Shi'i of Iraq*. There are also several edited books dealing thematically with several Shi'i communities in the Arab world, such as *Shi'ism and Social Protest*, edited by Juan R. I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie, as well as Martin Kramer's volume *Shi'ism, Resistance, and Revolution*. The case-study approach presented in this monograph provides new insights into policy issues related to the Shi'i.

The book fits neatly within the current scholarly discourse on civil society, liberalization, and democratization in the Middle East and elsewhere. It approaches issues related to the Shi'i communities of the Arab world as policy challenges for both the Shi'i and the regimes that rule over them. The authors' basic thesis is that the Shi'i communities represent an ideal case study proving the importance of creating open and responsive political systems in the Arab world. They argue that the only way for Arab regimes to avoid political unrest, and even violence, on the part of the Shi'i is to allow them legitimate and effective access to the political system.

There are two primary organizational possibilities for a book such as this one: according to themes or according to country. The authors manage effectively to "have their cake and eat it, too." The book starts with four chapters dealing with thematic issues, followed by five chapters dealing with individual countries (Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon). The book concludes with two chapters discussing policy implications vis-à-vis the Shi'i, the Arab regimes ruling over them, and the United States. Thus, the work is essentially a regional case study containing several smaller country-level case studies.

In the first four chapters, the authors do a good job of demonstrating how Shi'i communities share certain characteristics and concerns while maintaining regional distinctiveness and following different paths due to inherent differences in their situations. For example, the authors avoid the common pitfall of assuming that the shared Shi'i belief system significantly overshadows differences. Rather, they stress political, social, and economic environment, along with a wide variety of social and cultural attitudes, as being key factors in determining the interests of each Shi'i community. They also demonstrate how Shi'i beliefs themselves are complex, diverse, and ever-changing. The authors point to several sources of internal dissention among Shi'is, such as attitudes toward the state, degree of religiosity, Shi'i institutions such as the *maraji' al-taglid* (sources for emulation), and social and economic disparities. They also point to the fact that the rise in political awareness among Shi'is in the past three decades has coin-
cided with similar changes among Sunnis. Much of this has to do with disillusionment with modernity and Western cultural, political, and economic influences. Shi‘i identity formation involves both self-identification and ascribed identity, according to the authors, who show that Sunni attitudes toward the Shi‘i have been largely negative and exclusionary. For example, some Sunni religious groups, such as Salafis and Wahhabis, consider the Shi‘i to be little more than heretics or apostates, while Sunni Arab nationalists often call into question the Arabness of the Shi‘i, preferring to associate them with Persian culture and civilization. The general trend is that the Shi‘i are viewed with distrust by the Arab regimes that rule over them. This occurs in part because Shi‘is are viewed as a threat, especially in Iraq and Bahrain, where they form an absolute majority. Often they do not fit into the state’s nationalist and religious ideologies. Their loyalty to the state and the nation is also called into question, as many states fear that the Shi‘i can be influenced by Iran, or even that the Shi‘i may owe primary allegiance to Iran. All of these attitudes and suspicions are called into question by the authors of this book.

The examples of Iraq, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia are presented as cases in which there has been an utter failure to incorporate the Shi‘i into the social, economic, and political order. The Shi‘i of Iraq are presented as the most tragic case because in recent years there has been low-level open war between the state and the Shi‘i community of southern Iraq. This has resulted in part from the fact that Shi‘i form an absolute majority in Iraq, thus posing a threat to the authoritarian minority Sunni regime. The authors argue that nothing short of a change in regime is likely to improve the situation of Iraqi Shi‘i. Bahrain is presented as a much milder version of the situation in Iraq, in that the Shi‘i form an actual majority, and the government has provided almost no opportunities for the integration of the Shi‘i into the political system. However, the Bahraini Shi‘i have not yet turned toward open opposition and conflict with the state. The authors imply that this may become the only option for the Shi‘i if no policy changes are made by the Bahraini regime. The case of Saudi Arabia is presented in a similar light, although the extremely small number of Shi‘i in Saudi Arabia has prevented them from undertaking any real opposition efforts. The most they have been able to do is apply public-relations pressure from abroad. The public-relations battles have had limited success, but nothing has fundamentally changed for the Shi‘i of Saudi Arabia.

The success stories, according to the authors, are Kuwait and, to a lesser extent, Lebanon. Kuwait is represented as a model for successfully dealing with the Shi‘i community. Although discrimination persists in Kuwait, the Shi‘i have been successfully incorporated into the political establishment. This is partly based on a long history of very limited ties between the Kuwaiti ruling family and a small portion of the Shi‘i community, along with changes brought about by the Gulf War. The authors have more mixed feelings about Lebanon, where the Shi‘i have been incorporated into a political system based primarily on sectarianism. They suggest that, although this is not an ideal political arrangement, it may be a successful transitional political system and may eventually give way to a more liberal and democratic system of government that does not reinforce sectarian divisions.

The final two chapters in the book deal primarily with policy implications. The most basic policy recommendation is that all parties concerned should work toward greater integration of the Shi‘i into political, economic, and social systems in the Arab world. Suggestions are also made regarding the strategic options of the Shi‘i. However, these are much more complex and diverse. For example, there are advantages and disadvantages in following a political strategy that stresses the specific needs of the Shi‘i community, as opposed to a strategy that strives for broader national interests that are not unique to the Shi‘i community.

Shi‘i communities in other Arab states, such as Yemen and Syria, are unfortunately not dealt with in this book. The authors explain this omission as resulting from their decision to focus on Ithna ‘Ashariyya Shi‘i, because they make up the dominant Shi‘i group. One can also raise logistical issues based on the fact that these communities are different in many ways from the
five communities selected for this study. However, it would have been instructive to include these communities because they are so different, if for no other reason. For example, the Alawis in Syria and the Zaidis of Yemen are not excluded from access to power. Further, Arab nationalists and Islamists often do not differentiate between diverse sectarian groups among the Shi’is. Because theology is correctly represented in this book as not being the sole driving force behind political decisions, the theological differences between these Shi’i groups would not pose any fundamental theoretical problems. The authors do not isolate the different ways that Iran affected these countries, an approach that would have brought the Iranian factor into the political equation.


REVIEWED BY ANNA G. EDMONDS, Bainbridge Island, Wash.

*Visible Islam in Modern Turkey* by Adil Özdemir and Kenneth Frank is an objective, readable handbook of Islamic worship practices. The authors offer an introduction to the basics of Muslim worship in Turkey and to expressions of faith and identity, prayer, alms-giving, the fast, and the pilgrimage to Mecca. Along with some history behind the practices, they also present their combined interpretations of the present religious climate. This last issue lifts parts of the book above the level of general guide to that of social commentary, as the authors point out the tensions between secular and non-secular worldviews.

Özdemir and Frank assume that they are writing largely for a Western Christian audience who know little about Islam but are willing to listen. At the same time, they are sensitive to their Muslim readers. They intend their book to do two things: to answer general questions about Islamic practices and to introduce to non-Muslims “the ideals, the viability, and the humanity of an Islamic way of life.” They are unusually well qualified for this work because of their backgrounds: Özdemir is a Muslim theologian and a member of the Department of Basic Islamic Disciplines of Dokuz Eylül University; Frank has been an educational missionary of the United Church of Christ for three decades in Zambia and Turkey. Both men now live in Izmir, Turkey. They have come to their co-authorship through years of interfaith dialogue, and share the understandings each has thus won in the hope that their readers may themselves engage in such a faith journey.

Going beyond the customary descriptions of the “Five Pillars of Islam,” Özdemir and Frank extend their discussions to include both canonical sacraments such as recitations of the Qur’an, non-canonical sacraments such as interpretations of dreams, and practices contrary to the spirit of both the Qur’an and the hadith such as astrology. They stress that the practices are embedded in the total Turkish social, economic, political, and historical framework, and that an understanding of them comes only from within this context. “For non-Muslim observers to witness the practices of Muslims, and then to generalize from these observations about Islamic views of God, nature, human beings, and society, is . . . to look at this matter from the wrong direction, from outside in.”

The first section of *Visible Islam in Modern Turkey* deals with background information for the rest of the book. The authors discuss some of the problems they faced in the writing, among them finding fresh and meaningful English ways to express basic Islamic ideas. In so doing, they are concerned to avoid hackneyed or pejorative phrases. They note that public worship is
in itself a “conspicuous socio-political statement,” and thus suspect in secular circles. Although they recognize the many dimensions of religion in Turkey, they concentrate on “orthodox” Sunni beliefs and practices because they are shared by the majority of the population.

In the main part of the book, titled “A Portrayal of Worship in Turkey,” Özdemir and Frank discuss the elements of Islam in the order that non-Muslim visitors are most likely to notice them. Thus, they begin with various ways in which Muslims express their faith and their identity, including first the testimony, the *shahādah*, with the reminder that the contemplation of “the confession of faith is to dwell on the ultimate meaning of existence,...to see the Prophet Muhammad as one great example, and model.” Warning that mere private testimony must be accompanied by actions, they go on to discuss male circumcision, the role of the Qur’an, frequent pious phrases, prayer beads, and the sacred nights.

The roles of the major religious orders, the *tarikats*, are characterized with the comments that, although they have been illegal since the early days of the republic, they have persisted not only because they fill a need for community loyalty and support, but also because they exercise an influence over Turkish politics. Fasting and the month of Ramazan, the funeral prayer and burial, religious functionaries, the call to prayer, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and charity merit their own separate chapters, as do cleanliness and the physical elements of the mosque.

The chapter on the sacrament of prayer illustrates one of the unique qualities that characterizes the whole book in the warmth and mellow wisdom it portrays of Islam: “The worship we are describing is not a dominantly cognitive process, but it does have its own rationality. Islam is ultimate trust in, and commitment to, the unseen, the invisible, the Divine Mystery.” In recounting the story of the Night Journey of Muhammad when he prayed with both the Jewish prophets and Jesus, the authors point out that it “depicts ritual prayer itself as an interfaith gathering point for the established religious traditions.” This is in welcome contrast to the more common portrayal of Islam as legalistic and exclusive of other faiths.

The authors are straightforward in presenting the contradictions between traditional Islamic and current secular concepts. They use the issues of the alms tax (*zakat*) and the Animal Offering Holiday to raise questions for both secularists and non-secularists concerning charity and responsible social service, concerning ecology and a way to show gratitude to Allah for the abundance of the Earth, and concerning private versus communal worship. Although these points of friction figure large in the picture of Islam that visitors may see in Turkey, the authors might have added that a resolution of them is beyond the responsibilities of outsiders.

The final pages of the book include fifteen appendixes that cover a variety of specialized subjects. These make for quick references, with a list of current areas of controversy, Sunni celebrations and their dates, a discussion of gender issues, and sets of the stations of the prayers. They give the floor plan of a mosque, with a description of the uses of each element. Brief footnotes, a glossary of Islamic terms with variations in their spellings, a short bibliography, and the index complete the book.

If Özdemir and Frank are considering a second edition of this book, I suggest including more information about music and musical instruments specific to the Sufi *zikir* (*dhikr*) as elements of worship that communicate beyond conscious cognitive processes. Likewise, in the interest of attracting more of their readership, they might provide some photographs or line drawings.

The one book I found missing in the bibliography, and the one to which I would compare this one favorably, is Edward Lane’s *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, now more than 150 years old. Although Lane’s book is a more comprehensive study, it addresses the same subjects as Özdemir and Frank’s book in a similar spirit of carefully reasoned fairness and accuracy. *Visible Islam in Modern Turkey* admirably fills a void in recent Islamic reference materials for both casual tourists and long-term non-Muslim residents in Turkey. It is the authors’ unique blend of scholarship, personal experience, and spirituality that give the book its lasting validity.
In *Failing the Crystal Ball Test*, Ofira Seliktar, a political scientist at Gratz College, seeks to account for the “policy and intelligence debacle” (p. x) associated with the pre-eminent crisis of the Carter years. It is her hope that by understanding what went wrong with policy toward Iran, future policy-makers will be able to reduce the risk of similar disasters elsewhere in the relatively unstable conditions of the post-Cold War world. To achieve her objective, she focuses on the three-year period from the beginning of 1977 to the seizure of the United States embassy in November 1979. Seliktar, whose previous work has centered on Israel, bases her study on the multi-volume series of American documents seized at the embassy and published in Iran during the 1980s. These materials cluster around the last several years of U.S.–Iranian relations prior to the takeover of the compound. In addition, she has relied on an extensive list of secondary works in English.

Her study opens with three chapters setting out the theoretical basis for the case study to follow. She discusses the theory and practice of predicting political change, methodological problems with such predictions, and, finally, two paradigms for interpreting political change: developmentalism and dependency. (Simply put, the former presents the West as a model for the developing world, while the latter holds that the West has caused many of the ills affecting that same region.) Although these paradigms contain a good deal of jargon, this rarely detracts from the narrative, which advances with commendable clarity.

Seliktar devotes the remainder of the book to the details of U.S.–Iranian relations from 1977 to 1979, and here, too, the writing is unambiguous. She is at her best when describing the cacophony of voices on Iran and the infighting within the Carter administration, all of which contributed to the immobilization in decision-making she so laments. Although little of the information in her account is new, the author’s single-mindedness in assigning responsibility for failure sets her study apart.

The culprits are the dependency theorists, whom she variously identifies as New Leftists and those captivated by moralpolitik, who came to dominate the Carter administration’s policy toward Iran, with their particularly malevolent view of the Shah. Among them, Seliktar singles out the State Department’s Iran desk chief, Henry Precht, for repeated criticism. According to her, this influential group of scholars and officials exercised an insidious influence on the policy-making process, rarely admitting openly their ideological persuasions or the fact that they were advocating their own values while hiding behind “the false pretenses of scientific objectivity” (p. 178). Failing to understand the profound weakness of the Iranian moderates and the threat posed by Ayatollah Khomeini and his supporters, they spread their misinformation throughout the policy-making community, with disastrous consequences.

In reading this account, I was reminded of a similar charge that Robert Kaplan made several years ago in *The Arabists*, arguing that missionaries and their progeny had had a pernicious effect on U.S.–Middle Eastern policy because they had allowed themselves to become too emotionally attached to the Arabs and their cause. Whether missionaries or “dependencistas,” both authors have surely exaggerated the extent to which one small group dominated U.S. policy.

Seliktar carries her criticism further, commenting that academics, like journalists—and unlike policy-makers—never pay a price for their predictive failures, for their bad advice. It is difficult to know what to make of this observation. Although she may be correct, surely she...
cannot wish to silence scholars, which might well be the result of holding them responsible for the advice they give. Even though they might not be exponents of realpolitik, which Seliktar apparently prizes, their absence from the debate, I am convinced, would cause more harm than good. As for her admonition that academics should admit candidly their biases, although that might simplify matters, I find it hard to believe that the ideological leanings of any scholar would long remain hidden from high-ranking U.S. officials.

Like others before her—most prominently, perhaps, Marvin Zonis (Majestic Failure: The Fall of the Shah)—the author seems to assume that the United States could have affected the course of events in Iran, absent the inner tensions and disagreements, which she details. (Only once does she admit that a different American policy probably would have made little difference, and this admission is lost in a sea of counter-argument.) This view places her squarely in the camp of scholars who emphasize the external factors of revolution. Indeed, one comes away from this study knowing far more about developments in Washington than in Tehran.

And yet even here there are concerns. By focusing on such a relatively brief period in U.S.–Iranian relations, the author inflates the significance of the dependency theorists, who had only recently gained some prominence after years in the wilderness. Had she taken a longer perspective, the results would have revealed something quite different: she would have discovered the prominent role of the developmental theorists, who were so active on Iran from the mid-1950s. The longer view also would have revealed the great complexity of this revolution, which had been decades in the making.

A more historical approach would also have revealed that the “New Internationalism” bore remarkable similarities to the ideals of Woodrow Wilson, and that it was not, after all, “a novel vision of foreign relations” (p. xx). The long view would have shown that events of the years 1977–79 shared many similarities with earlier times—that the Shah, for example, had frequently suffered mood swings, most emphatically in the early 1950s and again a decade later; that bazaar merchants traditionally closed their shops as a sign of protest; and that fundamentalism was perhaps more firmly rooted among middle-class Iranians than it ever was among illiterate peasants and the urban poor.

As we might expect from title and subject, “fundamentalism” makes a prominent appearance in this work, but as is too often the case, it remains undefined. Seliktar accounts for its growth by relying on a reductionist argument, which I find troubling. Religious norms, she states, prevent Muslims from embracing principles of market economy; hence, they are “locked in a circle of poverty” (p. 193), that makes them ripe for recruitment by fundamentalist agitators. What these norms are, we can only guess. Omissions such as these should remind us again of the extraordinary care called for when scholars set out to analyze societies not their own.


REVIEWED BY JENNY B. WHITE, Department of Anthropology, Boston University

This book serves two important functions. First, it gives a comprehensive overview of the many varieties of Islamic practice and organization in contemporary Turkey and sets these into the larger national context. Second, the author shares important insights into the manner in which the culture of the political process leads inevitably to certain kinds of accommodation with religion. The survey of Turkey’s religious brotherhoods, associations, and political parties, while brief, is comprehensive without being superficial. Enough history, ideology, organization, and telling details are given for each to come alive in the larger context of Turkey’s complex
The book comes alive in the description of the Alevi, a religious minority that has been the subject of the author's own research for many years. There also is a particularly interesting discussion of the presentation of Islam in children's schoolbooks and the relationship of Islamic values to moral behavior and love for the nation. Although this is not new material, it is set within a larger discussion.

The author asks, what are the conditions for the peaceful incorporation of Islam into the secular state? He points to three factors: the introduction of democracy; the diffuse nature of power, because authority is entwined with patronage and reciprocity; and the tradition of joint initiatives between citizen and state. These, the author argues, make it possible for the Turkish state to accommodate Islam and secularism at the same time. The continual renegotiation of relations among “faith, power and authority” (p. 4) also can be seen in the military's complex stand regarding Islam as both a threat to and a tool for maintaining social order. The Turkish state, the author suggests, is by nature open, diffuse, and malleable, thus allowing religious revival and religious activism to develop within existing social and civil institutions. This interpenetration of religion and political and civic life has meant that any social revolution will be piecemeal and fought on the terrain of rival zones of patronage. There is also a long history of shared responsibility for state projects between the state and private citizens or religious foundations. Local initiatives finance and build schools, health centers, and mosques, then hand them over to the state to run. Thus, religion, patronage, and the cultural ideal and practice of mutual support have long served as bridges between religion and the state.

Stated another way, this situation leaves the state particularly vulnerable to subversion by religious activists through patronage networks. The author argues that the relatively benign coexistence of religion and state breaks down with the introduction of political Islam because this is a movement that promotes religious uniformity over the religious pluralism that has been characteristic of Turkey. It also has served to galvanize the opposition into a more united and rigid Kemalist, secularist front, dividing society into opposing camps and making mutual accommodation more difficult. Although the rhetoric surrounding the election of the Islamist Welfare Party and, later, Virtue Party does seem to reflect a hardening in positions, the author's analysis seems to take this at face value. In fact, Kemalism means much more than simply secularism and should be treated in a more nuanced manner. The Islamist parties themselves have been transformed, and their constituencies have come to reflect just as much, or even more, diversity in terms of social class, gender, and ideological and religious views, practices, and goals. It is questionable whether political Islam is more of a threat to the authority of the state than other religious organizations and movements. Indeed, what may slowly be changing is the very patronage-based form of politics the author describes, as a popular Islamic political movement takes shape. The author's oversight may well be due to the particular moment in time when the book went to press, just after the Welfare Party was banned and before the new Virtue Party began redefining the nature of Islamic politics. Although this process was under way in the Welfare Party, it was not obvious.

The arguments presented in this book about the nature of the Turkish political process and its relationship to Islam are crucial reading for anyone seeking to understand the nature of political power and opposition in Turkey today. In general, the book provides a welcome antidote to less nuanced interpretations that set a monolithic Islam against a cohesive secularism. The book is comprehensive and eminently readable, and would be appropriate for undergraduate classes on Turkey and Islam. It is marred, however, by an irritating use of concepts and Turkish terms without definition. There is a glossary of these terms in the back of the book, but that is no substitute for clarity in the text, especially for the reader unfamiliar with Turkey. The book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on Islam and politics and to the still sparse body of literature in English on Turkey.

REVIEWED BY MAZIAR BEHROOZ, History Department, Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater, Mass.

In general, historians seldom venture into predicting the future. Their discipline and training guides them toward attempting to reconstruct the past by relying on research, scrutinized facts, deliberation, and analysis. Other disciplines seem sometimes to disagree. That historians do not venture into predictions does not arise from a conservative orientation in their discipline, which may lead to a lack of enthusiasm for adventure; it comes from a philosophical attitude toward study of human society that points up the fact that the task of reconstructing the past, when data are obtainable, is a monumental task. Doing the same for events that have yet to happen can easily turn into futile attempts precisely because of lack of adequate data for analysis. On rare occasions, of course, major events in history have been predicted. World War II is a good example. However, observers missed other, equally significant events. The fall of the Soviet Union and the Iranian Revolution of 1979 are two examples.

When it comes to Iran, the problem of predicting its future course becomes even more problematic. Iran is a dynamic society that has managed to surprise its observers on more than one occasion in the 20th century. The author of the book under review is well aware of this reality and suggests that "history has been unkind to those who have tried to predict the course of Iran's political trajectory" (p. 195). Nevertheless, he braves the subject and devotes his final chapter to it. In her study of the Iranian Revolution and its predictability, Nikki Keddie (*Iran and the Muslim World*, 1995) convincingly argued against the temptation. Zahedi does not agree with this caution. But by venturing into the realm of predictions, the author has taken a great gamble—namely, investing an important aspect of his book's value on the merit of his prediction.

Zahedi's book is well written and well organized. By providing a theoretical framework and comparing the Islamic Republic's current developments to those that led to the 1979 Revolution, the author attempts to venture into the future. Chapters 3 and 4 are devoted to an assessment of various social groups, both before and after the revolution. These include the intelligentsia, the traditional and modern middle classes, the bazaars, and the dispossessed. Chapter 5 is a brief assessment of oppositional forces, which the author does not see as a significant threat at this point in history. Next, Zahedi provides an analysis of the shortcoming of the Islamic state both before and after the 1997 election of Muhammad Khatami. His core argument seems to be that there are two possibilities for the future course of the Islamic regime: it will collapse on its own or be overthrown. In his predictions, Zahedi does not seem to see much chance of the Islamic Republic evolving into anything sustainable.

In terms of sources, the book's reference section displays an interesting collection of secondary sources. In terms of primary sources, however, the book leaves much to be desired. The only Persian source cited repeatedly is the Washington, D.C., weekly *Iran Times*. Although this periodical is a good source for a summary of weekly events in Iran, it can by no means be considered a substitute for the real thing. Of many books published in Iran since just before 1997 election of President Khatami not much can be seen. Of all the lively discussions in Iranian print media during past years, not much is relied on. That the author lived in neighborhoods of Los Angeles and Cambridge, Massachusetts, during his graduate and post-graduate work suggests that accessibility to primary sources should not have been a problem. Further, the author's use of existing sources is more like a summation of other scholar's analyses rather than any particular contribution on his part.
Relying on mostly secondary sources on a sensitive and complex subject such as Iran and its revolution creates two problems. First, it decreases the value of the work for the reader who seeks fresh analysis based on in-depth, primary research. Second, it relegates, perhaps more than it should, the value of the work to its ability to correctly predict the course of Iran's political trajectory.

In his review of Edward Shirley's book *Know Thine Enemy: A Spy's Journey into Revolutionary Iran* (*Iranian Studies* 32 [1999]: 302), Gary Sick observes that the author’s key predictions on Iran had proved wrong. On Khatami’s election in 1997 and the author’s complete failure to anticipate it, Sick wrote: “this was an eventuality never imagined by the author and is, alas, the humbling fate of those who would adopt the mantle of prophecy in that most complex and surprising land.” Zahedi’s book may be heading in the same direction. Its merit is, for the most part, based on delivering on its cautious claim—that is, its prediction that there is a moderate chance for the Islamic Republic of Iran to be overthrown.


**REVIEWED BY JAHANGIR AMUZEGAR,** international economic consultant, Bethesda, Md.

This book is essentially the third volume on the history of British Petroleum (BP) from 1901 to 1975, which the author has tried to present on its own, to be read with or without reference to the previous two volumes. It deals with three phases of BP’s developments during 1950–75, starting with the 1950–54 period of Iranian oil-nationalization crisis, the 1955–70 phase of growth and internationalization, and finally the 1974–75 takeover by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The author has been BP’s “official historian” for years, and the company’s “History Committee” has approved the present study.

The massive, 600-plus-page narrative deals with BP’s historical developments over the last quarters of the 20th century. Peering through thousands of official company notes, memos, reports, and discussions, and consulting nearly everything written about this oil major, the author traces in meticulous (and not always necessary) detail BP’s trials and tribulations in an extraordinarily tumultuous era. The book is exhaustively researched, more than amply documented, and engagingly written for both serious research scholars and casual readers. Some 115 pages of copious footnotes and bibliography and thirty-six color plates and sixty-six photographs, plus fifty-seven charts and 18 tables, are combined to show BP in the best possible light.

*British Petroleum and Global Oil* deals chronologically and methodically with BP’s structure and organization; its subsequent entanglement with the Mossadegh government and the Iranian oil nationalization; the company’s post-nationalization changes in culture, management, and orientation; the threat to its viability during the Suez Canal crisis; the successful search for new sources of crude oil in Alaska; its behind-the-scene maneuvers to resist British government policies; its protracted differences with the Shah of Iran on the latter’s expected income from oil exports; the push for new outlets (after Alaska’s “Holy Grail”) for both refining and product marketing; the company’s financial ups and downs; its bold and far-reaching forays into petrochemicals; an aborted venture into making protein out of oil; its subsequent diversification into non-oil animal feed; and, finally, its entanglements with OPEC.

As the reader discovers early in the book, BP was not a typical capitalist corporate entity. Unlike its early private rivals—Rockefeller’s Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell—the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (as BP’s parent) was, from its beginning, virtually a British public enterprise that was majority-owned and directed by the British Treasury in the interest of the British
government. BP’s great influence as a “new form of corporate capitalism” on the Iranian scene “for good or evil” is acknowledged in the Introduction (p. 1). The close association of the company’s fame and fortune with Britain’s imperial power is also duly admitted (p. 74).

The book is a standard “company document,” written from BP’s vantage point and corporate interests. To be sure, no history is ever written truly objectively. And, a history written by a commissioned scribe for his patron might be expected to be doubly tainted. Nevertheless, Bamberg paints BP’s image (even in its more benign 1954–75 period) fairly realistically, with many warts and blemishes on display. The company’s culture, for example, is honestly described as Anglo-centric and imperialistic, discriminatory in favor of both the staff’s nationality (British) and sex (male); bent on total physical and social separation between expatriate and native employees; impervious to local customs and practical tradition; strictly inbred in managerial promotion; and adamantly hostile to the British staff “gone native” (pp. 13–16).

In a clear display of candor, Mossadegh’s nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian’s assets in 1950 is aptly depicted as a blessing in disguise and a watershed in BP’s subsequent development. The seizure resulted in a change in the company’s “management culture,” its shift away from dependence on Iran for its crude oil and refining capacity, and the reduced influence of the old and gruff hands in company affairs. In short, the company emerged from the nationalization trauma with strong finances, more diversified production and refining interests, a more solid outward-oriented strategy, and fewer deadwood among its staff (pp. 45–47). The great irony in BP’s history is that the company succeeded in snatching victory out of the jaws of defeat.

An intriguing part of the book’s diffuse saga is the author’s (presumably innocent) shock and his (apparently candid) laments regarding the oil majors’ “unpopularity” not only among OPEC members, but also with their own “flag” governments and the world public at large (pp. 488–89). Portraying the majors (and particularly BP) as injured parties and victims of circumstances for no longer being able to set oil prices and control the international flow of oil under the “old-style concessionary” relationships, the author sadly deplores the “seismic upheaval” in the global oil business (p. 489). Evidently still in the psychological stage of denial, Bamberg finds no connection between this global unpopularity and the oil majors’ past unspeakable behavior (including Standard Oil’s shameful history in the United States, Shell’s dismal record in Nigeria, and BP’s own unflattering story in Iran).

BP’s patently outrageous treatment of Iran’s oil wealth (apart from Mossadegh’s grievances about the company’s well-publicized political machinations in Iran) is clearly demonstrated by the company’s record. The total royalties and taxes paid to the Iranian government during the 1911–51 period amounted to less then £120 million—a small fraction of payments to stockholders (including the British Treasury). And, when the company lost some 60 percent of its shares in Iranian oil assets after 1951, its Special Contingencies Account alone was large enough to give BP stockholders a four-for-one bonus share, thus increasing the share-holding’s value fivefold from £3.75 to £18.75 overnight (p. 44).

The book’s principal strength lies in chronicling a wealth of minute details about the company’s inner operations, strategies, acquisitions, and ventures—matters that are of interest largely to company employees, managers, stockholders, and rivals, but not to casual readers. In chapters of general interests (e.g., the dispute with the Iranian government and dealing with OPEC), Bamberg has precious little to add to what is already known and has been reported. In fact, the three chapters devoted to the rise and role of OPEC consist mostly of references to other works. However, what the general reader still finds interesting in the chapters dealing with OPEC’s ascendancy and the oil majors’ loss of control over oil market-sharing and price determination are some revealing snippets about the anachronistic, overbearing, short-sightedness and imperious arrogance of some latter-day oil barons such as BP’s William Fraser and Eric Drake, Dutch Shell’s John Laudon, and ESSO’s Jack Rathborne. Bamberg also (inadver-
tently) shows how these men’s hubris, greed, and stubbornness ultimately worked against their
fiefdoms’ interests. In turn, he underlines (again unintentionally) the foresight, ingenuity, patrio-
tism, courage, and skills of certain OPEC leaders from Venezuela, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

*British Petroleum and Global Oil* is still an unfinished story. When the history of BP’s last
quarter of the 20th century is written at a later date, the company will be shown not only to
have been in a better financial and competitive position, but also run by a more imaginative,
consumer-friendly, and environmentally conscious management and probably enjoying a less
“unpopular” image worldwide.

**TALAL NIZAMEDDIN**, *Russia and the Middle East: Towards a New Foreign Policy* (New York:

**REVIEWED BY ROBERT O. FREEDMAN**, Baltimore Hebrew University, Baltimore, Md.

In an outgrowth of his doctoral dissertation, Talal Nizameddin, now a lecturer at Haigazian
University in Beirut, discusses the evolution of Russian foreign policy toward the Middle East
under Boris Yeltsin from the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 until 1997. The
book, based in part on extensive interviews in Moscow, seeks to show how Russian policy
evolved from what the author describes as the “radical pro-West” view of Foreign Minister
Andrei Kozyrev in the early 1990s to the more nationalist view of Yevgeny Primakov in the
mid- to late 1990s. In general, Nizameddin succeeds in his task, although his failure to evaluate
critically some of the comments given to him by his interviewees in Moscow, such as Vitaly
Naumkin, and the clearly anti-United States and anti-Israel perspective with which the book is
written detract from the value of the study.

Nizameddin begins his book with an overview of Soviet foreign policy toward the Middle
East under Joseph Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, and Mikhail Gorbachev. He
notes, correctly, that while Stalin had succeeded by the time of his death in 1993 only in
alienating virtually all of the countries in the Middle East, including the Arab world, Iran,
Turkey, and Israel, his successor, Khrushchev, had a great deal more success, particularly in
the Arab world. Brezhnev, Khrushchev’s successor, sought to build on Khrushchev’s successes
by cementing Moscow’s ties with key Arab states through major arms deals, but his record was
marred by Egypt’s move from the Soviet to the Western camp and by the Soviet invasion of
Afghanistan in December 1979, which alienated much of the Arab world. Gorbachev, in turn,
made fundamental changes in Soviet Middle East policy. He withdrew Soviet forces from
Afghanistan, de-ideologized Soviet foreign policy, reestablished Soviet diplomatic relations
with Israel, and even cooperated with the United States during the Gulf War against Saddam
Hussein, although Moscow’s cooperation was less extensive than Nizameddin asserts. In de-
scribing Soviet policy toward the Middle East, the author makes several important factual
errors and also some political judgments that are, to say the least, questionable. For example,
he asserts on page 27 that the Israeli army won the 1967 Six Day War with U.S.-supplied weap-
onry, when in fact France was the primary supplier of Israel’s military equipment. Similarly, he
makes the following highly questionable assertion: “Moscow failed to match the foresight of
Saddam Hussein with regard to the Khomeini regime: that its existence was dependent on foreign
adventures and influence over Muslims in Central Asia and the Middle East” (p. 37).

In his analysis of the evolution of the Yeltsin regime’s foreign policy, Nizameddin takes a
very benign view of Russia’s policies in the “Near Abroad”—the newly independent states
of the former Soviet Union, many of which now bordered the Middle East. Thus, he asserts,
“Moscow’s reorientation away from the West was largely forced upon it by the growing insta-
blility around it, rather than as a direct response to anti-Western forces in the country” (p. 77).
In fact, a good bit of the instability was generated by the Russians themselves, such as those who helped the separatists of the Trans-Dniester region of Moldova and those who gave military aid to Armenia in its war against Azerbaijan. In addition, it can be cogently argued that it was precisely the growing political opposition Yeltsin faced in the Russian Duma (Parliament), not instability on Russia's new borders, that moved Russia away from cooperation with the West. The author, however, is correct in noting that one of Kozyrev’s major weaknesses was his inability to control Russian foreign policy, and this was one of the reasons he was replaced by Yevgeny Primakov in January 1996. Nizameddin has a very benign view of Primakov, noting that Primakov, “whom some in the West mistook for being a hardliner, or anti-Westerner,” in fact “was neither, but simply a realist centrist whose style was less idealistic than that of Kozyrev or Shevardnadze” (p. 95). Such an evaluation would come as a surprise to many Western diplomats, who in fact saw Primakov as an anti-U.S. hard-liner who sought to build alliances to prevent the United States from creating a “unipolar world.”

The strongest part of the book lies in Nizameddin’s analysis of Russia’s relations with Syria, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. He carefully analyzes the dispute over Syria’s unwillingness to repay to Moscow debts Damascus owed to the Soviet Union, and he correctly notes the peripheral role played by Moscow during the Lebanese crisis of April 1996. He also correctly evaluates the disappointments on both sides of the Russian–Saudi relationship. While Russia had hoped for extensive monetary aid from Saudi Arabia, Saudi leaders were troubled by the growing ties between Russia and Iran, by Russian efforts to get sanctions lifted against the regime of Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and by Russian actions in Chechnya. In the case of Iraq, however, Nizameddin fails to provide a source for his assertion that Russia’s losses in the Gulf War totaled $18 billion (most Russian and Western analysts put the Iraqi debt at $7 billion). He also asserts, without giving sources, that Russia, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, expected $24 billion in Western aid (p. 76), and that Moscow had intervened on several occasions “to save Arafat’s PLO, and even his life, from Israel and Syria, particularly in Lebanon” (pp. 150–51). It is possible that Nizameddin got this information during his interviews in Moscow and accepted them uncritically, as he does a number of other pieces of information that he received from his Russian interlocutors. Perhaps the most egregious of these dealt with the “morality” of Russian politics and foreign policy. Nizameddin reports that “perceptions continued to exist in Russia that Moscow should uphold virtue and justice in its inner society as well as in foreign affairs” (p. 134), and hence Russia found certain aspects of Israeli policy such as settlement expansion “morally difficult to justify” (p. 132). This was the same Russia that was supporting the Serbs in their brutal slaughter of Bosnian Muslims and was engaged in a brutal war of its own in Chechnya—actions that were far more morally reprehensible than Israeli settlement-building in the West Bank and Gaza. Nizameddin also has a clear bias against Israel, whose policy toward its Arab neighbors in the 1990s is portrayed as basically “aggressive” (p. 108) despite Israel’s ceding of land to the Palestinians under the Oslo Agreement and its peace treaty with Jordan. Nizameddin is also critical of the Russian media’s even-handed reporting of the Arab–Israeli conflict (pp. 172–73; here he should have been far more careful in differentiating among the a highly variegated Russian press) and criticizes the strong American denunciation of the Hamas and Islamic Jihad bombing attacks in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in February–March 1996. He favorably compares Primakov’s reaction to the bombings, noting that his response “differed from that of the United States in that Washington’s statements were highly interactive with Jewish emotions and sentiments at the expense of more rational responses” (p. 128).

In sum, although there is a large amount of useful information in this book, Nizameddin’s uncritical acceptance of some of the information given to him by his interviewees in Moscow and his clear biases against Israel and the United States detract from the book’s overall value. I hope for a revised and updated edition of this book, analyzing the major changes in Russian policy since 1997, and especially under Putin, in which the author will correct these deficien-
cies and differentiate more clearly among the highly variegated Russian media. That would make the next edition of the book a more solid contribution to the field.


REVIEWED BY JAMES P. BENNETT, Department of Political Science, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.

“We Greeks invented tragedy. So we are fated to act it out. But why it should be only the Greeks of Cyprus, I don’t know” (Greek Cypriot student, Limassol, 1993). “When bad things happen to us we think someone else intended them. When it’s good things, we think we did them. That’s what we learned [in an intercommunal conflict-resolution exercise]. But it’s true!” (Turkish Cypriot student, Nicosia/Lefkoşe, 1997). Brendan O’Malley and Ian Craig ably relate a well-researched account of the division of Cyprus, focusing on the deliberations and political events that presaged partition in 1974. Their purpose is not to draw lessons for policy today, but to explain and to fix blame—and, at times, credit—for the division of the island.

The interpretive framework is familiar: four external powers pursue their own remarkably constant objectives and rivalries within the context of the Cold War, thus repeatedly ignoring the aspirations of the inhabitants of Cyprus. The United States sought a presence on Cyprus to operate valuable signals and radar-intelligence stations, and sought to preclude expansion of Soviet influence in the Mediterranean. Great Britain initially sought to retain expansive military rights on Cyprus to continue its presence in the Middle East but later to collect intelligence as currency in its special relationship with the United States. Over most of this period, Greece sought enosis to complete the unification of insular Greek peoples. Turkey sought to protect its southern coast from a Greek and a Soviet menace; only secondarily, it sought to protect the Turkish minority on Cyprus from the “Cretan solution”—what today we term ethnic-cleansing. Compatible with these diverse objectives, on several occasions prior to 1974 an agreement imposing some form of ethnic division, ranging from the extreme of “double enosis” to reforms of cantonal self-government plus foreign bases, of the island was nearly in hand, always to be wrecked by one party’s backing away, usually out of fear of domestic political repercussions.

In O’Malley and Craig’s account, the wishes of the Cypriots were generally slighted. The Turkish Cypriots, about whom little is said in the book, sought primarily to hang on to their always precarious position on the island. The Greek Cypriots, though usually divided, with a plurality voting for the Communist Party, exerted influence in Athens through the master tactician Archbishop Makarios and sufficient pressure on the British to avert a lasting division. But after the military coup in Greece in 1967, Makarios became increasingly anathematized to all four foreign powers and eventually lost his balance.

The authors do not follow events beyond the immediate impact of the 1974 partition, so others must assess whether it is tragedy or comedy. Greek military-coup plotters failed to assassinate Makarios only because some of their tanks were held up in rush-hour traffic. Atrocities of the early years of intercommunal fighting are laid primarily at the feet of Greek Cypriots, and Nikos Sampson is properly credited for his reputation as a pathological killer. But the authors do not shrink from describing without sensationalism the terror created by the Turkish invasion in 1974. O’Malley and Craig identify heroes who—temporarily, at least—stemmed the flow of events toward partition. Notable among these is the British officer Martin Packard, who repeatedly halted intercommunal violence with few resources but his own prestige until his government removed him. They identify one clear villain: Henry Kissinger.

Although episodes of British–American (and sometimes Turkish) cooperation occurred to
divide the island to varying degrees, the conspiracy that O’Malley and Craig have in mind is duplicity. In 1974, “publicly Kissinger called for stability in NATO’s southeastern front, but privately the United States tacitly encouraged the Greeks to lead a coup on the island and gave an implicit green light to the ensuing Turkish invasion” (p. 162). That the authors fail to discover a smoking gun in support of their accusation is not surprising, because the relevant official documents of this period have not been released. They make a stronger case for the second charge than for the first.

Reader, judge their case for yourself. It is carefully researched and well worth attention not only from those who are interested in contemporary Mediterranean and Middle Eastern issues or in Cold War history, but also from those who are interested in historiography. I understand the authors to be urging, against many other histories of this conflict, that unintended consequences do not dominate history. Over the long term, the intentions of the big powers are usually realized.

The book is a serious historical contribution. The authors use to excellent effect British diplomatic sources, the CIA's post mortem in 1975, and many responsible memoirs and secondary sources. I noticed only a few factual errors on peripheral matters, such as the terms ending the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and the course of events in the Yom Kippur/Ramadan War in 1973. Some “merely possible” charges are raised that bear little relation to their enterprise, such as that Harold Wilson was a Soviet spy and that the CIA directly funded EOKA-B. At critical junctures, the authors rely on the assertions of a single source that other scholarship has qualified, such as George Ball’s memoirs on the impact of its “brutal” U.S. diplomatic note to Turkey of 1964, Mehmet Ali Birand’s account of Turkish policy deliberations prior to Turkey’s “peace action,” and several “suspicions” of Glafcos Clerides about U.S. intentions. Additional questions can be raised about how seriously some intra-governmental proposals were taken by senior leaders, such as the “astonishing plot” devised by Robert Komer and McGeorge Bundy to bring Turkey and Greece to heel in August 1964. Somewhat selective use is made of testimony before Representative Rosenthal’s committee investigating the involvement of the U.S. government in the 1974 invasion. These matters are quibbles viewed against solid investigative and integrative contributions.

By the late 1950s, the governments of Britain and the United States separately reached the conclusion that partition of Cyprus would be a sensible measure to safeguard their strategic interests, hold NATO together, fight the Soviets, and save the Cypriots from fratricide. A decade after the end of the Cold War, three of the four objectives arguably persist. Until a new, incompatible objective—say, the Europeanization of Turkey—intrudes, the interpretive perspective offered in The Cyprus Conspiracy suggests that Cyprus will remain divided.

ERGUN ÖZBUDUN, Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2000). Pp. 181. $49.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY FRANK TACHAU, Political Science Department, University of Illinois, Chicago

Based on Professor Özbudun’s lectures at Bilkent University, this book is at once compact, highly readable, and very insightful. Unlike much current literature on Turkey, the analysis is set in a broad and informed comparative context. Turkey, the author points out, has been left out of comparative political studies, particularly those encompassing the Middle East and southern Europe, in which arguably it could (or should) have been included. Scholarly neglect thus reflects real-world politics: Turkey falls between two worlds, one of which it once largely controlled, the other to which it currently aspires to belong. This lacuna is one of the factors that persuaded Özbudun to publish this volume.
The main comparative theme underlying the book is democratic consolidation. This process has engaged students of comparative politics since the onset of the so-called third wave of democratization, beginning with the downfall of the long-lived Portuguese dictatorship in 1974, spreading across southern Europe (Greece and Spain), working its way through Latin America, and culminating with the collapse of Soviet domination in Eastern Europe. Although Turkey belongs in the “second wave” of democratization (falling between the end of World War I and the early post-World War II years), its history of democratic breakdowns makes it a good candidate for comparison with third-wave countries in terms of problems of transition from autocracy to democracy and consolidation of democracy. Özbudun argues further that Turkey is inherently interesting because “it is the only democratic and truly secular country in the Islamic world. . . . [T]he success or failure of Turkey’s democratic experiment will tell us much about [the] compatibility” of Islam and democracy (p. 1). Some would suggest that the same might be said of Turkish secularism. Indeed, the two are inextricably intertwined, as this is a country in which an Islamist government could conceivably come to power by democratic means. Such an outcome would mean the end of secularism—or, at least, its very sharp transformation. It remains unclear whether it would also mark the end of democracy. In the meantime, ironically, many supporters of both democracy and secularism in Turkey have come under sharp criticism, especially (but not exclusively) from European observers, for seeming to favor the latter over the former. Özbudun clearly favors both. The value of his analysis is enhanced by the judiciousness of his assessments of Turkish political institutions and their dynamics. His approach is compatible with that of Juan Linz, Alfred Stepan, Larry Diamond, Guillermo O’Donnell, and others who have focused on democratic transitions around the world, and with whom he has collaborated on a number of occasions.

Özbudun believes that the initiation of democracy in Turkey occurred because of the relatively benign nature of the authoritarian regime established by Kemal Atatürk: “the transition [was] an expected culmination of Kemalist reforms.” He rejects arguments based on structural explanations, such as the emergence of a burgeoning capitalist class, arguing that, like the Mexican PRI, the RPP could have adapted to socio-economic change and retained its hold on power. He characterizes this first transition as typical of the “reform mode” in which the outgoing authoritarian regime controls the process, which is non-violent and fully constitutional. Implicitly, this argument recognizes that the introduction of democracy was initiated and controlled by the elite rather than the product of demands emanating from lower socio-economic strata.

Along similar lines, Özbudun suggests that none of the three republican constitutions in Turkey (1924, 1961, 1982) have enjoyed broadly recognized legitimacy because popular participation in their development and adoption was carefully restricted. In his view, this is one of the main reasons that there have been periodic interruptions in Turkish democracy and that the military continues to play an active political role. It is, in short, a principal cause of Turkey’s failure to consolidate democracy fully.

Özbudun agrees with and reinforces the view that the Turkish political-party system is beset by three related problems: volatility, fragmentation, and polarization. Fragmentation is obvious. In the last two elections, no single party garnered more than 22 percent of the vote. In 1999, the center-right parties, which once dominated the system, together accounted for barely 25 percent of the vote. Non-centrist parties, however, captured about one-third of the electorate. Thus, although that election is not covered in this book, it confirmed these trends. Electoral volatility has also been worrisome, unlike in such southern European countries as Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece, three of which experienced democratic transitions in the mid-1970s.

Özbudun blames military intervention and the failure of Turkish parties to strike roots in the civil society. Ideological polarization has also seriously weakened Turkish democracy, with the center declining precipitously, and religious and right-wing parties gaining strength. He finds
some silver linings in this clouded picture: the fact that one of the extremist parties (the Nationalist Action Party [NAP]) has shifted toward the center, and the fact that the Turkish public continues to support the concept of democracy.

Özbudun argues that consolidation of democracy is also held back by the weaknesses of the party system. Specifically, parties are hierarchically structured; they have traditionally manifested marked oligarchic tendencies, and continue to do so. This is true of all parties, regardless of ideology. Leadership is highly personalistic, which in Özbudun’s view explains the inability of parties to merge or even to cooperate when they are in coalition with one another. He devotes considerable attention to the Islamist Welfare Party (WP), which he feels was “the only Turkish party that comes close to the model of a mass party.” This judgment may be music to Necmettin Erbakan’s ears, inasmuch as he promised to make the party a mass organization at a time that it was widely viewed as sectarian and marginal to the system. It was also more integrated with civil associations such as foundations, media outlets, educational institutions, a labor union, business-organization and holding companies, and religious orders and communities. Özbudun further describes the WP as “the only party that has avoided... decline.” The WP was outlawed and replaced by the Virtue Party (VP) in 1998, apparently too late to be analyzed fully in this book. The 1999 election, in which the new party lost a quarter of the electoral support garnered by the old party in 1995, apparently also occurred after the book went to press. Nevertheless, Özbudun provides very useful insights. He cites opinion surveys indicating that, although religious values were a major factor underlying support for the WP/VP, as many as half of its supporters cited other factors, including class interests. He notes that the party’s strongest support came from underprivileged urban masses.

Özbudun also views the continuing political role of the military in a comparative context. He disagrees with observers who argue that the regime has been successfully civilianized since 1983, suggesting that this is overly optimistic. He points to the “soft coup” of 1997 and concludes that the military will be tempted to intervene again if either of its most cherished values—the territorial integrity of the state and the secular commitment of the body politic—comes under threat.

With regard to civil society, Özbudun recognizes that “an active and well-organized civil society is an essential prerequisite for a democratic system.” He argues that the Ottoman Empire differed radically from Western Europe in this respect, with state authority highly centralized and concentrated in the hands of state elites. In addition, he suggests that civil society suffered from “the fragility or absence of corporate, autonomous, intermediary social structures,” which could mediate between the state and the individual. The result was a high degree of state autonomy that survived in the republic, leading to negative attitudes toward “particularistic interests” and organizations, such as interest groups and political parties which speak for them. Despite the emergence of prominent independent associations such as the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (TÜSAD) since the 1970s, the government continues to dominate the economy and society. The much-vaunted liberalizing reforms identified with the late Turgut Özal may have opened the economy and stimulated impressive dynamism and growth, but it did not reduce the power of the state. Rather, it led to a “restructuring of the state and a concentration of government powers,” which left economic groups powerless in the policy-making process. On this point, Özbudun’s view is widely shared among observers.

On the other hand, his analysis of the 1997 “soft coup” that brought down the government of Necmettin Erbakan indicates that this was much more complex than foreign observers, especially in the media, have suggested. The anti-Erbakan campaign involved active participation of the most prominent trade unions, business associations, and even organized small traders and artisans (the last said to have been a strong source of support for Erbakan). Özbudun characterizes this effort as “a momentous event without precedent in the history of Turkish democracy” (p. 139). However, he acknowledges that the “credible threat of a military coup”
guaranteed its success, once again demonstrating the continuing strength of state elites. By comparison with many other analyses, which tend to emphasize the role of the military, Özbudun thus offers a highly nuanced interpretation.

Finally, the book turns to the challenges of political Islam and Kurdish nationalism. Özbudun attributes both—at least, in part—to the effects of globalization. He suggests that the rise of the WP/VP is partly due to the failure of leftist parties to counter the corrosive effects of the erosion of the welfare state. The result has been a shift from the politics of a left–right cleavage to a secular–religious one. The resolution of this conflict remains unclear. Özbudun sees the WP/VP as caught in an acute dilemma: if it moves to the center, it risks alienating its religiously motivated core, and vice versa. This may explain the decline in Islamist voting and the concomitant rise in the newly moderate NAP in the 1999 election.

As for the Kurdish issue, Özbudun favors a political solution over a military one. He argues that the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, is not supported by a majority of Kurds, who favor a peaceful resolution. However, he sees major political and constitutional obstacles to the creation of a more pluralist society that such a resolution implies.

This highly insightful book ends with a qualified vote of confidence in Turkish democracy. It does not foresee a return to authoritarianism, but neither does it project early consolidation of democracy. "Turkish democracy may endure, but it may do so in a state of inherent vulnerability" (p. 153).

If there is any weakness in this finely honed analysis, it is the fact that it apparently went to press too early to take into account such major developments as the virtual collapse of Kurdish armed resistance with the capture and trial of its leader, Abdullah Öcalan; the 1999 election, which led to the formation of a government that remained stable and effective for almost two years; and the formal recognition of Turkey as a candidate for membership in the European Union. These dramatic developments may have marginally bolstered democracy, but Özbudun’s guarded and measured conclusion remains persuasive. He has rendered a great service by providing a clear road map for a deeper understanding of the underpinnings of Turkish politics and democracy, with all its warts.

Stefania Pandolfo, Impasse of the Angels: Scenes from a Moroccan Space of Memory (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). Pp. 399. $60.00 cloth, $22.51 paper.

Reviewed by Douglas L. Bouredua, Department of French and Italian, Ohio State University, Columbus

Stefania Pandolfo’s Impasse of the Angels is a fascinating study of a Moroccan society as it defines itself in the present-day post-colonial Maghrib. Starting at a point of crisis for the people in question (the move from the old village to the new), the author artfully presents the understanding of identity (personal, social, regional, and even national) as precisely the result of such conflicts, both historical and present: the fracturing and reunification, wounding and healing, produced by mutually opposed and yet interacting processes.

The entire presentation of this study mirrors this weaving of processes, as the author enters into dialogue with the subjects of her analysis, allowing their words to contribute to the text as fully as her own, and, equally important, creating a dialogue between these rural Maghribians and the canonized scholar–theorists of the West. The reader’s understanding of Pandolfo’s study is enhanced by the unity of form and subject matter in her work. As she presents a multilingual village (Moroccan vernacular and classical Arabic as well as Berber), she also presents to us a polyglot text, quoting not only in these languages but also in French and Italian (all non-English quotes are translated). Images of poetry, architecture, and weaving, all evoked by
the residents of the village, are threaded into her argument in such a manner that one is at pains
to discuss her work without recourse to the same fields of vocabulary. One is quickly impressed
by the breadth of Pandolfo’s research, and indeed the notes to her text are nearly as interesting
to read as the text itself. It should be emphasized that no less important than her command of
Western and Arabic scholarship is her equally profound appreciation of the scholarship and
theories of the Moroccan village she studies, presenting their analogies drawn from poetry,
crafts, and even folk etymology in a compelling manner. The result is a beautifully drawn
portrait of how the people of the Dra Wadi order their own world, on their own terms.

Pandolfo’s text is extremely well written and a pleasure to read. Her scholarship is profound
and soundly based on extensive research, yet presented in a manner that makes it easily accessible
to non-specialists of the Maghrib. Impasse of the Angels should be considered a text of
great interest not only for all scholars of the contemporary Maghrib, but also for all who study
post-colonial multi-ethnic societies from any perspective—and especially those interested in
folk tradition and its contribution to personal, ethnic, and national identity.

M A R Y A N N T É T R E A U L T , S t o r i e s o f D e m o c r a c y : P o l i t i c s a n d S o c i e t y i n C o n t e m p o r a r y K u w a i t

R E V I E W E D B Y D E B O R A H L. W H E E L E R, Center for Internet Studies, University of Washington, Seattle

In her pivotal work on Kuwaiti politics, Mary Ann Tétreault provides an “insider's guide” to
the private and public spaces in which struggles over communal power are pursued by the
government, the Parliament, and the people of Kuwait. Tétreault is careful to call her text
“Stories of Democracy,” as she realizes the reflexive nature of what democracy means at differ-
ent periods in history (before oil, after oil, under Iraqi occupation, in post-Liberation Kuwait);
for different people in Kuwait (women, the merchants, government officials, tribal leaders,
service politicians, opposition leaders); and in different contexts (the mosque, the diwaniyya or
men's social club, the civic association, Parliament, the government). With this in mind, she
argues that “democracy” is a “concept that ‘moves’ depending on one’s assumptions” (p. 3).
Her basic message is that Kuwaiti politics resembles the politics of the Greek city-state, and she
relies on various forms of Aristotelian comparison to explore this concept. Moreover, Tétreault
illustrates that much of Kuwaiti politics resembles a high-stakes soap opera. For example, she
calls the bad debt crisis “one of the longest running soap operas in Kuwaiti politics” (p. 164).
In Chapter 4, she labels Kuwaiti politics “a family romance, whose grip on political actors
constrains their choices” (p. 67). Toward the end of her text in chapter 8, Tétreault combines
these metaphors when she observes that in the city-state that is Kuwait, politics are “the product
of a domestic public life that seems all too often like life in a large and contentious family”
(p. 206).

Her text remains highly critical of the government of Kuwait for two main reasons: first
because of its “failure to recognize and articulate national interests” (p. 29), and second, be-
cause of its “lack of accountability” to the people of Kuwait (p. 203). At the same time, she
reserves a note of optimism when she argues that heads of state in Kuwait have distributed oil
wealth to citizens in a more egalitarian way than many governments in the region. Moreover,
she notes that Kuwaiti politics has known periods in which the state and Parliament have held
each other in check, especially under the rule of Abdullah al-Salim (1950–65). Tétreault con-
cludes that “if these checks and balances can be strengthened, many of what now appear to be
intractable economic and social problems could find constructive ameliorations and resolution”
(p. 199). In other words, although at times it seems highly unlikely, “given current political
In her Introduction, Tétreault explains that her methodology is that of a political economist trained in the art of “structural explanations for social phenomenon” (p. 11). The narrative, however, is also informed by an intentional focus on the individual as political actor. Thus, throughout the analysis, Tétreault illustrates “the agency of individuals as well as . . . the structural constraints that limit their choices and shape the outcomes of those choices” (p. 11). This focus on the structural constraints on individual action, as well as individual resistance to structural constraints, encapsulates her treatment of the politics of state and society in Kuwait.

Tétreault explores the relationship between structure and agency in statecraft by probing the government’s inability to neutralize completely opposition to its authority. Even through dissolutions of Parliament, which occurred in 1976, 1986, and 1996, the Kuwaiti government has continued to succumb to limitations on its autonomy. For example, in each of these cases, dissolution came in response to National Assembly members’ “threats to investigate allegations of corrupt business deals by ruling family members and conflicts over oil and finance policies” (p. 198). This demonstrates an attempt by individuals to limit government autonomy. Moreover, in each of these cases, new elections were eventually held, which suggests that the government eventually gave in to domestic democratic pressures.

Exploring another facet of state–society relations, Tétreault observes that: “since 1980, the rulers of Kuwait have manipulated constituencies and elections to change the character of parliament. Their aim was to get rid of the merchant traditionalists who felt themselves entitled to a strong voice in public affairs, and to replace them with “new men” and tribal representatives who, because they would owe their prominence and their private benefits to the regime, would know their place and act accordingly” (p. 206). Instead, Tétreault argues, “most new men saw their preferments as entitlements and quite a few came to parliament with their own agendas”; thus, “they proved unreliable allies” for the regime (p. 207).

The inability of the state to act completely autonomously throughout Kuwait’s history is explained by Tétreault in light of the capacities of individual Kuwaitis. As she observes in chapter 8, “[in] Kuwait, where people are blessed with social, economic and personal resources not only in their individual capacities but also in their collective capacities as families, neighborhoods and congregations, and professional and business groupings, we have seen that the ability of citizens to carve out spheres of autonomy is extensive” (p. 184). Tétreault argues in Chapter 2, “Citizens and States,” that the push and pull between Kuwaiti rulers and citizens has created an “oscillation between democratic oligarchy and autocracy that has characterized Kuwaiti political life for one hundred years” (p. 31). Those spaces in which Kuwaitis have maintained some political autonomy include the home and the mosque, as well as the marketplace and unregistered associations (pp. 59–60).

Her argument that democracy has organic roots in Kuwait is built on a series of myths and stories. Her most important illustrations of this point come in Chapters 3, 4, and 9. She observes, in terms of founding myths in Chapter 3, that “Kuwaiti historians tend to emphasize the participatory nature of the politics surrounding the founding of the city and the choice of its ruler” (p. 34). In chapter 4, she argues that “Kuwaitis embraced democratic ideology and practices as homegrown elements from their national past rather than rejecting them as alien grafts from the imperial West. This myth has endured in spite of vigorous propaganda campaigns by religious and secular leaders in Kuwait and throughout the Middle East that insist on the foreignness of democracy and its unsuitability to local traditions and values” (p. 65). At the end of her text, in Chapter 9, Tétreault includes a portion of an interview with Hasan al-Eisa, a “secularist democrat” (p. 208), in which they discussed the future of parliamentary democracy.
in Kuwait, Eisa observes, “Liberal democracy is not deeply evolved in this country, in spite of the bullshit that we have been democratic for thirty years” (p. 209). Têtéault uses the phrases “Liberal democracy is not deeply evolved in this country” and “we have been democratic for thirty years” as what she metaphorically calls “bookends bracketing a long shelf of stories about democracy in Kuwait.” Each story, vignette, grand narrative, romance, and adventure tale presents a different version of the many discourses of democracy and their antitheses, which characterizes the tug of war between rulers who want complete autonomy and do not want their decisions (even poor ones) questioned and the public who increasingly view themselves as capable and deserving of rights “to participate directly in the public life of the nation” (p. 209).

Têtéault’s story is highly personal and is inspired by the friendships she shares with Kuwait and its people. She bases her narrative on two separate field studies of Kuwaiti politics—one in 1990, when she had a Fulbright grant to study the politics of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, and another in 1992 (shortly after the liberation), at which time she had a U.S. Institute of Peace grant to observe the first parliamentary elections in Kuwait since 1985. Têtéault’s analysis is an important contribution to the field in that it mainly describes the political culture of Kuwait, at times inspired by post-structuralist methods, whereas existing literature tends to be more conventional history or political economy. Her work builds on the important contributions toward cultural analysis made by the anthropologist Anh Nga Longva, whose work Walls Built on Sand: Migration, Exclusion and Society in Kuwait (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997) also captures many of the cultural nuances that participate in Kuwaiti public and private life.

Because there are so few books in Middle East studies that actually capture, in the author’s words, “what it might be like to be Kuwaiti and what that identity means politically” (p. 10), this book will be of interest to scholars writing about politics in the Gulf, as well as for those who teach courses in the politics of the developing world or more specialized courses in Middle Eastern affairs.


REVIEWED BY ASIM ERDILEK, Department of Economics, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio

The surge in foreign direct investment (FDI)—investment with managerial control by the foreign investor, usually a multinational corporation—has been the major driver of globalization in the past two decades and the accelerator of economic development in many developing countries. It has, however, bypassed Turkey. By all relevant relative measures found in the United Nations’ annual World Investment Report, Turkey has failed to attract much FDI.

Before 1980, Turkey had essentially a closed economy, as it pursued import-substitution industrialization behind trade barriers. Since 1980, Turkey’s globalization has been impressive but one-sided. The Turkish economy has become much more open to international trade. The customs union with the European Union in 1996 has reinforced this openness. But Turkey’s integration with the world economy through FDI has lagged relative to other developing countries. Even the customs union has failed to bring about any increase in FDI. Annual net inflows of FDI are yet to reach the $1 billion mark. According to a recent Turkish State Planning Organization report, since 1994 new foreign investors accounted for less than 10 percent of the annual FDI inflows. The government’s inward FDI target for 2000 was $2.8 billion; actually, during the first nine months of 2000, Turkey was a net exporter of FDI, with a net outflow of $260 million.
Turkey’s failure to attract FDI has both economic and non-economic causes. The economic causes include chronic high inflation, economic instability, inward orientation until 1980, weak protection of intellectual property rights, lack of inflation accounting and internationally acceptable accounting standards, failure of privatization, inadequate legal system, and insufficient infrastructure (communications, transportation, and energy). The non-economic causes include political instability, internal conflicts, historical animosity toward foreign economic presence (dating to the Capitulations), excessive bureaucracy, widespread corruption, lack of FDI promotion, and structure of Turkish business (family-owned and closed to foreign takeovers).

Viewed against that background, this is a narrowly focused book that should be of interest primarily to international business academics specializing in FDI. It deals with the various microeconomic and managerial aspects, which the authors refer to as “dimensions,” of U.S. and Western European FDI in Turkey. It contains scant discussion of the FDI policies and environment in Turkey. It mentions the liberalization of the FDI and foreign-trade regimes after 1980 but offers no in-depth analysis of the economic, political, and social factors that determine Turkey’s attractiveness as a host country to foreign investors. It is more about the managerial whys and hows, such as strategic motives, partner-selection criteria in joint-ventures, management control, and joint-venture performance evaluation of FDI in a developing country than about the specific macro as well as micro causes and effects of FDI in Turkey.

Without a specific thesis of its own, the book is offered as an empirical test of the British economist John Dunning’s Ownership–Location–Internalization (OLI) paradigm, which explains FDI in terms of ownership, location, and internalization advantages. FDI, based on managerial control, enables multinational corporations, faced with higher transaction costs of exporting and licensing to internalize their overseas activities to achieve lower transaction costs. Through internalization, such corporations bypass arm’s length market transactions, replacing them with administered (“internalized”) transactions, conducted at transfer prices, between the parent company and its foreign affiliates. Multinational corporations’ affiliates can compete with their better-informed local rivals in the host country because of their parents’ superior proprietary assets, which vary in tangibility and specificity. These assets include patented products, processes, or designs; industrial secrets; technological know-how; managerial and marketing skills; and established supplier and customer contacts. These assets are expected to give the multinational’s affiliates a productivity advantage over their host-country rivals. Location advantages refer to those of host countries and can be comparative advantages such as natural resource or labor abundance or government-created advantages based on import restrictions or FDI incentives.

The authors of this book should be commended for their meticulous efforts to collect firm-specific primary data through mailed questionnaires. The appendix outlines how they did that, but unfortunately it does not include even abbreviated versions of the questionnaires used. Their statistical techniques, based on SPSS for Windows, include descriptive statistics, factor analysis, binomial logit, and multiple regressions. The authors mistakenly claim that their sample of ninety-eight observations is large and hence must be normally distributed. As the assumption of normality is crucial to the appropriateness of the specific statistical techniques used, the authors should have tested, using the tests available in SPSS for Windows, whether their data were indeed normally distributed.

In Chapter 1, the authors draw attention to the important role played by FDI in globalization in the past two decades and present data on Turkish inward FDI in 1980–95, emphasizing the unrealized potential of Turkey as a host country. They also outline the purpose and contribution of their study as an empirical analysis, based on Dunning’s conceptual OLI framework, of the managerial aspects of Western FDI in Turkey. This chapter ends with short summaries of the other chapters in the book. In chapter 2, the authors identify, using factor analysis, Turkey’s major host-country location influences that attract Western firms and examine how these influ-
ences vary across five dimensions: the country of origin, mode of entry (greenfield versus brownfield), ownership pattern (wholly versus jointly owned), size, and industry (manufacturing versus services). Chapter 3 distinguishes between transaction-related versus firm-specific motives for investing in Turkey and, using factor analysis, examines how the different motives vary across the same five dimensions. In chapter 4, the authors reformulate their FDI motives in terms of Dunning’s three advantages, and, using factor analysis and binomial logit regression, examine how the importance of these advantages vary across three of the five dimensions noted earlier. In chapter 5, which contains the most original and interesting of their results, the authors turn their attention to the strategic motives and partner-selection criteria in joint ventures from the viewpoints of foreign and local partner firms, using factor analysis and multiple regression. They find, as expected, that the relative importance of the strategic motives and partner-selection criteria vary between foreign and local partners. Chapter 6 focuses on the variation of management control across different functional areas, such as finance, human resources, and marketing, according to various venture characteristics such as ownership pattern, foreign-parent nationality, and industry. Chapter 7 examines, using factor analysis, how expected and actual joint-venture performances, overall as well as specific in terms of such criteria as marketing, cost efficiency, finance, and technology development, are viewed differently by foreign and local partners. Chapter 8 contains the summary and the implications of the study.

The authors claim that their study has managerial as well as public-policy implications. The managerial implications, presented in two pages, are practically useless, being so general and obvious. Two examples: “foreign investors should exert their efforts to concentrate on the factors that are most relevant for their own situation and allocate the remaining time over the less relevant ones” (p. 175) and “Turkish companies must recognize that they may be vulnerable over the long term due to inherent power imbalances” (p. 176). The public-policy implications, squeezed onto a single page and underdeveloped, however, are right on target. In order to attract more FDI, Turkey must (1) complete the structural transformation of its economy through public-sector reforms and privatization, (2) stop screening FDI, (3) increase protection of intellectual property rights, and (4) promote itself as a host country for FDI.

As an international business specialist interested in a statistical study of the managerial aspects of FDI in Turkey, I would recommend this book to my library, but as a Turkey-area specialist, I would not. I should also note that most of the major findings of the book, contained in chapters 2, 3, 4, and 7, were previously published in international business journals.

Although it is not evident from the Bibliography and the Introduction that it is so, this book left on me the impression of a raw Ph.D. dissertation, with its turgid style, inflated and repeated claims of originality, and overzealous display of scholarship for its own sake. Because of a lack of editing and integration, the chapters are repetitious in their literature reviews and details of the various statistical procedures used. Several boilerplate passages are repeated verbatim from chapter to chapter. There is no evidence that this book went through the hands of a good editor at Quorum Books. That is a shame.