BOOK REVIEWS

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REVIEWED BY MARK LEVINE, Department of History, University of California at Irvine, Irvine, Calif.; e-mail: mlevine@uci.edu

Globalized Islam is an important new book about a topic that still receives surprisingly little attention from scholars of Islam—how the dynamics and experiences that define contemporary globalization have impacted the Muslim world. Although focusing primarily on globalization’s political and cultural impact, with largely superficial discussions of its economic dynamics, the richness of analysis and breadth of data make it a pioneering contribution to the literature on globalization and Islam.

Roy considers globalized Islam to be the result of the complex interrelationship of globalization, Westernization, and the increasingly important phenomenon of Muslims living as minorities in Europe and the United States. These experiences must be explored in a context where existing norms of religious expression and guidance have lost their authority, which has led to significant changes in the way Muslims engage their faith.

The most important aspect of the globalization of Islam is the evolution of what Roy terms “neofundamentalism”: a response to the “failure of political Islam” to offer a viable blueprint for establishing and administering an Islamic state. What makes neofundamentalism specifically “new” is, first, that its ideologues see globalization as “an opportunity, not a loss” to create a “universal religious identity” delinked from any specific culture. Second, neofundamentalism is most often a phenomenon of rootless and deterritorialized Muslim youth, especially second- or even third-generation residents of Western countries.

We see the evidence of this phenomenon from the growing popularity of lay Muslim preachers across various Muslim societies to, more negatively, the multiculturalism of groups such as al-Qa’ida. The phenomenon is a result of two crucial processes: first, the permanent migration of millions of Muslims outside the dar al-islam; second, the “unhomeliness” brought on by the often unwelcome penetration of Western cultural symbols associated with globalization since the era of high imperialism.

This larger process has spelled the death knell for the Islamist politics of the past two generations. What has emerged in its place is the first post-Islamist generation, in which politics predominates over the religious (even if at first glance it seems to be the reverse) based on a kind of anti-intellectualism that often refuses to engage non-Salafi ideas yet offers a sometimes sophisticated critique of neoliberalism.

Paradoxically, neofundamentalism can also signify the “privatization of re-Islamization” (p. 97), symbolized by the spread of a kind of neoliberal Islamism of “new ‘Islamic’ businessmen [who] openly advocate the free market, see personal wealth as a blessing from God.”
This finding is quite important because “neofundamentalism goes along with a belittling and deliberate diminution of the state,” which is replaced by a focus on reconstructing Islam one individual at a time. In this manner, neofundamentalism can help facilitate the very political–economic processes it seeks to combat.

Several of Roy’s arguments raise problematic issues: the most important among them being how to draw boundaries between neofundamentalist and other types of Muslim belief or practice, and particularly the ambivalent relationship between neofundamentalists and Islamists. Indeed, Roy discusses a blurring of the divide between Muslim Brothers, neofundamentalists, and conservatives and the political basis of the choice of certain groups to use violence. As important is the need to clarify his understanding of culture. Neofundamentalism is a globalized phenomenon because it embodies in itself an explicit process of “deculturation”—rebuilding the ummah on a purely religious basis through a decontextualization of religious practices “from any specific culture” (p. 259).

Making this process possible is, for Roy, Islam’s metamorphosis from culture to “mere” religion. Although he rightly argues that neofundamentalism “valoriz[es] uprootedness” through a focus on the individual believer (p. 269), his argument that religion and culture are in the globalized era two separate phenomena and that globalized Islam’s “imaginary ummah” is “beyond ethnicity, race, language, culture, and not embedded in a specific territory” seems open to question.

The “passage to the West” is perhaps the key movement in Roy’s narrative of the birth of globalized Islam. He argues that there is a “loss of religious authority” and an “objectification of Islam” in this process, which dilutes a formerly “pristine culture where religion was embedded in a given culture” (p. 151). However, no culture is ever pristine nor is there only one culture in a given society, as the conflicts within immigrant communities living in the same neighborhoods makes clear.

Whatever issue one might take with some of the book’s arguments, their saliency was apparent in writing this review, during which time the 6 July 2005 London terrorist bombings occurred. Here Roy’s focus on the impact of Westernization and secularization—the production of a younger generation of rootless believers who see their position in the West as transitory and have no stake in their societies, and their disconnect from established Muslim communities and their concerns—was revealed in all its richness. Indeed, that one might find much to debate with the specific arguments of the book is a testament to its far-reaching goals and willingness to take conceptual risks to begin a much needed (if necessarily imperfect) process of defining the terms that will in turn define the field of Islamic studies in the coming years. One can hope that this book will help motivate a much needed rethinking of terminology in discussing various religiously motivated Muslim social movements.

Globalization and the Muslim World marks an important contribution to the state of the art in scholarship on globalization in the Muslim world. Particularly because the research for the eleven contributions was conducted before September 11, it reminds us of the priorities of scholars right before “everything changed” and the priorities of many scholars naturally shifted toward the myriad of issues involved in the war on terror.

Indeed, the volume’s chapters highlight the problems mainstream scholarship has encountered when theorizing globalization—first, as largely a phenomenon of the global North (when it has in fact long been indigenized in the global South), and second, in “trivializing religious activism” as a valid and modern form of globalized experience. The book’s first chapter, Birgit Schaebler’s “Civilizing Others,” proves this point with a discussion of how similar European and Muslim understandings of “civilization” were until the era of high imperialism saw Europeans reimagine the Muslim world into a backward and nonmodern region that, at best, was an object to be civilized. It was then that civilization was transformed from a “universal concept” in which all peoples could participate to one that at the same time
signified several large-scale blocs of cultures and heritages that were differentiated by their position along the spectrum of barbarity and modernity.

Further expanding the notion of the breadth of civilization, Mehrzad Boroujerdi’s chapter, “Subduing Globalization,” offers a powerful admonition to scholars in and of the West to pay greater attention to indigenous productions of globalized knowledge on its own terms, that is, without trying to reference or contextualize it within Western paradigms. Boroujerdi demonstrates, in a manner similar to the work of anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff on the “South–South” networks of critical theory, how the indigenization movements in the Muslim world belie the claims of many Western scholars that such knowledge is necessarily defined as “apologetic, chauvinist, essentialist,” and other negative traits.

Indeed, the idea of freeing “captive minds” has occupied a whole generation of Southern intellectuals. Underlying this belief are the dual insights that Western culture and social sciences were not the only valid models for Southern scholars to follow (or even the best ones). What is interesting is that this sentiment emerged out of the same suspicion of Western master narratives of universal rationality and value-free science that motivated post-Nietzschean theory in the West.

At the same time, however, the indigenization process is fraught with difficulties because it can produce a kind of “cultural schizophrenia” in which “religiously sanctioned social science,” for example, critiques modernity yet tries to fulfill the same social roles as modern social science. This latter point also emerges from Jocelyne Cesari’s chapter, “Islam in the West,” which explores how the individualization and secularization of Islam as it develops in the Muslim diaspora of the West has sometimes led to a “clash of civilizations” within Muslim families, rather than at the “civilizational” level that is the focus of mainstream policy scholars such as Samuel Huntington.

What is important about the dynamics she discusses is how they reflect an increasing “universalization” of Islam through the seemingly opposed process of individualization and personification of the religion. For those unable to participate in such a transition, however, Leif Stenberg’s chapter on “Islam, Knowledge, and ‘the West’” demonstrates how the rationalities underlying the construction of new ideological relations to history by some conservative Islamists aim to construct a normative history to guide believers for whom the West (and by extension, many aspects of their home societies) have “taken a fundamentally wrong direction” (p. 103).

Part 2 of the book builds on the insights of the first part by exploring the long durée of globalization and then its reach into the most modern forms of media: the Internet and the “global mufitis” produced by satellite television. Specifically, Heather Sharkey’s chapter, “Globalization, Migration, and Identity,” offers a valuable discussion of how a seeming backwater of globalization, 19th-century Sudan, was actually a major node of global integration and movement of peoples, goods, and cultural symbols. Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen’s chapter, “The Global Mufti,” reminds us that sometimes the figures and media who are often the most obviously “global,” such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi and al-Jazeera, are potentially not as interesting as other, less publicized scholars and networks, such as the Egyptian imam Shaykh al-Sha’rawi. The latter’s program, on Egyptian television, is argued to be more “global” even as it looks more traditional.

Finally, Anne Marie Oliver’s closing chapter returns to an issue—the “anxiety of civilization”—that was an important component of the earlier discussions of the volume. Her analysis of Hamas’s supposed literalism shows it not to be merely a “deglobalizing reaction” to oppressive modernity but also part of an attempt to construct a counteruniversalist ideology that serves linguistic and aesthetic purposes as well as political and religious ones. Indeed, in a manner similar to the recent work of Palestinian scholar May Jayyusi, Oliver reminds us that spectacular acts of violence such as suicide bombings and the literalism they
represent “always point to a subversive force at work,” whose aesthetic dynamics need to be elaborated in a much more sophisticated manner than has heretofore been achieved (p. 214).

Although she does not make this argument, it seems from her discussion that the allure of suicide bombings (and, we can suppose, the large-scale violence inflicted by the Israeli Defense Forces upon Palestinians as well) can come at least in part from the belief in the “genetically encoded” irredeemability of the other, and the danger of language whose seductiveness can lead one to trust an enemy who can only do one harm.

Globalization and the Muslim World is a useful volume both for scholars who are trying to ground their research in a different set of arguments and theoretical framework than that of mainstream debates on globalization and for upper level undergraduate and graduate courses on globalization and modern Islam. Despite being the product of a pre September 11 world, it should retain a high degree of relevance to contemporary globalization and Islamic studies for some time to come.

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REVIEWED BY MANSOUR FARHANG, Department of Political Science, Bennington College, Bennington, Vt.; e-mail: mfarhang@bennington.edu

Mark LeVine is a “musician–activist–academic” troubadour, and his book reflects a genre of work that combines solid analysis with advocacy. He is a scholar but by no means detached. He speaks Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, Persian, French, Italian, and German and has traveled extensively in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). He is also a conceptual thinker who seems quite at ease with empirical and statistical materials. Moreover, he has met, conversed, and played with a significant number of cultural, political, and intellectual figures in the MENA region. Above all, he is both a promoter and critic of what he refers to as “the global peace and justice movement.” He is currently a professor of history at the University of California, Irvine. Thus, the book is a composite of LeVine’s analytic perspective, personal experiences, and normative preferences; it is a panoramic exposition of culture, politics, and economics in the contemporary MENA. The stated purpose of the book is to show how neoliberal globalization contributes to the perpetuation of tyranny, violence, and corruption in the MENA, and he examines a cluster of tangible and intangible variables to make his case. He takes us so deep into the labyrinthine of globalization that the reader might have to struggle to remain focused on the message. He never fails, however, to show the relevance of his excursion trips in the journey and their connection to his main themes.

LeVine argues that “the peoples of the region have to fight two battles simultaneously: against their own despotic and corrupt governments, and against the larger ‘world’ financial system” (p. 157). As an example of this double challenge, he provides empirical evidence to show the connection between the rise of oil prices and the increase in weapons exports to the region. He makes a credible case to demonstrate that “the political and economic systems of the region are determined in crucial ways by an arms–petrodollar cycle that can only function in an environment devoid of peace, justice, democracy, and autonomous development” (p. 156). His analysis of the war in Iraq is a must read. It is vastly different from the official story and the mainstream media coverage of the conflict, for he places the war in the context of the Bush administration’s decision to use Iraq as a laboratory for its neoliberal design to remake the political economy of the Middle East region.

LeVine maintains that young Muslims are best positioned to join the global struggle for peace and justice, but the cultural imperialism of the economically progressive Western...
activists makes it difficult for them to identify with the movement. “What makes this situation worse,” he writes, “is that while the peace movement finds it difficult to bring Muslim youth more actively into its activities, it leaves the door open to extremists Muslim religious movements which are doing increasingly well at recruiting young Muslims in the absence of a positive alternatives” (p. 267). He is critical of the European and North American supporters of the “global peace and justice movement” for wanting Muslims to be more like us . . . discard their veils and “assimilate to the dominant Western culture of the protest movement” (p. 271). As important, he writes, “while ‘we’ make demands (however subconsciously) on our Middle Eastern comrades to be more like us, many more of us would do well to learn Arabic, Persian, Turkish or Hebrew and go live in the Middle East, learn the cultures and bring back that knowledge to use for the larger movement” (p. 272).

It is indeed the case that, after the collapse of Eastern socialism and secular nationalism in the Islamic world, extremist Islam has become an appealing alternative for Muslim youth. The discussion of culture in the book is the key to its overall analysis. The socialist and nationalist ideologies of the post World War II period focused on national self-determination and economic justice without disturbing the native culture. Today, challenge to cultural norms and taboos is central to politics and social change in the MENA countries. From a secular or human-rights perspective, one can view this challenge as a positive development in the long run; but for the time being, it is a major impediment to the advancement of peace and democracy in the region. LeVine’s analysis of culture change, in relation to both globalization and native traditional sensibilities, is the most important contribution of his book to our understanding of contemporary upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa.

LeVine regards the U.S. media coverage of Islam to be often superficial or distorted and provides a historically informed portrayal of Islam as a religion or cultural system that, like other major religions, lends itself to diverse and evolving interpretations. He does this both conceptually and empirically. What makes his observations unique and instructive is his ability to combine his personal experiences as a traveler in the Arab/Islamic world with an impressive knowledge of the history and cultures of the region’s peoples and states. His style of writing ranges from providing statistical evidence to show how the policies of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization impact the lives of ordinary people to creative storytelling about musicians, preachers, and gay and lesbian dancers in a Beirut nightclub. This variation in LeVine’s narrative shows that his iconoclastic book is a product of scholarly research as well as journalistic dispatches from Iraq, Israel, Palestinian territories, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, and Morocco. He has interviewed senior international political figures, discussed the Qur’an with Muslim Brothers, lived next door to Hamas mosques, dodged terrorist bombs, and performed from Woodstock to Damascus Gate. He is the kind of hybrid analyst who can blend scholarship, journalism, and art with an impressive command over his subjects. Few readers would agree with all of his views, but even fewer could fail to appreciate his edifying and revealing insights.

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REVIEWED BY DAVID COMMINS, Department of History, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa.; e-mail: commins@dickinson.edu

Essentialist paradigms just seem to come naturally to Western thinking on Islam and the Middle East. Public discourse on the Muslim world is heavily accented by Samuel Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” and Bernard Lewis’s account of “what went wrong” in Muslim history.
The governing assumptions in Richard Bulliet’s essays are that such paradigms exacerbate tensions between the United States and the Muslim world and that they threaten Muslim minorities in Western societies. Therefore, he considers it urgent that we re-envision the historical relationship between Islam and the West to avoid turning the clash of civilizations thesis into self-fulfilling prophecy. The essays at hand pose four large, loosely related questions: Does it make sense to view Middle Eastern Islam and Latin Christendom as components of a common Islamo-Christian civilization rather than as rival civilizations? Why does religion play a significant role in modern Muslim politics? Why did American Middle East specialists fail to predict the Islamic revival? What might the future hold for the Muslim world?

Bulliet argues there can be no clash of civilizations because Latin Christendom and Middle Eastern Islam form a single civilization. His case rests on identifying comparable dynamics of converting populations to monotheistic religions, the emergence of religious specialists (ulema and monks) with institutions of learning (madrasas and monasteries), and the evolution of similar religious forms (Sufi orders and popular devotional movements). Granted that Latin Christendom and Middle Eastern Islam exhibit some similarities, one may object that Bulliet strains to select evidence to fit his framework, for example, by exaggerating the religious character of early European universities. True, the essay format is too brief to do more than sketch a historical overview, but the evidence here makes a stronger case for comparative studies than a civilization based on shared beliefs, values, and traditions.

In the second essay, Bulliet turns Lewis’s normative question concerning what went wrong into an empirical one, “What went on?” In either case, how do we account for the contemporary salience of religion in the Muslim world after decades of anticlerical policies? Bulliet suggests that justice has represented a supreme political value in Muslim societies comparable to freedom in the West. When rulers exercised tyrannical powers, the ulema stood up for justice to make them temper their conduct. The modernization of state institutions afforded rulers greater power than ever before, which they wielded to silence and co-opt the ulema. The religious call for justice did not perish but migrated to lay intellectuals forging new discourses invoking Islam.

Why area studies scholars in the United States did not perceive the rumblings of religious dissent becomes evident in Bulliet’s review of Middle East studies. In “Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places,” he contends that the Cold War’s Russophobic climate inclined scholars to highlight the Islamic world’s Westernizers and to overlook the multitudes captured by emergent movements insisting on a central role for Islam in public life. Bulliet advocates a turn away from the pitfalls of imagining that Americans will ever find the Muslim world filled with either angels or demons. That task will require understanding Muslim societies on their own terms rather than viewing them through the filter of Western values and interests. The essay’s subtext is polemics between followers of Bernard Lewis and Edward Said (a contest that reached the point of diminishing intellectual return some time ago). Bulliet strives for balance by placing scholars, the objects of their study, and their debates into historical context. It is a noble initiative.

The Muslim world’s crisis of religious authority forms the core of perhaps the most compelling essay, “The Edge of the Future.” Authority to speak on religion formerly rested on specialized religious learning associated with ulema and madrasas. However, the ulema’s decline, the arrival of the printing press, the spread of mass literacy, and the rise of lay Islamist writers rearranged the landscape of religious discourses. Bulliet suggests that, throughout Islamic history, creative innovation has emerged on the edges of institutional and political power and that, in today’s Muslim world, there are a multitude of “edge” situations in Muslim societies and diasporas. He further contends that such innovations take centuries to unfold and that the path from militant jihadism to a pacific, tolerant vision may not become clear in our time.
The concept of civilization is a powerful heuristic device for organizing history but is not a historical artifact. Would Middle East studies be a richer field if we replaced a hostile essentialist paradigm with a benign one? The concept of Islamo-Christian civilization confines Islam to the Middle East, but the “edge of the future” encompasses diasporas. If modern technologies of communications and transportation integrate Muslim communities more tightly than ever, what does this mean for the integrity of Middle Eastern Islamic civilization, the sibling of Latin Christendom? It may well be that the perils of present-minded history, in this instance driven by the commendable aspiration to combat fearsome tendencies, compromise conceptual rigor. Whatever qualms I have, however, these essays, if widely read, would have a salutary effect on public discourse. In the narrower realm of academia, students in upper level undergraduate and graduate courses examining historiography and contemporary scholarship on the Middle East and the Islamic world would benefit from pondering these essays. They emanate from a fair-minded approach to strident debates—written, if you will, from the center.

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REVIEWED BY NIALL CHRISTIE, Department of Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies, University of British Columbia and Department of History, Corpus Christi College, Vancouver, B.C., Canada; e-mail: niallchristie@yahoo.com

Between 1239 and 1241, the military expedition commonly referred to as the Barons’ Crusade took place in the Holy Land. The campaign was conducted in defiance of the orders of Pope Gregory IX, who in 1235, had exhorted the Christian nobles of Europe to change the objective of their planned expeditions from the Holy Land to Greece, where the Latin Empire of Constantinople was under threat from the rulers of Bulgaria and Nicaea, both kingdoms that the Pope saw as heretical. Nevertheless, while the Barons’ Crusade was a military disaster, its armies repeatedly defeated by those of the Ayyubid rulers of the region, through careful negotiations with the Ayyubids, the crusaders were able to secure an expansion of the holdings of the Kingdom of Jerusalem of a magnitude that had not been equaled since the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin in 1187.

In his work on this crusade, Michael Lower provides a detailed account of the initial preaching of the crusade to the Holy Land by Pope Gregory; his subsequent change of its objective; the reactions that his message received in Hungary, the County of Champagne, western France, and England; and the expeditions to Constantinople and the Holy Land that were conducted as a result of his efforts. However, Lower does not seek merely to provide a narrative; he uses the Barons’ Crusade as a case study to challenge some common assumptions about crusading. In particular, he proposes that the commonly accepted idea that the crusades were an expression of a unified Christian identity is an oversimplification of the true situation in the period, effectively demonstrating that the religious affiliation of the participants in the crusade was only one of several factors that affected how they approached the endeavor. This is not the only notion that Lower challenges. He also shows, for example, that the assumption that the crusades automatically had a negative impact on followers of faiths other than Catholic Christianity is also erroneous, and he urges caution in the use of such binary categories (Christians and non-Christians) when seeking to understand historical developments. By the same token, he also questions the established concept of the crusade as an effective instrument of papal control of the nobility of Europe. The Barons’ expedition to the Holy Land
represents the culmination of various activities undertaken by crusaders despite opposition and even the employment of punitive measures by the papacy in its efforts to redirect the crusade to Constantinople.

In discussing the responses to Pope Gregory’s appeal in various regions of Europe, Lower emphasizes the study of comparative local history, as exemplified by his concentration in turn on the responses of the rulers of Hungary, the County of Champagne, western France (especially Brittany), and England. This strategy usefully enables Lower to demonstrate that the Pope’s message encountered widely varying reactions and had equally varied consequences. For example, he is able to show that, although the Pope’s call led to the execution of heretics and the exploitation of Jews in Champagne, at the same time it indirectly improved the position of Muslims, Jews, and other non-Christians in Hungary, where papal efforts to degrade these groups were abandoned in favor of an effort to encourage King Bela IV and his followers to crusade to Bulgaria, where, in Pope Gregory’s eyes, there were more dangerous enemies of the faith to be found. Thus, we see both the mixed impact on non-Catholics as a consequence of the Pope’s preaching and the establishment of a hierarchy in the level of threat that various non-Catholic groups posed to the faith that nuances the otherwise binary perception of Christian vs. non-Christian.

Lower’s use of the sources is careful and thorough, and he provides an impressive bibliography of both primary and secondary sources that indicates the comprehensiveness of his research. Admittedly, he uses few Muslim sources from the period, but this finding is reasonable considering that the focus of his attention is for the most part on the response to Pope Gregory’s message in Europe. Even in his account of the Barons’ brief expedition to the Holy Land, his focus is above all on the Western point of view, although he does use several primary and especially secondary sources to provide a degree of balance.

*The Barons’ Crusade* is primarily a book about Catholic Christian Europe and its response to Pope Gregory IX’s call to the crusade. As a result, it is likely to seem of limited interest to most of the readership of this journal, being of most immediate use to scholars of the Western perspective on the crusades and scholars of the Eastern perspective who wish to broaden their awareness of the period. That said, Lower’s challenging of existing generalizations and cautioning against the adoption of oversimplified conceptions of historical realities present an exemplar to historians of all periods and regions, making this work of wider interest than it originally appears. In addition, Lower’s argumentation is clear and his writing style engaging, which will add to the book’s appeal to professional scholars, students, and interested laypersons.

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REVIEWED BY JACQUES WAARDENBURG, Faculté de théologie et de sciences des religions, University of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland; e-mail: jacobus.waardenburg@unil.ch

With the discovery and publication of his *Mughni* (completed in 380/990, published in fourteen volumes in Cairo, 1958–65) and his 120-page “Critique of Christianity” (written in 385/995 as part of his *Dala‘il al-nubuwwa*, published in two volumes in Beirut, 1966), the work of the Iranian scholar ‘Abd al-Jabbār (ca. 937–1025) has lately become a focus of interest for students of medieval theological thought. The first publication, an encyclopedic work, is a major source for the study of Mu‘tazili thought, many texts of which have been lost. The second text is an important document of medieval Islamic polemics against Christianity.
The present book is an in-depth study of this polemical text, referred to by G. S. Reynolds as the **Critique**. His four main chapters treat successively the **Critique**'s historical context (Mu'tazili polemic against Christianity, life, and work of 'Abd al-Jabbār, religious communities in Rayy at the time), its text (reputation, content, style, and purpose), and its Muslim and non-Muslim sources (Christian Arabic texts of the *adab al-jadal* style, Jewish sources, and contemporary oral sources).

In his conclusion, Reynolds draws special attention to the “sectarian milieu” where all kinds of narratives must have circulated at the time, especially in Rayy, with its population of East Syrian Christians and Isma'ili and Zaydi Shi'ites in addition to Hanafi and Shafi'i Sunni Muslims. This explains some singular features of 'Abd al-Jabbār's text, including its lively style pointing to real dispute and debate. The author’s polemical style is a product of his own religious thought. He draws, however, on a living tradition of Muslim writings on Christianity following three kinds of approaches: *kalām* minded, historical/scriptural, and missionary/apologetic (especially in treatises).

Reynolds explores four main issues:

1. the most important extant Muslim texts on Christianity written before the *Critique*,
2. the search for precedents in earlier Muslim texts for individual passages in the *Critique*,
3. the *Critique*’s relation to earlier Muslim writings, and
4. the relevance of the historical context of late 10th-century Rayy for this particular text.

He gives a thorough survey of Muslim perceptions of Christianity from the 7th to the 11th century. The *Critique*’s vision of Christianity is substantially different from earlier Muslim writings on Christianity and so is the author’s procedure in refuting Christianity. Earlier Mu'tazili refutations sought to demonstrate the logical failures of Christian doctrine, presenting questions to which logically adequate answers had to be found (masā'il wa-ajā'ib). In his *Kitab al-radd 'ala al-nasara* (*Mughni*, Book 5), 'Abd al-Jabbār himself had followed this path of refuting Christianity by logical means. In the following years, he must have studied Christianity intensively, as a result of which he wrote the *Critique* in 385/995. Here, he wants to demonstrate that the Christians’ religion is not that of Christ; in a variety of ways Christians have left Christ’s religion (p. 117). To prove this, 'Abd al-Jabbār presents particular arguments (theologumena) as evidence, derived from Qur’anic and Biblical texts, from the early history of Christianity, and from religious stories about Christians that must have been circulating at the time. He contends that the Christianity of the Christians is completely in error. The few true followers of Jesus who remained faithful to his message were persecuted and sought refuge elsewhere, whereas the other Christians strove for power and finally imposed Christianity by coercion. They suppressed Jesus’ original gospel and put pagan practices in place of the Divine Law. False Christian leaders deceived the community, and Christian people became fascinated by miracles serving as “proofs” of religious truths (as distinct from the Muslims’ search for what is rational). By means of concrete examples from scripture, history, and narrative literature, ‘Abd al-Jabbār polemically develops the main Qur’anic objections against Christians. The result is a deconstruction of Christianity as held by Christians and an Islamic construction of Christianity as the counterpart of the current Islamic construction of Islam.

We find here an Islamic critical reading of the Bible, an Islamic critical history of Christianity, and an Islamic critical interpretation of a Christian lifestyle. This Islamic vision of Christianity emerged in response to the demands of religious deputation in a “sectarian milieu,” in which given communities fought to maintain and strengthen their identity against the attacks of rival factions. Because identity was expressed in religious terms at the time, communities cherished a “confessional” identity, constructed by adherents and deconstructed by enemies. Reynolds presents forceful arguments to show “the degree to which sectarian
controversy of the medieval period has affected Muslim–Christian understanding” (p. 245). By recognizing this, “the two groups might today be free to understand each other in a new and more irenic manner” (p. 245). ‘Abd al-Jabbâr’s treatise (like Ibn Hazm’s work on non-Islamic religions) belongs less in the field of the study of religions than in that of the art of disputation, in this case between religious factions. ‘Abd al-Jabbâr wants not to understand the other people’s religion but to invalidate it, following “the precedent set by the Qur’an and the Prophet Muhammad” (p. 137).

Further than Abdelmajid Charfi’s foundational study al-Fikr al-islami fi al-radd ‘ala al-nasara of twenty years ago (Tunis, 1986), this book surpasses existing studies on Muslim–Christian polemical literature. It contains detailed literary and historical research on ‘Abd al-Jabbâr’s biography; the social context of Rayy, where the book was written; and numerous Muslims connected with Muslim–Christian discussions. The author displays great erudition; he knows his sources and treats complex methodological problems well. He has done meticulous research on ‘Abd al-Jabbâr’s “Islamic” interpretations of Biblical texts and elements of the history of Christianity.

This book goes far beyond a single study of one particular text (the Critique). Because it pays attention to both Muslim and Christian debaters before ‘Abd al-Jabbâr, it is in fact a kind of handbook on 8th- to 11th-century Muslim polemics against Christianity in the Middle East. Most important in my view is Reynolds’ analysis of the way ‘Abd al-Jabbâr argues and what intellectual procedures he adopts in his presentation of Christianity. The book makes fascinating reading. I think Ritter, Stern, and Pines would have enjoyed seeing it. It leads its readers back to the question of what present-day critical historical research has to say on the origins of Christianity.

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DAVID COOK, Contemporary Muslim Apocalyptic Literature, Religion and Politics Series (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2005). Pp. 282. $34.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ORIT BASHKIN, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago, Chicago; e-mail: oritb@uchicago.edu

Contemporary Muslim Apocalyptic Literature is a fascinating read. It is a scholarly study of a rich body of apocalyptic texts, integrating hadith literature, Qur’anic exegesis, and Christian apocalyptic tales, along with narratives similar to those one would find in contemporary magazines sold in American supermarkets that deal with unidentified flying objects and flying saucers. Cook’s exploration looks at the new ways in which apocalyptic writers construct time and meaning and underlines the changes that occurred when medieval apocalyptic literature was transformed into the modern context.

Chapters 1 and 2 detail the major concepts and methodologies within Muslim apocalyptic writing and identify schools of thought within the modern apocalyptic worldview. Cook distinguishes three subgroups in the discourses: first, a conservative school, which is produced and controlled by the ulama and often makes no effort to relate the apocalyptic traditions to present realities; second, a radical school, which appeals to the present and produces apocalyptic scenarios “based on classical Muslim material, more or less in the same manner that evangelical Christians use biblical materials” (p. 15); and third, a neconervative school, which synthesizes the radical outlook yet minimizes the biblical material used by the radical method.

Other chapters deal with the particularities of the grand apocalyptic narrative. They explore concepts such as that of the mahdi (chapter 6) and the Antichrist (chapter 9); analyze textual
problems encountered by apocalyptic writers when reinterpreting holy scripture and sacred traditions (chapters 10 and 5); underline new concepts of apocalyptic time (chapters 3 and 4) and apocalyptic space (part of chapter 6); and examine the ways in which contemporary realities such as the involvement of America in Middle Eastern politics, the existence of the state of Israel, or the new regime of the Taliban were reconfigured into the present apocalyptic literature.

Undoubtedly, readers will benefit from Cook’s extensive knowledge of the classical apocalyptic literature in both the Shi’ite and the Sunni traditions. Cook’s mastery of such sources, moreover, enables him to underline the modern and popular nature of the new apocalyptic texts and expose their hybrid nature. Every chapter provides a rich and meticulous description of its subtheme, incorporating as many apocalyptic works as possible. This finding is most evident in chapter 6, which describes a long fantasy concerning the changes that will occur in the universe after the arrival of the mahdi. Cook takes us step by step on a captivating journey illustrating the various battles that are supposed to occur at the end of time.

Another important strength of the text is its ability to challenge the simplistic categories of “clash of civilizations” by demonstrating how Western narratives and images, from the Protocols of the Elders of Zion to the biography of Henry Kissinger (who is sometimes identified as the Antichrist, p. 163), are incorporated as signs of the coming end. Cook, however, convincingly illustrates that the radical groups themselves adhere to a concept of “clash of civilizations,” which classifies “the world into stark, easily identifiable categories and bolster[s] a worldview in which the West and Islam are in total opposition” (p. 6). The text also highlights some unexplored aspects of radical Islamic literature. For example, it contains interesting discussions on the appropriation of scientific, technological, and pseudoscientific motifs in apocalyptic works (p. 71–83, in particular). These accounts are used by writers to scientifically authenticate the correctness of their religious beliefs—much like 19th-century biblical archeologists used archeology to substantiate the Bible.

Another interesting aspect of the book is the new light it sheds on the market of modern religious literature. Cook demonstrates how the reprinting of the classic apocalyptic heritage in the past fifteen years by the religious establishment enabled radicals to recreate their own messianic scenarios and challenge the conservative knowledge of the sacred tradition. Finally, this book exemplifies the vitality of Qur’anic exegesis and interpretation of tradition by examining the ways in which such readings are produced in a modern context and the problems faced by the new, popular interpreters.

One wishes, however, that Cook would have given more attention to the context of the Arab state and to the Arab readership. Although it is virtually impossible to assess the reception of conspiracy theories or obtain data on sales of apocalyptic books, it would have been useful if Cook had included more biographical information on the apocalyptic authors or information regarding the frequency with which these texts are mentioned in the more conventional media. Although the invaluable parallels Cook draws between Christian and Muslim apocalyptic traditions generate a much-desired comparative analysis, what is lacking is a more detailed comparison to the Arab secular discourse, because such writers challenge tolerant and secular voices in the Arab world. In fact, some narratives mentioned in the book are the mirror images of particular reformatory and secular representations. Radical writers incorporate and compete with the national discourses, presenting their own version of Arab nationalism and the state. The depictions of the just caliphate created by the mahdi could be viewed as the counterimage of many Arab states. The mahdi, we note, not only rids the world of Israel but also destroys the Gulf shaykhdoms, in particular Kuwait (not surprisingly, some texts appeared after the first Gulf War). Because such narratives also feature Saddam Hussein, Michel ‘Aflaq, King Hussein, Yasir Arafat, and Hafez al-Asad, more about the relationship of such groups to local politics seems to be in order, especially because Cook notes that their apocalyptic
message inspires them to challenge the current political norms. The emphasis on the Arab national context might undermine Cook’s hypothesis that such texts, although written in Arabic, are also geared toward Christians in an attempt to contest the “apocalyptic philo-Judaism so prevalent among Protestant evangelicals” (p. 220). Similarly, the very rich bibliography could have benefited from texts dealing with contemporary Islamic discourses by Emmanuel Sivan, Gilles Kepel, or additional works by Yvonne Haddad (the bibliography only lists one article).

Lastly, although Cook is careful to note that the texts he read are pertinent to apocalyptic Muslim writers, at times he generalizes about “Islam” or the “Muslims.” Commenting on Israel’s centrality within anti-Semitic conspiracy theory depicted in the apocalyptic texts, Cook writes that Israel is “a country that has succeeded in building a democratic and progressive society when the Muslims [my italics] overwhelmingly have not” (p. 21), neglecting that the Arab press often criticizes Israel for its undemocratic politics. Likewise, in answering the question, “What does the outside observer gain by gazing at Muslim apocalyptic literature?” Cook writes that we see “the lack of self criticism, the defensive attitude towards anything that comes from the outside world, the self-imposed prison of the conspiracy theory . . . . One could therefore say that while there are many positive qualities in contemporary Muslim society, in reading the apocalyptic literature, we are able to see the depth of the opposition to such qualities” (p. 229). This statement about Islam seems to undermine the book’s emphasis on the hybrid nature of such apocalyptic texts, borrowing from Muslim as well as European and American sources.

Nevertheless, this is a very interesting study that is sometimes even humorous because of the nature of the narratives presented. (Who knew that the Antichrist might come from the Bermuda Triangle?) It can serve our students, who might not know the cosmology of the Muslim Day of Judgment yet will surely be familiar with the elements taken from evangelical mythologies and science-fiction tales that populate this Islamic–eschatological space.

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REVIEWED BY LI GUO, Department of Classics, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind.; e-mail: li.guo.6@nd.edu.

This is the sixteenth volume of Giorgio Levi Della Vida Conference Papers. The 1999 conference honored two recipients of the award: Josef van Ess and André Raymond. Seven chapters—three by the two honorees and four by their colleagues—cover a wide range of topics, all under the rubric of the designated theme for that year’s conference, “Text and Context.”

Van Ess opens with a frank, nuts-and-bolts discussion of the relationship between “text and context,” or, in his own words, between “exegesis and history,” between philology and historiography (p. 6). His urgent call for reintroducing, or perhaps reemphasizing, the “German hermeneutical tradition” to the “English-speaking scholarly community” stems from what he sees as a trend in the “separation of historiography and philology,” which he attributes to the influence of Albert Hourani, among others, who was “allergic” to philology (pp. 7–8). His criticism of some of the “highly valued pieces of research which are based on pretty bad philology” and his warning that “the contempt for mere handicraft has had disastrous consequences” (p. 8) are a renewed wake-up call for all, English speaking or otherwise. The
age-old debates will carry on, insofar as the very issues at stake are still very much alive with us today.

Exemplifying the “German hermeneutical approach” advocated above, van Ess’s follow-up piece is a meticulous exercise plowing through the context, or what he terms “intertextual dialogue” (p. 20), surrounding the texts about one particular historical event: the so-called plague of ʿAmwas that struck the Muslim army during the conquest of Syria around 638 (17 or 18 a.h.). A comparison of the three key texts yields various layers of contexts—historiographical (akhbār and its isnads), geohistorical (Iraqi vs. Syrian), and theological (the eschatological implications of the plague)—with the lucidity and thoroughness that one usually associates with the author. A pleasant surprise is yet another layer of “context” unraveled herein, namely the political spins by today’s Arab states in their search for lieu de mémoire of the “plague” in question (pp. 21–22). This is perhaps quite a stretch from the “Germanic” approach but a refreshing one nevertheless.

Showcasing another great European scholastic tradition, the French school of Arab urban study in the premodern era, André Raymond’s contribution painstakingly surveys all the “textual material” for the study of urban developments during the Ottoman era; these materials include historical sources, writings by Western visitors, consular documentation, European archives, waqf documents, documents in “Oriental” archives, and court documents. Equally important is the “nontextual documentation” within the “urban context,” namely, cartography, iconography, epigraphy, and architectural surveys. The latter is being highlighted by the so-called “architectural production” (“using the combined resources of written documents and urban archaeology,” p. 54) heralded by Jean Sauvaget, to whom the chapter is dedicated, although Raymond is quick to point out Sauvaget’s apparent “bias against Muslim town planning” and his “anti-Ottoman prejudice” (p. 54). Such “idiosyncratic reticence” notwithstanding, the method established by the master has not lost its relevance and vigor. In many ways, this chapter is more than a mere bibliographical guide; rife with erudition, wit, and bluntness, it offers a great deal of insights cumulated over a lifetime career. Here are some of my favorite highlights: Raymond’s harsh critique of “western narratives” (pp. 32–33), his bitter rebuke of the recent “historiographical revisionism” that questions the validity of long-term statistical study of Muslim societies in modern times (pp. 42–43), and his critical assessment of the current status of preservation of the Ottoman-era monuments in Cairo (p. 51).

The concept of “producing” texts, and thus “reproducing” contexts, is further explored by the ensuing chapters. Stephen Humphreys investigates “the building blocks of intellectual, religious and literary discourse” in the medieval Islamic world that are by now widely accepted as consisting “of a set of preexisting texts consciously chosen and manipulated by those engaged in this discourse” (p. 71). A case to be made here is the dynamics of the act of writing in the two key arenas in Islamic studies, hadith and history (tāriḵ). In his lucid prose, Humphreys gives one of the most satisfying articulations to date of the “openness and fluidity” that continued to characterize Islamic historical writing.

David King offers an intimate account of Islamic astronomical instruments based on an analysis of the inscriptions on these instruments. The detective anecdotes and personal observations are highly entertaining (King uses “alas” a lot) and extremely informative.

Paula Sanders takes the modern preservationist community to task by arguing that the Bohras, a community of Ismaʿili Shiʿa in modern day Cairo, provide “different contexts” for investing in the restoration of some Fatimid monuments in Cairo “with intended meaning” (p. 132).

Dale Eickelman elucidates the implications of “new ideas” of reading and teaching texts from the Islamic tradition. Much is dwelled upon in an introduction to, and analysis of, the career and work of Muhammad Shahrur. Eickelman argues that modern Muslim thinkers, the likes of Shahrur, “are redrawing the boundaries of public and religious life in the
Muslim-majority world by challenging religious authority, yet the replacement they suggest is a constructive fragmentation” (p. 165). It is perhaps not a coincidence that the volume concludes with the social anthropological discourse that van Ess readily acknowledges in the beginning of the volume as an inspiring “American” pursuit that is a far cry from the Germanic approach, but is “very helpful” in understanding texts (p. 10). In some sense, this volume can be read collectively as a dialogue between the European scholars and their American colleagues, and more importantly, between different approaches to text and context.

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REVIEWED BY MARÍA ÁNGELAS GALLEGO, Instituto de Filología, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid; e-mail: magallego@filol.csic.es

Two centuries after the shu‘ubiyya movement was active in the East, the Arab–mawāli dispute was replicated in al-Andalus. The only extant manifesto of Andalusi shu‘ubiyya is the Risala (Epistle) of Abu ʿAmir ibn García al-Bashkunsi (11th century). Studies on this work are scarce. After the pioneering work of I. Goldziher on the shu‘ubiyya in al-Andalus (“Die Shu‘ubiyya unter den Muhammedanern in Spanien,” 1899), which included extracts of the Risala, two editions of the text were produced by al-ʿAbbadi (Madrid, 1953) and A. Harun (Cairo, 1951–55). The text has been translated into English and analyzed, along with five refutations to Ibn García, by J.T. Monroe (The Shu‘ubiyya in al-Andalus, 1970).

A few investigations on this topic have been carried out recently, but the volume under review (Larsson’s doctoral dissertation, translated from Swedish into English) constitutes the most extensive work to date devoted to the Risala of Ibn García and the shu‘ubiyya in al-Andalus. The book comprises six main sections: “Introduction,” “The formative period of al-Andalus,” “The symbolic articulation of power,” “Dissidents during the caliphate period,” “Ibn García and the context of his time,” and “The reading of Ibn García.” Finally, there are a conclusion, bibliography, and index of proper names.

In the introduction, Larsson briefly discusses a variety of topics illustrative of the author’s approach to the subject, general issues related to the history and historiography of al-Andalus, and specific issues related to the reading of Ibn García’s Risala, structured as follows: (A) objectives, (B) sources, (C) theoretical setting, (D) Ibn García and heresy, (E) methodological setting, (F) previous research, and (G) historical background. However, in this introduction, the reader receives a somewhat confusing impression of the book’s contents, which mirrors the confusing structure of the chapter. In addition, Larsson goes far beyond the analysis of Ibn García’s letter and the shu‘ubiyya movement by discussing issues with little or no relation to the book’s focus. This is the case in the section on previous research, where Larsson speaks of the early 20th-century historiographical debate between Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez Albornoz on whether Spain resulted from a mixed Semitic and Latin heritage or was built on a Latin/Christian foundation (pp. 33–34), followed by a summary of scholarship on the history of al-Andalus (pp. 34–36) that includes works as general as the Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, Encyclopaedia of Islam, and Cambridge History of Africa.

Chapter 2 deals with the history of al-Andalus from the conquest in 711 CE to the proclamation of the independent caliphate in 929 CE, paying special attention to the social conflicts of Andalusí society, including those of a religious, ethnic, and political nature. Larsson adroitly links theology and political power in his analysis of social tensions. In chapter 3, the focus of attention is the structure and articulation of power during the caliphate period.
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(929–1031 CE), through the analysis of two specific manifestations of power and legitimacy: the adoption of the title of caliph and the architectural language of the mosque of Córdoba. Chapter 4 summarizes different sources of social conflict at the end of the caliphate period.

Chapter 5 brings us closer to the meat of the matter. It gives a general overview of the Taifa period and the more specific historical and intellectual context of Ibn García’s Risala. Larsson summarizes and discusses previous scholarship on the corresponding issues. Finally, chapter 6 is a detailed survey of the contents of the Risala. The core of Larsson’s reading of the letter is its interpretation as a means of legitimizing a non-Arab alternative to Arab rule. This will be, of course, the most interesting chapter for those who desire a novel and up-to-the-minute discussion of Ibn García’s work and the shu‘ubiyya in al-Andalus.

It must be said, however, that one drawback of Larsson’s study is the often erratic organization of the material and the presentation of the different topics. It is difficult for the reader to follow the thread of the different chapters. Furthermore, the putative theme of each section feels diluted by the variety of information, regardless of its relevance to the main subject. There are also numerous typographical and some grammatical errors in the text and in the bibliography. By way of example: “Iberio” instead of “Ibero” (p. viii), “Íbn al- al-” (p. 7), “Ménendes” instead of “Menéndez” (p. 18), “Espagne Musulman” instead of “Espagne Musulmán” (p. 34), “it does not expresses [sic]” (p. 52), “differ-ences” (p. 61), “that were to influenced [sic]” (p. 71), “From an [sic] málki” (p. 84), “opra” instead of “por” (p. 215), “España” instead of “España” (p. 220), “Hespéres” instead of “Hespéris” (p. 220), “pólitico” instead of “político” (p. 220), etc.

The scholar of Arabic and Islamic history will recognize this book as an “introduction and update” to a topic of Andalusi history rather than as an “in-depth study.” This is particularly the case given the author’s reliance on secondary sources. Yet, one of the highlights of the study is its emphasis on methodological and theoretical issues. Larsson has most adroitly situated each topic within a broad theoretical setting, using modern sociological methodology and language.

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REVIEWED BY JANE HATHAWAY, Department of History, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio; e-mail: hathawayj@hotmail.com

Suraiya Faroqhi is such a fixture in Ottoman social and economic history that one might not expect her to undertake a book dealing with Ottoman foreign relations. Yet, it is precisely her grounding in socioeconomic history that makes The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It such an insightful work. The book examines the empire’s relations with the major European states, as well as with Iran and India, from the mid-16th through the late 18th century. This period, not coincidentally, coincides with what was until recently known as the era of Ottoman “decline,” a concept that Faroqhi has played a leading role in repudiating. Her book thus constitutes one of the first examinations of Ottoman foreign relations in light of “post-decline paradigm” reconceptualizations. However, strictly speaking, it is not a foreign-policy study. It combines a “cultural encounters” approach with a postmodern sensibility, relatively new to the Ottoman field, regarding the Ottoman Empire’s self-perception and projection of imperial identity.
Following an exposition of problems inherent in the study of Ottoman engagement with the “outside world,” Faroqhi devotes chapter 2 to exploring the Ottomans’ chief foreign rivalries and alliances at four critical junctures: 1560, the date of the earliest extant Mühimme Defterleri, or “Registers of Important Affairs” (and, coincidentally or not, the high point of imperial stabilization under Süleyman I); 1639, which marks a key treaty with the Safavids; 1718, when the Ottomans signed the Treaty of Passarowitz with the Hapsburgs; and 1774, the year of the humiliating Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, which ended six years of war with imperial Russia. Despite this largely militarily determined periodization, the chapter gives equal weight to commercial and economic matters, which, of course, were inseparable from warfare. In this context, Faroqhi contests the tenacious notion that the Ottoman Empire had begun to be incorporated into the European-dominated world economy as early as the 16th century.

Chapter 3 addresses Ottoman control of border regions, a topic that is attracting considerable interest in the field. Focusing on the Hijaz, Dubrovnik, and Moldavia, three frontier territories that enjoyed comparable degrees of autonomy despite divergent political and economic circumstances, Faroqhi concludes that the Ottomans patronized vassal regimes on relatively stable frontiers and did not necessarily follow a trajectory from indirect to direct rule, as Halil İnalcık’s venerable template for “Ottoman methods of conquest” would have it. At the same time, she questions the implicitly “declinist” notion that the centralized rule characteristic of the 16th century fell apart in succeeding centuries, positing instead “a relatively brief time-span of—often incomplete—centralization in the sixteenth or . . . seventeenth century, bordered by centuries of comparatively decentralized rule” (p. 96). Having established Ottoman administrative flexibility, Faroqhi turns in chapter 4 to the conduct of imperial warfare, rejecting the assertion that the Ottoman economy was mobilized entirely for war while, in the face of Europeanist “military revolution” literature, citing new research suggesting that the Ottomans kept pace militarily with most of Europe until well into the 18th century.

The book’s later chapters emphasize cultural encounters, exploring the ways in which captivity, trade, and pilgrimage fostered contact, willing or unwilling, between the Ottoman Empire and its neighbors and even among various communities within the empire. Chapter 6, on trade, is particularly impressive, drawing on the author’s formidable expertise in commercial history. Although the inclusion of India, Iran, and Armenian trade diasporas in this chapter is welcome, Africa receives curiously short shrift. The trans-Saharan African slave trade is virtually ignored, while the empire’s North African provinces are lumped together as “Tunis–Algiers–Tripolis.”

An engaging final chapter on “sources of information on the outside world” culminates in discussions of Kâtib Çelebi’s Cihannuma and Evliya Çelebi’s Seyahatname. (Although Evliya is touted in the introduction as the book’s “hero,” he largely disappears from the text until chapter 8.) Faroqhi offers a rather unconvincing explanation for why Ottoman geographers and travelers often used medieval Arabic sources uncritically; the question begs for a deeper analysis of the intertextuality between medieval- and Ottoman-era works and the role of this intertextuality in shaping Ottoman geographical consciousness.

Faroqhi has synthesized a formidable amount of cutting-edge research by numerous Ottomanists, herself very much included. Apart from the distracting juxtaposition of Gregorian and hijri dates, her exposition is lucid yet always keenly aware of debates and lacunae within the field. The book contains a very useful glossary and annotated bibliography, as well as two maps (again slighting Africa!) and several intriguing illustrations. Like all Faroqhi’s works, it will undoubtedly become required reading for graduate students in Ottoman history, but it is accessible enough to be used by upper division undergraduates and even intrepid members of the general public.
Several studies have been written about the guilds of Istanbul. Eunjeong Yi’s work stands high among them. Using a multidisciplinary approach, the author views the guilds of Istanbul before and after the 17th century in a wider than usual perspective, comparing them to guilds in other Ottoman cities and raising a series of new ideas regarding their structure and functions. The book is made up of an introduction, four chapters, a general conclusion, six appendices, a bibliography, and an index. The appendices give lists of trades and guilds in Istanbul in the 17th century from different sources.

This book is the outgrowth of a 2000 Harvard University doctoral dissertation, “The Istanbul Guilds in the Seventeenth Century: Leverage in Changing Times.” Eunjeong Yi states in the preface that her aim was to question the works that tended to judge that “Ottoman guilds in general, and the Istanbul guilds in particular, were tradition-bound and/or closely controlled by the government” (p. ix). The author, however, acknowledges that, even though the original sources she explored were of the early to mid-17th century, she was, nevertheless, able to discover some patterns of behavior applying to many guilds that would seriously modify conventional wisdom. This admission reflects the transparency and caution with which the author approaches her interpretation of guild dynamics in Istanbul. Comparisons with the dynamics of guilds in other Ottoman cities support her conclusions.

Among the issues explored by the author is the ethnoreligious composition of guilds. Of fifty guilds whose delegations are described in the Islamic court registers, thirty-five consisted of Muslim and non-Muslim members. Although almost all the ketkhudas (heads) of those guilds were Muslim, the heads of subgroups within major guilds with mixed membership could be nominated from among non-Muslim members. Guilds composed solely of Christians or Jews frequently had ketkhudas from the same denomination. This was exactly the situation in the Syrian guilds at the time. Yi’s explanation that the appointment of Muslim members as heads over guilds with mixed membership was because they could more effectively engage with the government is supported by evidence from Syrian guilds. To interpret the appointment of heads of mixed guilds from among Muslims as stemming out of fanaticism, which could be a tempting interpretation, would be a gross mistake. The guilds upheld with rigidity a work ethic that evaluated members based on their expertise, not on religious affiliation. Guilds in societies and cities with mixed religious population under Ottoman rule applied this rule in work ethic to the full.

Another major issue that the author explores is the interguild relationship whereby a guild was attached, as assistant (yamak), to a major, related guild for the purpose of retailing the products of the major guild and contributing to the payment of its taxes. Such a relationship existed, for example, among the guilds in Syria and Albania (for the latter, see the work of Zija Shkodra). A case in point is the guild of slaughterers, which was yamak to the guild of butchers. This relationship was intended to compensate for the rigidity of traditional regulations that restricted the expansion of businesses by imposing a quota on supplies provided to guilds and also by discouraging partnerships among producing guilds to keep prices under control.

Guild Dynamics also deals with the role custom and tradition played in resolving disputes among guilds outside the court. The distribution of raw materials among guild members, attempts by outsiders to join the guilds, the quality of work done by production guilds, and the amount of taxes each guild member had to pay toward the total amount of taxes collectively...
imposed on the guild were some of the problems the head of the guild and its elders had to deal with, guided by custom and tradition. The author emphasizes the role precedent had played in resolving differences within and among the guilds and in maintaining law and order among craftsmen away from the authority of the Muslim court. The court simply took notice of the decisions of guilds.

The right to practice a trade through the ownership of *gedik*, the tools of a trade, meant in effect, as the author rightly argues, a license to practice a trade. Yi, however, like others who have studied *gedik*, did not find conclusive evidence as to whether or not there were fixed numbers of licenses in each trade. In addition, the relationship between *gedik* and *khilu*, which is the right to use the premises, seems rather blurred and differs from one city to another.

The relationship between the government and the guilds is amply addressed here. The government role, according to the author, was crucial in the building of infrastructure, provisioning, mediating, price fixing, and market supervision through the *mühtasip* (market inspector), but this did not amount to absolute state control of the guilds. When necessary, the guilds appealed to the government through petitions against heavy taxation. When grievances were not addressed to satisfaction, guilds were ready to rise in revolt, as in the rebellion of 1651 in Istanbul, treated by the author, and there are ample examples in other Ottoman cities.

*Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul* is a well-researched work, accurate and thorough, engaging and enlightening, and a pleasure to read. Its contribution to the field is immeasurable. It raises multiple issues for comparison with guilds in other Ottoman cities. The publication of this solid work prepares the ground for comparative studies of guilds in the various regions of the Ottoman Empire. There is much to compare, for instance, between guilds in Syria and in Albania, and between guilds in these two countries and those in Palestine, Egypt, Anatolia, Istanbul, and the rest of the Balkans. The excellent research done by Eunjeong Yi and other scholars in those countries makes such a comparison possible.

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REVIEWED BY MICHAEL M. GUNTER, Department of Political Science, Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, Tenn.; e-mail: mgunter@tntech.edu

This is a very significant contribution to a long-standing historiographical debate over what happened to the Armenians during the last days of the Ottoman Empire. Was it a premeditated genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman officials, as most Armenian and other scholars believe, or the unfortunate result of wartime excesses, as the Turks and a few others argue? Lewy accepts neither interpretation. Instead, he finds that “both sides have used heavy-handed tactics to advance their cause and silence a full and impartial discussion of the issues in dispute” (p. 258). Although he might have mentioned that Raphael Lemkin actually coined the term *genocide* based on what he believed had happened to the Armenians, Lewy aptly declare that “the key issue in this quarrel...is not the extent of Armenian suffering, but rather the question of premeditation: that is, whether the Young Turk regime during the First World War intentionally organized the massacres that took place” (p. ix).

Lewy takes on what many who back the Armenian contentions consider to be some of the most damning evidences of a premeditated genocide and shows how they are “materials of highly questionable authenticity” (p. 250). These suspect documents include the so-called “Ten
Commandments . . . issued by the Committee of Union and Progress [CUP] relative to their plan for massacring Armenians” (p. 47), “still another secret meeting that is said to substantiate the element of premeditation . . . described in memoirs written by a purported member of the central committee of the CUP, Mevlanzade Rifat” (p. 51), and the Naim Bey “telegrams allegedly sent out by minister of the interior Talaat Pasha, ordering the extermination of the Armenians” (p. 63) and published by a minor military censor at that time, Aram Andonian.

Lewy also questions the methods of arguably the leading current Armenian scholar–advocate for the premeditated genocide thesis, Vakhakn N. Dadrian. Lewy points out Dadrian’s “selective use of sources” (p. 282–83), how when “checking the references provided by Dadrian . . . it becomes clear that these sources do not always say what Dadrian alleges” (p. 83), Dadrian’s “manipulating the statements of contemporary observers” (p. 84), how “only through shrewd juxtapositions of words and insertions (which he puts in square brackets) that Dadrian ends up with the desired result” (p. 85), and how “it is Dadrian’s gloss and not the original text quoted that includes the incriminating words” (p. 86).

Lewy examines many other sources that help “establish the terrible suffering of the deported Armenians and the occurrences of massacres. But, contrary to Armenian claims, they do not prove the responsibility of the central government in Constantinople for these killings” (p. 135). These sources include the German missionary and Orientalist Johannes Lepsius, the German poet Armin T. Wegner, the famous British Blue Book edited by Lord James Bryce and a young Arnold Toynbee, and Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire.

On the other hand, Lewy finds “most valuable . . . the consular reports . . . of Leslie A. Davis, the American consul in Harput . . . Of special importance are accounts of his visits to several mass execution sites, one of the few such reports available from any source” (p. 139). Recently released Turkish publications “focus almost exclusively on Armenian rebellious activities. Hardly any documents are included on the relocations or the confiscation of Armenian property” (p. 132). In addition, “only a fraction of the massive Turkish archival holdings are available to researchers, and these are carefully controlled by the Turkish authorities” (p. 133). Lewy also accuses “the Turkish side, which seeks to dismiss the mass killings as ‘excesses’ or ‘intercommunal warfare’ and often speaks of ‘so-called massacres’” as “distorting the historical record” (p. 252).

As for the argument that “the large number of Armenian deaths—genocidal consequences—as proof that the massacres that took place must have been part of an overall plan to destroy the Armenian people” (p. 43), Lewy counters that it “rests on a logical fallacy and ignores the huge loss of life among Turkish civilians, soldiers, and prisoners of war due to sheer incompetence, neglect, starvation, and disease. All of these groups also experienced a huge death toll that surely cannot be explained in terms of a Young Turk plan of annihilation” (p. 250). Lewy further takes to task the recent French law punishing those who in effect do not agree with the premeditation thesis. In 1995, for example, a French court found the prominent scholar Bernard Lewis guilty of denying that the Armenians suffered a premeditated genocide and imposed a token fine.

How does Lewy explain what happened to the Armenians? “The momentous task of relocating several hundred thousand people in a short span of time and over a highly primitive system of transportation was simply beyond the ability of the Ottoman bureaucracy . . . Under conditions of Ottoman misrule, it was possible for the country to suffer an incredibly high death toll without a premeditated plan of annihilation” (p. 253).

There has long been a need for somebody with the academic objectivity and courage to take on this challenging issue. Although Lewy’s analysis is certainly not going to constitute the definitive answer, there is no other comparable work that so objectively and thoroughly reviews and analyzes so many different sources on both sides of this bitterly divisive issue.
Lewy’s study also contains three maps, a very brief list of abbreviations and glossary, thorough notes, a lengthy list of works cited, and a good index.

Given the increasing importance of the Kurds, several new books on the subject have recently appeared, an important one being *Turkey’s Kurds: A Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Ocalan* by Ali Kemal Ozcan. Most of the books, however, have dealt with the Kurds in Iraq—who constitute only 4 to 5 million—while as many as 12 to 15 million live in Turkey and another 6 million in Iran. Thus, this sophisticated, well-documented sociological study of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey and its longtime leader Abdullah (Apo) Ocalan is most welcomed.

“A modified and [slightly] updated version” of Ozcan’s 2002 doctoral dissertation (p. ix), this study is largely based on “prolonged observations, an unstructured interview with Ocalan, and an ‘illegal’ questionnaire” (p. 6) to 184 Kurdish respondents in Diyarbakir, Mersin, and Ankara. Ozcan was even allowed to join the PKK’s education program at its Central School in Syria in the summer of 1994, an experience that might have influenced him to overemphasize the success of the party in the “education war” (p. 241). A table detailing the rigorous “daily timetable of party education” from 7 a.m. until midnight appears on p. 270, whereas another table on p. 271 contains “a list of Ocalan’s [48] published works” totaling 16,501 pages.

In general, Ozcan seeks “to throw light on the processes of the PKK’s ‘massification’—its mobilizing sources and dimensions among the people of Kurdistan” (p. 18). He concludes that the “PKK’s organizational performance lies behind the revitalization of the Anatolian Kurds” (p. 242). The author also reviews theories of the nation and nationalism—Marxist conceptualizations in particular. He is impressed with the inadvertent role played by the emergence and formation of Turkish capitalism and the [Turkish] Republic in giving rise to the PKK and Kurdish detribalization.

Ozcan repeatedly argues that “in the face of the organization’s total abandonment of all national liberation objectives . . . the ethnic resistance of the Kurds under Turkey . . . shall have to be defined as an ‘identity’ liberation movement, rather than a national liberation movement” (p. 233). By this he means that since the capture of Ocalan in February 1999, the PKK has lessened its former demands to merely democratic rights for the Kurds as Turkish citizens within the borders of a unitary state. The author even speculates about Ocalan’s “philosophy of human nature” (p. 241) being applicable “not just for the Kurds and the neighboring societies of the Middle East but for the whole of humanity” (p. 242). Many, however, believe that the former position is simply a tactical move given Ocalan’s incarceration, whereas the latter is indicative of his megalomania.

Ozcan adds that “the actuality is that the globalization of ‘supranationalism’ is enjoying its heyday, through which national markets of nation-states—and its outdated nationalism—are becoming less and less significant, and are doomed to eventual meaninglessness” (p. 233). Such a blanket conclusion is very debatable. Although globalization has dramatically spread, nationalism too continues vibrant. The two phenomena, while seemingly inversely related, apparently are not necessarily so. A generation ago, for example, modernization was supposed to lead to the decline of nationalism, but instead helped lead to its renewal in such states as Britain with its growth of Scottish and Welsh nationalism. There is no inherent reason why a Kurdish nation cannot exist within a truly democratic Turkey joined to the European Union (EU).

Regarding Ocalan’s capture in February 1999, Ozcan seems to believe that “the US had decided to hand Ocalan over to Turkey following a detailed report presented by Michael M. Gunter [the present reviewer] who interviewed him in Damascus on 13 and 14 March 1998” (p. 15). If Ozcan means that this reviewer was someone working for the U.S. government to aid in Ocalan’s capture, he is completely in error. Rather this reviewer recommended—and
continues to do so—that the United States look upon the PKK more favorably than as merely a terrorist organization, but he has been ignored given Turkey’s role as an important NATO ally of the United States. (Contrast the negative U.S. position toward the PKK with its positive attitude toward the Iraqi Kurds who were enemies of the Saddam Hussein regime.) Ozcan also concludes that the United States helped to capture Ocalan because of the PKK’s “calculable decline of organizational (and consequently military) capability” (p. 232). This reviewer instead would explain the U.S. action here as again support for its NATO ally, Turkey. These differences notwithstanding, the present reviewer finds Ozcan’s study to be an even-handed, sophisticated analysis of an important Kurdish movement that has clearly reordered the Kurdish situation in Turkey and will continue to do so with powerful repercussions for the future of this important country and its candidacy for membership in the EU. Despite the book’s occasionally obscure style of writing, scholars as well as governmental practitioners will read it with great benefit. Ozcan’s study concludes with appendices containing the questionnaire he administered to his 184 Kurdish respondents, along with its statistical results (pp. 254–76); the basic organizational structure of the PKK; and a list of the 75 Kurdish self-immolations that briefly occurred from 1998 to 1999. There also is ample documentation, as well as an index and a useful bibliography of English- and Turkish-language sources that still omits some important recent work.

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REVIEWED BY ALEV CINAR, Department of Political Science, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey; e-mail: alevc@bilkent.edu.tr

This book offers a rich and highly informative ethnographic study of the ways in which nationalism and citizenship in Turkey have been pervaded by a discourse and culture of militarism, which resulted in what Altinay calls a “military-nation.” Altinay argues that this myth, which establishes the Turkish nation as defined by an essentially militaristic quality, is so pervasive that it is perceived as a natural and commonsensical condition of Turkish nationhood which leaves it closed to any negotiation and contestation. In her book, Altinay provides a richly illustrated answer to the question, “how is it possible that the military as an institution and ‘military nationhood’ as an idea have been so omnipresent, yet a discussion of militarism and militarization so absent?” (p. 3)

This is the first comprehensive—and much needed—book in English that takes a close look at militarism as a culture and the core of national ideology in Turkey. This feature alone makes this book a must for anyone interested in a more insightful view of the role and the centrality of the military in Turkish society and political culture. It is also highly relevant for those who are interested in the study of nationalism and citizenship and their relation to gender and militarism, but because the author provides only ethnographies and does not engage in a discussion with these more abstract issues directly, readers with such general interests are left to draw their own conclusions.

In six chapters, Altinay demonstrates the ways in which the myth of being a military-nation was produced and inculcated upon public culture in Turkey. After exploring the making of the myth of the Turkish military-nation through the writing of official national history in the early years of the republic, Altinay goes on to examine the gendering of citizenship in relation to this pervasive discourse of militarism. Even though this chapter provides a thorough account of Turkey’s first female pilot, Sabiha Gokcen (who was also the first female combat pilot
in the world), the highly complex and intricate relationship between gender and militarism is unfortunately reduced to the discussion of the presence (or absence) of women in the military. The presentation of the Gokcen’s memoirs and the ways in which the state invests in her public image hints at very interesting questions about how the discourse of militarism is used in the construction of gendered notions of citizenship involving not only femininity but also masculinity, and yet the author does not offer such an analysis. She suggests that the discourse of militarism is about state control over women’s bodies, but in fact most of her examples and observations in other chapters illustrate the ways in which militarism is more directly and centrally about state control of men’s bodies. This indifference to the symbolic significance of men and their bodies in relation to the discourse of militarism only contributes to reproducing the same paternalist/masculinist discourse that treats the male subject as the invisible, unmarked norm, which the author is critical of.

Altinay also investigates antiwar movements and other challenges to the discourse of the military-nation. Enriched by the personal accounts of various conscription evaders and of gay activists who were declared unfit to serve in the military due to their alleged “psycho-sexual problems” (p. 80), this section illustrates how such counterdiscourses challenge the masculinist and militaristic norms of citizenship. However, the author does not elaborate further on whether these challenges change, subvert, or simply reinforce the dominant discourse of the military-nation. Indeed, some stories of gay activists and conscription evaders do not go beyond a complete and uncritical acknowledgement of the militaristic/masculinist standards of citizenship in Turkey. These sections necessitate a much more thorough analytical account of how exactly such counterdiscourses challenge, if at all, the dominant myth of the military-nation.

Examining the building of the myth of the military-nation in education, the last section of the book provides interesting observations on a crucial yet ignored issue, namely the “National Security Knowledge” courses that are compulsory in all high schools throughout Turkey and are taught by appointed military officers instead of civilian teachers. The significance of these courses is that this is one window in the national education system that is directly controlled by the military, giving it access to the students. Altinay brilliantly illustrates how the military uses these courses to teach students that the “right political perspective is the military perspective” (p. 137). In addition, Altinay’s observations again illustrate the ways in which the discourse of the military-nation, as it is produced through these courses, establishes masculinist norms of citizenship, excluding women all together from being equally valued and rightful citizens. Even though these courses are taught to both male and female students, the ways in which the texts introduce the military and norms of citizenship, and the teachers address their audiences, treat women as if they are virtually nonexistent. Unfortunately, the author does not elaborate further on how these courses function to instill a very masculine and militaristic sense of nation and norms of citizenship in schools.

One of the most serious oversights in this work is the total neglect of the impact of Turkey’s close alliance with Germany before and during World War II, and of the Cold War on the development and institutionalization of the centrality of the military in Turkey’s political discourse and public life. In tracing the roots of the significance of militarism, Altinay looks only at the modernization efforts of the 19th-century Ottoman state, which, one can claim, plays only a minor role. Nowhere in this book is there mention of Turkey’s close alliance and cooperation through the founding years (1930s) with Germany, which, at the height of its militarism, had a very powerful impact on the country. This influence is evident, for example, in the German-built Guven (Security) Monument marking the center of the capital, Ankara, and displaying a very masculinist and militaristic sense of nationhood. This insistence on militarism was further fueled by the Cold War and particularly Turkey’s relationship to NATO as the only member country with a border with the Soviet Union. During this time,
Turkey prided itself on being the NATO country with the second largest army after the United States.

Overall, Altinay provides an original, rich, highly informative, and well-illustrated account of the discourse of the military-nation in Turkey using case studies, interviews, personal stories, and observation. She is correct in drawing attention to the curious disregard for militarism as such a centrally constitutive feature of public and political culture in Turkey. It is unfortunate, however, that there is no elaboration on this work’s theoretical and conceptual implications and Altinay’s specific conclusions about the significance of the unique features of the military-nation myth in Turkey. When it comes to the theoretical, Altinay relies too heavily on secondary literature on discourses of militarism elsewhere. This book would be more complete if the author summed up her conclusions and the contributions her study makes to literatures on nationalism, militarism as a discursive practice, and citizenship. I speculate that the reason for such a significant oversight is because this work remains too confined to the disciplinary interests of anthropology and ethnography and fails to take up a more interdisciplinary approach that such a study of the culture of militarism begs for.

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REVIEWED BY ALVIN W. WOLFE, Department of Anthropology, University of South Florida, Tampa, Fla.; e-mail: wolfe@cas.usf.edu

This new book by Douglas White and Ulla Johansen goes well beyond what Bahram Tavakolian was thinking of when he spoke of “the multiple varieties of nomadism” and “the multiplicity of anthropological modes of thinking about nomadism” in a 2003 review for Reviews in Anthropology (vol. 32). Network Analysis and Ethnographic Problems represents an extreme in ethnographic method by using detailed professional observations over many decades (1956–95) and an extreme in analysis by using cutting-edge network modeling, graph theory, and computational expertise that is simply not available to the rest of us yet.

The association of three highly unusual factors—years of genealogical information, years of observing and recording a people’s marriages and migrations, and an interest in constructing scientific explanatory statements about the social structures that emerge as these natural and cultural processes unfold—results in a unique book. In theoretical interest, it has something in common with two foundational works that set off years of anthropological wrangling about kinship, George Peter Murdock’s Social Structure (1949) and Claude Levi-Strauss’ Elementary Structures of Kinship (1969, original French version in 1949). What seems to have prompted mathematical anthropologist and network analyst Douglas White to team up with more traditional ethnographer Ulla Johansen was the possibility of using her incredibly detailed knowledge of Turkish nomads’ social activities over several generations to try to resolve the most vexing problems of those two opposing theoretical systems. The result of the collaboration between White and Johansen is a book that, like those two earlier efforts, will undoubtedly serve as a take-off point for many other scholars to follow.

In addition to its contribution to our understanding of kinship theory in a quite new way, this book makes an outstanding contribution by reintroducing ethnographers to the network perspective. Fifty years ago, social anthropologists J. A. Barnes and Elizabeth Bott introduced network analysis into ethnography. Their initial steps made it possible for J. Clyde Mitchell to
cut an exciting path that was soon followed by other British social anthropologists, revealing how valuable network analysis could be, especially in the study of urbanization of African populations.

The end of the formal colonial era slowed social anthropological research in Africa in the decades following 1960. In addition, changes in the interests of anthropologists in the English-speaking world, such as the reduction of interest in comparative social structures and cultures, coupled with rising interest in qualitative interpretive ethnography, left the field of social network analysis to be developed by sociologists and organizational scientists. Douglas White, however, is one of a small number of anthropologists who developed the mathematical expertise necessary to make a genuine contribution to network analysis of complex systems through combining graph theory, long-term fieldwork, and the electronic computation required to deal with masses of quantitative data. These are the skills he brought to this work, putting this book at the cutting edge of network studies, regardless of discipline.

Thus, even those who are not interested in Turkish nomads per se may find this book of great value. Whether the reader is interested in kinship, in economics, in politics, or in history, this book might be considered must reading. However, it is not easy reading. Although the book is well-written, the subject matter is very complex and multidimensional. It contains many necessary tables and figures. It even gives URLs to color-coded figures that are available only on the Web, figures so complex that they cannot be understood without the color coding. Something that some readers may not understand is that, although most graphic illustrations appear in only two dimensions, graph theory is designed to explain multidimensional problems. Analyzing only a few dimensions of a multidimensional situation can be genuinely misleading, and it certainly will not yield much understanding of the whole.

The book begins with an introduction to network analysis in relation to ethnography, providing a succinct history of network thinking, including recent developments in various disciplines about network topology and dynamics. The authors point out that “taking a network path to coding and analysis” in ethnography leads to the ability to understand the emergence of social structural phenomena that would otherwise remain unobserved.

Another distinctive feature of this book is the formality with which the authors present their ideas and findings. In the introductory chapter, for example, they present four propositions, about network theory and emergence, with which are associated specific hypotheses that are supported or not by observation and analysis. The first of these propositions is “Networks have structural properties (local and global) that have important feedback on behavior and cognition” (p. 8). Clearly, that proposition is important not just to kinship, marriage, lineages, and clans but also to a much broader range of phenomena.

Although the reader will learn much about the Aydınlı nomads in southeast Turkey—their lineages, clans, marriage preferences, and observed patterns—this book is pointedly not just about those things but, as its title states, about ethnographic problems. Chapter 2, “Problems of Analysis,” puts it clearly: “How shall we ask questions that might unfold a whole theory-net of interesting and useful findings, ones that articulate with other theory-nets and research programs, and what shall be the types of definitions that bring a subject into a clear perspective?” (p. 59). Fortunately, the authors provide a twenty-five–page glossary, organized in categories such as ethnography and sociology, networks and graph theory, kinship and social organization, complexity theory, and so on. This reviewer found the glossary indispensable and also appreciated the sections suggesting further readings found at the end of each chapter. These features certainly add to the value of the book as a teaching tool.

The authors provide much evidence for their overview statement that “long-term field research has changed the face of anthropology” (p. 407). In distinguishing between phenomena that are easily observable and those phenomena that are generated through processes of interaction over periods of time, they show the need for new concepts, such as “structural
cohesion,” that can help fill the gap “between social structure and social organization,” and more importantly, “provide a link to the theory of complex phenomena that emerge through interaction” (p. 407).

One quotation from their concluding chapter summarizes well the kinds of innovations this book makes: “It is this very multiplicity of interactive levels and variables that provides a conceptual foundation for the study of social cohesion through the formal definitions and analysis of marital relinking (chapters 2 and 5), structural endogamy (analyzed in chapter 6), and changes in bicomponent or exocohesive structure (chapters 9 and 10) over time. We show how to use the study of changing practices to investigate emergent or changing rules, groups, and norms” (p. 408). Unfortunately, some readers of this review will be put off by the many neologisms—“relinking,” “bicomponent,” and “exocohesive” among them. However, the careful reader of the entire book comes to see the necessity, to capture the meaning of phenomena generated by interactions that have not previously been included as theoretical concepts.

White and Johansen have produced what could be the most important book in anthropology in fifty years. There is nothing like it. Their use of these several methodological and theoretical innovations applied to a Turkish nomad clan should stimulate others to undertake similar analyses of whatever societies or social groups they study.

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REVIEWED BY ZACH LEVEY, Division of International Relations, University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel; e-mail: zachl@poli.haifa

Candace Karp argues that the United States squandered opportunities to settle the Palestinian refugee problem, delineate final borders, and determine the status of Jerusalem in a manner that would have contributed to regional stability. Thus, writes Karp, the United States did a disservice both to the countries of the region and its own national interest. Karp deals with borders, refugees, and Jerusalem from 1947 to 1949, territory in 1956–57, and all of those issues with regard to the period immediately following the June 1967 war. Her verdict is that only in 1956–57 did the United States pursue a policy that both promoted its strategic objectives and diminished regional tension, forcing Israel to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip. Karp favors the term “immediate deterrence” to describe U.S. diplomatic coercion and the determination to impose, were they to have been necessary, economic sanctions to force Israeli compliance.

According to Karp, in 1948–49 no such determination guided the administration of Harry S. Truman, which acquiesced to the territorial gains Israel made in the first Arab–Israeli war. She regards this as a missed opportunity. In her view, the United States should have withheld the $100 million Export–Import Bank loan to Israel that the administration in January 1949 authorized, adding diplomatic pressure to force it to withdraw to the borders of the 1947 United Nations partition plan (pp. 12–13). The Department of State recommended such a policy, and in the author’s opinion, the failure of the White House to heed that counsel grievously damaged U.S. relations with Arab states. Instead, Israel remained in control of both the Negev region and the Galilee, bringing the dimensions of the Jewish state to one third more than the territory the partition plan had assigned it. The United States faltered with regard to Jerusalem, too, failing “to impress upon Israel and the Arab world its desire to see the city internationalized” (p. 124).
In Karp’s view, the United States missed another opportunity when, in 1967, it failed to reverse Israeli territorial gains, compel Israel to readmit to the West Bank the refugees that fled to Jordan in a second “exodus,” and force it to relinquish the eastern part of Jerusalem. How should the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson have dealt with this situation? “The workable solution involved an Israeli withdrawal from East Jerusalem, along with the rest of the West Bank, and the Old City placed under an international regime” (p. 260). Karp does not clearly explain how, in the circumstances that prevailed after the 1967 war, the United States could have elicited Israeli compliance with such demands.

Four principal flaws mark this work. First, the depiction of U.S. policy toward the Arab–Israeli conflict as ineffectual and self-defeating is facile. Karp applauds President Dwight D. Eisenhower for a “diplomatic onslaught against [Israeli Prime Minister David] Ben Gurion [that] was efficient and relentless” (p. 169). However, the circumstances of early 1949 and mid-June 1967 were as vastly different from the situation in 1956 as they were from each other. The author greatly oversimplifies matters by stating that Truman was prepared to force upon Israel neither a solution to the refugee issue nor a retreat to the 1947 borders because he was “unwilling to punish a new nation with a horrific legacy,” that of the Holocaust (p. 282). In fact, the Truman administration saw no strategic justification for alienating Israel from the Western camp and, in late 1948, resisted British pressure to force the Israelis to give up the Negev. Karp’s treatment of that aspect of U.S. policy is poorly focused, and she should have consulted the work of Zvi Ganin and William Roger Louis.

Karp claims that, in 1967, “American opposition to an Israeli withdrawal without corresponding Arab initiatives towards peace compromised its own position in the region” and benefited the Soviet Union (p. 213). However, it is neither clear that the United States in June 1967 could have forced an Israeli withdrawal nor apparent how doing so without an Arab quid pro quo would have contributed to regional stability. Karp quotes Lucius Battle, the assistant secretary of state who, in August 1967, noted that “U.S. influence and control in Israel is as limited as that of the Soviets over the Arabs” (p. 213). In any case, the Johnson administration wished not to reward the Arab states for their part in bringing about the 1967 War, while Arab losses in that war placed a severe strain upon the Soviet Union’s relations with Egypt and Syria, both of which it had armed heavily.

A second flaw is the cursory treatment of salient aspects of both the Arab–Israeli conflict and the cold war in the Middle East. There is no mention of the primary Soviet goal in the late 1940s, preventing Palestine from becoming an Arab-dominated state that would host British bases. Karp fails to note the arms embargo that the United States in 1948 imposed on both Israel and the Arab states and refers almost not at all to Soviet and Western arms to the region during the entire period that the book covers. Moreover, she accords the Middle East policies of President John F. Kennedy less than a page, thus relegating to brief mention, in the context of the next administration, the plan of Joseph Johnson, Kennedy’s initiative for a settlement of the refugee problem.

Third, the author has drawn extensively upon archival sources but is led by the documents, filling the text with numerous quotations and in some places reusing them (pp. 35, 80). A fourth shortcoming is that of historical inaccuracies and awkward passages throughout the book. These irregularities, many of which the editor should have corrected, undermine the author’s arguments. An example of such confusion is Karp’s explanation of the U.S. failure in June 1967 to publicly reprimand Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol for the Israeli role in creating and perpetuating a second Palestinian refugee crisis. She writes that “at any rate, White House strategy pertaining to a long-term comprehensive strategy, based, in the short term, around its linkage strategy, negated any chance that Tel Aviv would moderate its behavior” (p. 241).
Some readers may not care for the author’s repeated reference to “Tel Aviv.” In fact, Israel conducts its affairs of government in Jerusalem and considers that city its capital. Writers who wish to remain aloof from the controversy over sovereignty may avoid using either city as a substitute for references to Israel. The author also terms the first Arab–Israeli war the “War of Independence.” Perhaps she should have preferred the neutral “1948 war.” These faults should not deter researchers dealing with U.S. policy toward the Arab–Israeli conflict from consulting this work, but a more clearly written book may be more suitable for classroom use.

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REVIEWED BY NUR MASALHA, School of Theology, Philosophy and History, St. Mary’s College, University of Surrey, Surrey, U.K.; e-mail: masalhan@smuc.ac.uk

The Palestinian refugee problem has been at the center of the Arab–Israeli conflict since 1948. This question, the greatest and most enduring refugee problem in the world, remains intractable despite endless diplomatic efforts and decades of “peace process.” Some 60 to 70 percent of Palestinians are refugees, and the resolution of the Israel–Palestine conflict is impossible without addressing their grievances, rights, and needs. Furthermore, any discussion of contemporary Israeli policies toward refugees must take into account their Zionist roots and, in particular, the way in which they are linked to those policies that were instituted in the early years of the Israeli state. After the 1948 expulsions, refugees were not repatriated because Israel had no interest in allowing them back; the Israelis correctly argued that Palestinian repatriation would entail the reversal of Zionism and Israel’s transformation into a binational state. Since 1948, successive “ethnocratic” policies adopted by the Jewish state—land, ethnic and demographic, legal and political, military and diplomatic—have been aimed at reinforcing the power and domination of the Israeli–Jewish population.

A key element in these policies has always been the prevention of the return of Palestinian refugees to their ancestral villages and towns. Indeed denial has always been central to Israeli discourse: denial of the existence of the Palestinian people, denial of the (extensively documented) “ethnic cleansing” of Palestine in 1948, denial of the Palestinian “right of return,” denial of Palestinian rights in Jerusalem, and so on, ad infinitum and ad nauseam. Denial is a central component of a Zionist strategy of preemption: after the setting up of the “transfer committees” (first by the Jewish Agency in 1937–44 and later by the Israeli cabinet in 1948), and the cleansing of the land in 1948, Israelis denied any wrongdoing or any historical injustice. They continue to deny any moral responsibility or culpability for the creation of the plight of the Palestinian refugees and to deny any restitution of property. The refusal to entertain any recognition of culpability for the “ethnic cleansing” of Palestine in 1948 runs deep among Israelis of all political persuasions (left, right, and center). Instead, Israelis make counterclaims regarding Jewish property lost in the Arab world.

Fischbach’s Records of Dispossession is an important piece of revisionist history. Chapters 1 and 3 provide an excellent discussion of Israeli policies toward abandoned refugee property, the variety of methods by which the Israeli state expropriated this property, and the way the property was used by the new state. Other chapters contain highly original material, with detailed and often critical examinations of the Palestinian refugee property question and the “compensation issue.” Fischbach’s main contribution derives from his careful examination
of the archival records, especially those of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP)—records that were never before available to the public; they were kept behind “locked doors” at the U.N. archives in New York for nearly four decades (p. xxi).

In the 1950s and 1960s, the UNCCP had systematically compiled these massive records in the hope that they would become useful should Israel ever compensate the refugees for their losses. Israel’s obligation to compensate the refugees for land and property had been codified in paragraph 11 of U.N. Resolution 194 of 1948. Fischbach’s meticulous research documents U.N. estimates of the scope and value of the refugee property and conflicting Israeli and Arab estimates. The enormous number of previously unavailable documents on property losses by Palestinians in 1948 amassed by Fischbach, as well as the exceptional quality of his scholarship, makes his work by far the most important work on the subject.

Fischbach’s work is also useful on early Arab and international policies toward the property question. Although the main focus of Records of Dispossession is on the 1948–67 period, the work is interesting on the wider political and diplomatic contexts of the property issue, particularly the way this question has been affected by the evolving Arab–Israeli conflict throughout the last fifty-five years. In his conclusion, Fischbach correctly argues that Palestinians and the wider Arab world have generally understood the compensation question as surrender of the “right of return,” and refugees, in particular, have generally refused to discuss compensation separately from restitution and repatriation. This deep ambivalence toward the concept of compensation also explains the recent insistence of many Palestinian groups that the refugees obtain justice through property restitution not compensation.

Records of Dispossession is excellent on details but conceptually flawed in one respect. From the early 1950s onward, all Israeli attempts to work out proposals on compensation for Palestinian refugee property were tied to a settlement of abandoned Jewish property in Iraq, and later in other Arab countries. This linkage was also tied to the myth of “population exchange,” which is still being publicly propagated by even “moderate” Israeli leaders such as Shimon Peres. One of the most important issues discussed by Fischbach is “whether Palestinian refugee claims are linked inextricably to counterclaims raised by Israel. Once again, the answer provided by the historical record seems to be ‘yes’ ” (p. 365). What “inextricable link” and which “historical record”? Of course “Arab Jews” currently residing in Israel and the West are entitled to seek compensation from Arab regimes. Some, like the pro-Western government of Nuri Said in Iraq, tacitly and opportunistically conspired with the Israeli government of David Ben-Gurion to get rid of the indigenous Jewish community residing in Iraq for over two millennia. On this supposed “inextricable linkage” the author surprisingly accepts the Israeli official line uncritically. This also perhaps explains why this work has been welcomed by some mainstream Zionist academics in Israel and the United States. Once again, however, we Palestinians are being asked to pay the price not only for the Holocaust and other European atrocities against Jews but also for the cynical and often brutal behavior of post-1948 Arab regimes toward Mizrahi “Arab Jews.”

Records of Dispossession produces mountains of evidence but leaves much to be desired on “the way forward”; its implicit procompensation concepts are carefully camouflaged. In the opinion of this reviewer, a comprehensive, just, and durable solution will depend on bringing an end to the Israeli politics of denial and addressing the refugee problem justly. Only by understanding the centrality of the nakba and expulsion that the Palestinian people suffered in 1948 (in the same way that the Holocaust has been central to Israeli and Jewish society of today) is it possible to comprehend the Palestinians’ desire for return. Perhaps more crucially, the Palestinian refugee problem can only be resolved justly within the wider framework of a binational Israel–Palestine. Even now Israeli society is binational: one in every five Israeli citizens is a Palestinian. With acknowledgment and international support, the refugee issue can be resolved on the basis of a historic compromise between Israelis and Palestinians.
Acknowledgment also means that the Reparations Agreement between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany of September 1952, which was designed to compensate victims of the Holocaust, might serve as a model to compensate victims of the nakba.

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REVIEWED BY ORA SZEKELY, Department of Political Science, McGill University, Montreal, Canada; e-mail: ora.szekely@mail.mcgill.ca

In The Palestinians: In Search of a Just Peace, Cheryl A. Rubenberg examines how and why the Oslo process ultimately failed, arguing that it directly and inevitably led to the al-Aqsa intifada. She attributes this failure to four major factors: the flawed nature of the Oslo Accords themselves; Israeli policies that, in practice, made life for Palestinians much harder during the Oslo period; virtually unconditional American support for Israel; and the corrupt and oppressive nature of the Palestinian leadership. Regarding the last, a major portion of her argument centers on the contention that, far from being orchestrated by Yasir Arafat or the Palestinian Authority, the intifada was in fact an uprising against the Palestinian Authority as much as against the Israeli occupation (p. 276). Ultimately, however, Rubenberg lays the failure of the process at the feet of successive Israeli administrations that, in her assessment, were never committed to the creation of a Palestinian state through the Oslo process. Rubenberg contends that Israel instead saw the Oslo Accords as a means to extend Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza, while placating the Palestinians with the symbols, rather than the substance, of statehood and that Israel viewed the Palestinian Authority as a mechanism for enforcing Israeli security.

The book’s greatest strength is Rubenberg’s meticulous research; she includes a great many first-person accounts and quotations from those involved in the Oslo process and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, on both sides. This finding is particularly true of chapter 4, in which Rubenberg examines the city of Hebron as a microcosm of the Palestinian experience of the occupation. The sheer volume of information the author presents on life in the West Bank and Gaza during the Oslo years is a valuable contribution; Rubenberg paints a detailed picture of the hardships suffered by Palestinians under the occupation, including curfews, closures, and settler violence. However, her work suffers from a certain bibliographic narrowness: she draws very heavily on a limited range of sources from the Israeli left, particularly B’tselem and Ha’aretz, lending a certain bias to her account.

There are several additional themes that reoccur throughout the book: Israeli strength in contrast with Palestinian weakness; the corruption of the Palestinian Authority, Fatah, and Yasir Arafat; and, perhaps most significantly, the Palestinians’ assumption that, by recognizing Israel at all and reducing their ultimate goal from a state encompassing all of historic Palestine to a state in the West Bank and Gaza, they had made all of the concessions that could reasonably be expected of them. Although what may or may not have been “reasonable” to expect of the Palestinians, the Palestinian Authority, or Yasir Arafat is ultimately a subjective judgment, in Rubenberg’s account, the eruption of the intifada was directly connected to a sense of betrayal on the part of average Palestinians at being denied, through the Oslo process, what they believed they had already settled for. Rubenberg herself is clearly sympathetic to this formulation of the Palestinian position. However, what does not make its way into her account is any Palestinian argument dissenting from this perspective. There are, for example, Palestinians (albeit a definite minority) who advocate for a secular, single-state solution; the
Palestinian political discourse is somewhat more varied in reality than Rubenberg portrays it as being.

Although Rubenberg states plainly at the outset that she is interested only in the Palestinian narrative, the lack of an in-depth analysis of the Israeli government’s underlying motivations leaves the Israelis in her narrative as mere straw men to be knocked over. This is not to suggest that she flatly demonizes Israel, but rather that her argument would have benefited from a more complex exploration of the motives behind Israeli actions and Israel’s participation in Oslo. Because Rubenberg concedes that she is engaged in writing an “account of Palestinian history and politics” (p. 31), this approach is perhaps forgivable. However, given this goal, there is a more serious gap in her account, namely her homogenization of the Palestinian political spectrum. Although Rubenberg does differentiate between the “Tunisians” (that segment of the Palestinian Liberation Organization that returned to the occupied territories from exile in Tunis) and “the locals,” she fails to examine in any greater detail the variation across the Palestinian political spectrum. The most problematic example of this finding is the absence of any serious discussion of Hamas and Islamic Jihad as political actors in the occupied territories. This absence is in marked contrast with her discussion of the importance of nongovernmental organizations in the Palestinian political and social arena both before and after the return of the Palestinian Liberation Organization leadership from Tunisia.

Ultimately, *The Palestinians: In Search of a Just Peace* is less an analysis of the failure of the Oslo Accords than it is an examination of the Palestinian experience of the Oslo process. Although not an impartial examination of the failure of Oslo, as a resource for information on the realities of Palestinian life in the West Bank and Gaza during the Oslo years, this book is recommended.

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**REVIEWED BY SANDY SUFIAN**, Department of Medical Humanities and History, University of Illinois–Chicago Medical School, Chicago; e-mail: sufians@uic.edu

Mira Sucharov’s *The International Self* is written primarily for an audience of political scientists or international-relations scholars. As a historian, my comments here may, therefore, not address the major theoretical and disciplinary concerns of Sucharov or her intended readers as these are outside the purview of my expertise. Nevertheless, the following review critiques the book from a historian’s perspective with the hope that such an analysis will raise equally relevant intellectual concerns for all scholars of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. To be sure, a review by a political scientist of the Middle East or international relations theorist would yield a different set of comments.

In her book, and in a related 2005 article in *Armed Forces and Society*, Sucharov tries to insert a consideration of ethical identity into an analysis of diplomatic decisionmaking. In particular, she applies a new theoretical approach to analyze shifts in Israeli diplomatic policy with regard to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Sucharov takes the ideas of psychoanalysis and construction of individual identity and applies them to the state. She correctly considers the adaptations in context and the theory that such an exercise would require. The author looks at state identity and narrative as well as counternarrative to explain breaks in military patterns, public reception of those breaks, and consequent shifts in Israeli diplomacy.
The author dates a major change in such policy to the Lebanon war and the first intifada, which eventually led to a decision by the Israeli government, she argues, to engage in the Oslo negotiations, because those two events created a “cognitive dissonance” among the Israeli public. Sucharov writes, “The war in Lebanon and the Intifada were both instances of military episodes that, to broad swaths of the Israeli population, contradicted their state’s role identity. It was this break with Israeli’s security ethic and hence its self-image in the realm of security policy that led Israel to seek peace with the PLO” (p. 76). She argues that during and after these events, the “psychic tension that Israelis experienced between their state’s aggressive actions and its defensive-warrior role identity” was so intolerable for most Israelis that it provided a major justification to engage with the Palestinian Liberation Organization in peacemaking during Oslo (p. 90). The term defensive warrior refers to a Sucharov’s typology of state role identities where, in this case, the primary Israeli role identity supports a defensive ethic but is accompanied by an active policy of military operations.

Sucharov’s attempt at introducing a new way to analyze the conflict is a courageous and definitely innovative one, especially in light of the vast literature on the subject that has explored the conflict from what seems to be every detailed angle possible. Sucharov’s discussion of the Israeli principle of “wars of no choice” is particularly pertinent in light of the recent American rhetoric of “no choice” with regard to its war against Iraq.

The major problem with Sucharov’s analysis, in my opinion, is that she creates her own terms and then takes them as self-evident and nonproblematic throughout the book. As such, her model seems to be deterministic, rather than tested. As stated, she argues that the Lebanon war was the turning point in Israeli role identity without providing any in-depth historical investigation (other than a critical public response) that shows how and why events leading up to the Lebanese war and the war itself (rather than the 1967 war, Resolution 242, or other instances) make it the prime candidate for such a diplomatic shift. Her historical examination tends to be a summary of events rather than a detailed analysis of how those events connect to her argument(s). Similarly, Sucharov uses a typology of state role identities (p. 33) based on military concerns that is taken as true, with little proof offered as to the schematic’s validity from historical examples. The discussion of her schematic, although interesting and innovative, focuses primarily upon its logic, rather than its validity. Could there be another schematic that could equally apply or even fit better? The author does not pose this question.

Although state role identities are defined as diplomatic–military identities, the author bases identity construction on what she refers to as strategic culture, which, in turn, she bases upon cultural artifacts like school curricula and national rituals and myths. Those cultural artifacts and historical quotes presented move from the Yishuv period (pre-state) to the 1970s or 1980s, without accounting for significant differences in the relative power status of the Zionists in the Mandate period versus a post-1967 state period. True, as Zerubavel so aptly shows in Recovered Roots, such rituals contributed to the construction and expression of Zionist nationalism, but it seems problematic to jump from a claim about roots to using the same examples to explain a state’s military decisionmaking in a later stage of maturity and contemporary strategic culture(s). It seems to me that these cultural artifacts reflect more than they form the starting point of a military ethos. In addition, the contemporary reappropriation of Zionist myths (i.e., Masada, Tel Hai) does not necessarily translate into or effect concrete political steps.

Although Sucharov rightly acknowledges that identities are formed not only as a function of internal debates but also as a result of views of a state by external parties, she does not sufficiently consider Palestinian sources, comments, or narratives on Israeli military or diplomatic actions. Her primary-source materials come mainly from interviews and Ministry of Education files. I would be interested in learning more about how Palestinian narratives and construction of identity or existential concerns influence and shape Israeli state identity,
As she defines it. Materials from diplomatic, military, and economic sources or correspondence between governmental officials would have strengthened her argument.

Indeed, Sucharov’s analysis of Israel’s military patterns and diplomatic shifts is quite conceptual and theoretical, a definite focus of her field. For instance, Sucharov posits the concepts of “purity of arms” and wars of “no-choice” as foundational ideas in Israeli role identity. However, although these concepts are taught to Israeli soldiers, this does not necessarily mean that they are internalized fully, as she claims (p. 87); are practiced in every military instance; or are even overriding considerations in the war room at all times. To prove her claim, she needs to present archival evidence of officers having used explicitly these principles to determine their decisions, even when circumstances would predict an opposite response. My reading thirsted for a more thorough exploration of the state’s vital strategic, economic, and political interests, the materiality of the conflict. As most historians view this conflict, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is a conflict over land and the dynamics surrounding land. Existential/identity concerns may be important to consider but should be analyzed as part of a larger picture, rather than as a determining factor.

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Reviewed by Rebecca L. Stein, Department of Cultural Anthropology, Duke University, Durham, N.C.; e-mail: rlstein@duke.edu

For more than two decades, Israeli youth in the immediate aftermath of their mandatory army service have been backpacking through the so-called Third World in large numbers. The practice began in earnest in the late 1970s or early 1980s (accounts differ). By the mid-1990s, such treks had acquired the status of a national rite of passage among secular, middle, and upper middle class Jews, particularly those of European origin (Ashkenazim). This collection is the first to chronicle this national pastime and to situate it within the broader context of global travel on the one hand and Israeli society on the other.

As an Israeli phenomenon, backpacking has a particular historical genesis. The authors trace its emergence to the national crisis that followed the 1973 war (also known as the Yom Kippur War), with the profound insecurity it generated. It gathered strength over the course of the next generation after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon (1982) and outbreak of the first Palestinian intifada (1987)—events that, taken together, catalyzed a new culture of protest and critique within Israel and encouraged a breaking with canonical Zionist practices and mythos. When coupled with the influence of 1960s countercultures, which very selectively and belatedly made their mark on Israel, one saw a new generation of Israeli youth turning to the Third World (and particularly to India) as a means of distancing themselves from canonical nationalist practices and seeking spiritual alternatives in an era of political disillusion.

Interestingly, as the essays in this collection chronicle, the backpacker’s putative desire to distance oneself from the nation-state has had, perhaps, paradoxical effects. As the authors describe in wonderful detail, Israeli backpackers abroad actively work to recreate Israeli forms and circuits in the midst of their travels (described here as an “enclave” phenomenon). Most live almost exclusively in Israeli worlds, following tourist routes and modes of interaction proscribed by other Israeli travelers and interacting primarily with their compatriots. Travel, it seems, becomes a way to reconstitute the nation-state at precisely the moment in the lifecycle of Jewish–Israeli youth (post-army) when fatigue with the nation state sets in most profoundly.
In addition to a comprehensive introduction, the book’s most important contribution lies in its detailed ethnographic work, which carefully substantiates the quotidian forms that backpacking takes. Essays describe the now habitual Israeli routes and modes of travel, the norms of behavior that dominate in backpacking circles, and the stories told by travelers about their voyages that work to define the backpacking experience and secure its status as a national ritual. Together, these essays illustrate a cultural form that has acquired enormous import within mainstream Israeli society.

More than traveling practices are at issue. Rather, what is being described here is a backpacking culture, replete with its own language, sartorial norms, popular music, and modes of socialization. As some have argued elsewhere (Mevorah, 1997), the post-army trek as a nationalist rite of passage has lately upstaged even the army in terms of its nationalist function, that is, its role in facilitating integration into the nation state. In an era of dwindling Israeli commitment to the mythic nationalist project, these treks play an increasingly important role in the life cycle of the middle class, secular Israeli Jew, working to secure the transition into adulthood from army to civilian life. The backpacking trip is normative in terms of its popularity and works to generate “normative-ness” itself—constructing the terms of dominant Israeli culture, particularly among Israel’s young generation.

Most of the essays in this volume explore Israeli backpacking to sites in Asia, particularly South and Southeast Asia, as they constitute the most popular backpacking destinations. India is the most celebrated among them, attracting some 20,000 Israelis annually. Sites in Central and South America lure only half as many Israeli visitors. Although relatively homogenous in terms of their class and ethnoracial demographics, Israelis travel to India with multiple agendas. Some seek spiritual alternatives and turn to Eastern religious traditions. Others seek release in drug experimentation. Most seem to traffic in a form of Ashkenazi Orientalism that has, since the 1960s, configured India as an alluring but nonthreatening “Other.” There, one can enjoy the East (often referred to as the “Far East” in the Israeli lexicon) without partaking of the Occidental terror that threatens closer to home. Note that, save the Sinai Peninsula, most Arab sites available to Israeli passport holders have not attained an analogous appeal.

The political valences of the travel experience are not ignored by Israeli travelers. Several authors discuss the rhetorics of conquest by which the travel experience is popularly coded in the Hebrew vernacular, by which—borrowing from a lexicon used to talk about the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza—some Israeli travelers are cast as “conquerors” and others as “settlers.” As the authors of the introduction astutely suggest, the ease of this rhetoric in the Indian context is a parodic means of negotiating uncomfortable politics at home.

Indeed, militarism looms in many forms. Although of parenthetical concern in this volume, some authors begin to suggest ways in which backpacking practices explicitly mimic those of soldiers. It should be noted that, whereas backpacking is the book’s central focus, one chapter diverges from this paradigm to consider Israeli youth travel to concentration camps in Poland. Like the post-army ritual, this is a national rite of passage among high-school students, which effectively readies Israeli youth to defend their country by replaying the tragic history of European Jewish victimhood (of which Auschwitz is cast as paradigmatic instance) and the heroic history of martyrdom (anchored by the history of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, which is made to play an exemplary role in the Israeli version of Holocaust history).

In addition to its wealth of cultural detail, which should interest any scholar concerned with popular culture in the Middle East, the volume raises several important questions. What kinds of Israeli nationalisms and national identities are being generated in the backpacking context? The longing for India within post-1973 Israel emerges from a countercultural longing—a largely imported one. However, are the nationalist forms that are generated in Israeli backpacking spaces and societies in any way counternational—or, even more pointedly, counterhegemonic, as is tentatively proposed in the conclusion?
One wonders if the very question does not obscure the primary structural and temporal anchor of the backpacking experience—its status as a post-army institution. This reader would have liked a bit more reflection on the ramifications of this relationship and on the complicated interplay between violence (a word that is missing from this account) and travel. In its most popular and prevalent form, backpacking is practiced not merely as the sanctioned companion to army service but as a kind of cleansing ritual that makes the former possible and palatable. Thus, in addition to querying its counterhegemonic elements, is it not appropriate to consider the extent to which backpacking effectively functions to reproduce hegemonic Israeli institutions, albeit through the props and rhetoric of a (seemingly) countercultural practice?

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REVIEWED BY REEVA SPECTOR SIMON, Department of History, Yeshiva University, New York; e-mail: rsimon@yu.edu

Reading Michael Eppel’s *Iraq from Monarchy to Tyranny* while the United States attempts to impose democracy on Iraq reminds one how pre-Saddam Iraqi history has been generally ignored by policymakers and political commentators. Perhaps it is because the recent spate of books on Iraq deemphasizes the period of the monarchy and Iraq’s early experience in nation building, looking instead to the authoritarian Ba’th regime and Saddam Hussein’s tyranny in the recent past. As Eppel notes in this political analysis of post World War II Iraq, most histories that do cover the Hashemite period treat the years between 1921 and 1958 as a prelude to the overthrow of the constitutional monarchy and the military coups that followed. They analyze the relationship between the army and Arab nationalism and the role of the army in the revolution of 1958, the overthrow of the Qasim regime, the rule of the Arif brothers, and the subsequent Ba’th takeover in 1968.

Covering the same territory in this detailed political narrative, Eppel also seeks to explain why Iraq did not develop a viable liberal base that could counteract the authoritarian rule that followed the fall of the monarchy. He posits that the Iraqi middle class (“stratum”) sought a niche in Iraqi politics as it evolved from Western-educated Ottoman and Iraqi *effendiyya* during the post World War II era. These products of Iraqi schools propagated Arab nationalism and read, wrote, and advocated the nationalist ideology. However, it is also important to note that, as their numbers increased, they not only filled positions in the bureaucracy that allowed the state to function but they were also concerned with the future. By contrast, with the failure of the Rashid ‘Ali government’s war against Britain in 1941, the Iraqi politicians, military, and social elites who returned to power—the “younger brothers of the Sharifians”—were more interested in maintaining the political status quo than with social reform, industrialization, or democratization. As Nuri al-Sa’id, prime minister during most of the 1950s, and ‘Abd al-‘Ilah, regent for the young King Faisal II, vied for Iraqi political leadership in the Arab world, using Iraq’s oil wealth and symbolic support for Palestinian interests as well as the political system and elections to keep the political and tribal elites in power, they exhibited little regard for the social ills and economic problems of a society becoming more urbanized.

The economic and political crises of the late 1940s and early 1950s catalyzed domestic issues that plagued the monarchy and the political elites. Foreign policy, domestic politics, and economic strife all came together with repercussions that portended increasing centralization.
of authority and the suppression of political opposition. Occurring in the wake of bad harvests and economic distress, the riots (wathba) that broke out in January 1948 in reaction to the government’s renewal of Iraq’s treaty with Britain (the Portsmouth Treaty) led to a crackdown on opposition forces, most notably the illegal Communist party. Fears of Shi’ite tribes storming the palace—they claimed that the demonstrations were provoked by Sunnis and Communists—were exacerbated by the humiliation of Iraqi troops sent to Palestine in late spring. Instead of political reform, the regime opted for martial law and political suppression. However, the old line conservatives, both Sunni and Shi‘i, who led opposition parties eschewed revolution, preferring instead to work within the system without reforming it, thus alienating the activist youth, students, and workers.

By the early 1950s, the lack of land reform, a weak industrial base, little development of an industrial bourgeoisie, and increasing centralization did not provide adequate conditions for the growth of a vital liberal democratic opposition. Maintaining the two-stage, indirect method of elections where Iraqi citizens only voted for the electors from their precincts—generally local traditional notables or persons loyal to them, who, in turn, elected members of parliament—left the same politicians in power to perpetuate land ownership and power over the fellahin by a few families. Failure to reform the system and the intifada of 1952 foreshadowed middle class frustration at exclusion from the political process at a time of academic degree holder inflation and economic difficulty. The inability to effect change and Egypt’s replacement of Iraq in its role as the standard bearer of Arab nationalism only exacerbated the political frustration of the newly emergent educated middle class that resulted in its dissipation as a voice in Iraqi politics Without developing a vigorous middle-class opposition in Iraq, as Eppel recounts, there was no real alternative to the regime’s dependence upon the support of the army, tribal landowners, and the tribes in general, a situation that enabled the Ba‘th to take over tentatively after the Qasim regime and become entrenched by the early 1970s.

Drawing on secondary literature, British archives, Iraqi political memoirs, and newspapers of the period, Eppel provides a detailed chronological political narrative that results in a useful amplification of the period covered more succinctly in the histories of modern Iraq by Phebe Marr and Charles Tripp. The use of correct transliteration instead of common spelling (i.e., al-Pachachi becomes al-Bajhaji) is a minor annoyance.

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REVIEWED BY AMY MYERS JAFFE, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, Houston, Tex.; e-mail: amjaffe@rice.edu

The thesis of Ian Rutledge’s Addicted to Oil: America’s Relentless Drive for Energy Security promises to be highly interesting. The author tells us in a foreword that the war in Iraq is a culmination of a decades-long struggle by the United States to “control” Middle East oil. Careful to give the appearance of not simply falling into the blood for oil rhetoric, Rutledge notes that, although “there was never any intention to ‘steal Iraq’s oil,’” he will show in his book that this policy of “control and domination” was intended to “be achieved without the direct appropriation of Iraqi oil reserves by U.S. citizens” (p. 12). The task is a large one but certainly worth a good, modern political history.

The subject of the interaction between U.S. foreign policy and oil since World War I has been covered in various periods in many excellent histories. The author cites Irvine Anderson’s
Aramco, the United States and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamics of Foreign Policy, 1933-1950 as one example. Allen Matusow’s Nixon’s Economy: Booms, Busts, Dollars & Votes is another outstanding example of a book that covers the challenges for the Nixon presidency of energy shortages. International relations specialists might also appreciate John Ikenberry’s Reasons of State: Oil, Politics and the Capacities of American Government, which covers the same crisis periods. More recently, Georgetown University has made a contribution to the field by setting up its special collection for the Aramco history project, which is rich in documentation about how Saudi King Faisal interacted with American oil companies to try to influence American foreign policy in the Middle East.

When I picked up the Rutledge book, I was hoping for a nice treatise that would take me all the way from Franklin Roosevelt’s early interactions with King Abdul Aziz, the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, and the subsequent entry into the kingdom of American oil companies, through Ronald Reagan’s alleged effort to get allied Middle East oil producers to hasten the collapse of the Soviet Union (which was then occupying Afghanistan) through an oil price war. In this historical context, it would be useful and important to think about how we went from the 1940s Getty oil deal in Saudi Arabia to invading Iraq to change its government.

Unfortunately, Rutledge’s book does not accomplish this. Instead, he slips into left-wing jingoism about how Vice President Dick Cheney and former President Bush and the current president worked for companies involved in the oil business and never builds his case. A good treatment of the subject would show us documentation on how the industry ties of our senior leaders, combined with our need for oil, changed U.S. foreign policy. The Georgetown collection, for example, shows through correspondences and interviews exactly how King Faisal tried to use oil blackmail and threats of nationalization to motivate American oil companies to lobby Nixon to change U.S. foreign policy toward Israel. Concerning the blood for oil myth, the Georgetown materials do show that King Faisal used oil companies as emissaries, but studies make the opposite point. King Faisal was unsuccessful in changing U.S. foreign policy, despite his documented anti-Semitism and geopolitical efforts to the contrary. The documents collected by Georgetown add tremendous insight into the process of King Faisal’s interactions with the United States.

Rutledge refers only infrequently to this kind of rich primary-source material. Instead, he cites less reliable works, such as Ali Tareq’s Bush in Babylon: The Recolonisation of Iraq (the title speaks for its objectivity) and lesser known anti-Cheney websites. Whereas his better-documented accounts show that former President Bush started up an independent oil company in Texas, that point seems to contradict his basic premise, because Rutledge himself correctly points out that the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the lobbying group of the U.S. independent oil companies (especially those based in Texas), has long lobbied against U.S. dependence on Middle East oil to the point that it successfully attained a tariff on imported oil in 1932 and further protection from the Eisenhower administration. The same organization tried to sue the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries during the 1998 oil-price collapse and by no means is an organization trying to get the majority of its members oil in places like Iraq.

Overall, Rutledge relies heavily on quotations from what one could refer to as the “Bush-bashing” literature. His history sections are thin and seem based in footnoting to only a handful of secondary sources, such as Daniel Yergin’s The Prize and Bob Woodward’s Bush at War. His simplistic recounting of the 1956 Suez Crisis and Central Intelligence Agency involvement in the coup against Qassem in Iraq makes sweeping claims that are neither backed up nor well explained. In sum, I was left with the desire to go to some other reference material for much of the book to look up whether Rutledge was on point or not.
To give you a flavor of why one cannot recommend this book, I end with a quotation that is representative. “In 2000, Cheney accepted George W. Bush’s offer to be his vice presidential running mate. Cheney had previously stated categorically that he would never return to politics. We do not know what changed his mind, but possibly it was the realization that with Bush as president, he would be the real power behind the throne.” This and similar points about the vice president are asserted but never documented. Many of us suspect Cheney is a critical driver to many foreign policy decisions, but if Rutledge would like to prove that the vice president drove us to Iraq to get the oil, it would take far more than the anecdotal, loosely linked references he has provided in this book.

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REVIEWED BY RACHEL BRONSON, Middle East Studies Program, Council on Foreign Relations, New York; e-mail: rbronson@cfr.org

Few topics are as politically charged as why America went to war against Iraq in 2003. In the run-up to Operation Iraqi Freedom, members of the George W. Bush administration offered several reasons, including the need to eliminate Saddam Hussein’s brutal dictatorship, the threat posed by Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and the fear that President Saddam Hussein would one day disperse WMD to terrorists. After the attack, when WMD were not found, the administration shifted gears and began emphasizing Iraq’s importance to reforming the Middle East and taming the virulent Islamic radicalism that infects its body politic. The administration rarely mentioned oil, although the fact that Iraq straddles approximately 10 percent of the world’s proven resources surely must have factored into its thinking.

In his new book, America’s Oil Wars, Stephen Pelletière grapples with the question of why the United States invaded and occupied Iraq and directs his attention to the oil component of America’s strategy. Having served as the Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA’s) senior political analyst on Iraq during the Iran–Iraq War, Pelletière is well positioned to answer this question. His access to the intelligence community is complemented by contacts inside the U.S. military, provided by his subsequent position as the U.S. Army’s expert on the Persian Gulf at the U.S. Army War College. Both sets of contacts set him up to flesh out the intricate and complicated set of decisions that ultimately led America to occupy Iraq.

In this short book, Pelletière argues that, for at least the past quarter century, Washington’s quest for power has driven the United States to control Persian Gulf oil. He argues that America invaded Iraq because “Washington has come to see that, if it is to preserve its status as world hegemon, it must control oil, and to control oil it must regulate the production of OPEC . . . all the wars that America has been fighting—the first and second Iraq wars and the one in Afghanistan—have been over resources” (p. 144). The end of the cold war, and the rise of Iraq in the aftermath of the Iran–Iraq War (a war which he argues Iraq won), presented the United States with an opportunity to exploit the region’s oil and with a direct challenge to its ability to do so.

Pelletière also argues that American arms policy in the region, driven by the needs of U.S. decisionmakers to shore up the American military industrial complex, exacerbated regional instability and eventually threatened American oil interests. “If the focus of activity in the area was oil production,” writes Pelletière, “the region ought to have been kept stable” (p. 69). However, the United States directly undermined local stability by selling significant quantities
of arms because “arms trading promotes wars” (p. 69). Little serious attention is given to the role that massive Soviet arms transfers into the region also played; the all-important 1955 Czech arms deal is not referenced, nor is the contentious argument that “arms trading promotes wars” given due consideration.

According to Pelletière, the architect of America’s hegemonic quest to sell arms and secure oil was a small band of neoconservatives. This set of ideologically savvy former Democrats like Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, “primarily Jews who believed the Democratic party had gone soft on Israel” (p. 76), artfully persuaded millions of Americans to support war by both demonizing Saddam Hussein, who “had a lot of morality on his side” (p. x), and by building conspiracy theories that linked Saddam to the “Islamic Fundamentalist movement” (p. x), a charge that Pelletière attempts to rebut in the book’s first chapter.

Unfortunately, America’s Oil Wars is long on innuendo and conspiracy but short on proof and the kind of hardheaded analysis that one expects from a former CIA analyst and a senior professor at the Army War College. Rather than using his contacts to undergird his assertions with rich and insightful interviews, Pelletière relies on single-sourced footnotes of secondary texts. The book is chock-full of sentences like “if we assume that” and “we will never know, perhaps, but it does appear that something like the following was decided on” (p. 133). In a book like this, the reader expects the author to offer facts to illuminate assumptions, not merely to ruminate and hypothesize.

There are many puzzling aspects to Pelletière’s argument that the author unfortunately sidesteps. If oil were America’s primary objective, why did the United States military downsize in Kuwait after Operation Desert Storm instead of digesting the lucrative oil fields it had so easily occupied? Why did the United States simply not lift Iraq’s sanctions or the sanctions on other oil producers such as Libya and Iran? Perhaps most troubling is the author’s unwillingness to explore seeming inconsistencies in his own argument. If the attack were undertaken in the name of oil companies, for instance, how does he reconcile the fact that they “interestingly, seem to be holding back” (p. 142) their investments in Iraq?

Even Pelletière’s argument about the neoconservatives begs as many questions as it answers. He never says exactly who the neocons are, although he refers to the membership list of the Defense Policy Board—members ranging from Kenneth Adelman and Eliot Cohen to Harold Brown and James Schlesinger. He never offers a convincing discussion of how a seemingly small group of individuals was able to influence the most senior members of the Bush cabinet, including Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and much of “the American elite establishment” (p. 137)—although by implication (and conventional wisdom), they clearly did. The equally important question is, were the neocons really that important if “under Clinton, the Democrats adhered to basically the same line as the neo-cons” (p. 137)? It is easy to forget that, in 1997, Clinton’s secretary of defense, William Cohen, primed the American public for an attack on Iraq by producing a five-pound bag of sugar on the ABC Sunday morning show This Week and stating that “this amount of anthrax could be spread over a city—let’s say the size of Washington. It would destroy at least half the population of that city.”

America’s Oil Wars offers sweeping historical generalizations that will resonate with many who have followed the Iraq debate but provides little analytic justification to ground specific points. The five chapters are better read as individual essays than as components of a well-developed argument. Why, for example, Pelletière spends valuable pages talking about the brutality of Desert Storm in a chapter entitled “Techno War in the Gulf” remains a mystery. Important, yes. Relevant to his argument? Hardly. Unfortunately, this book, which has much potential given its title and the author’s background, comes up short against the growing literature on the causes and consequences of the U.S. war in Iraq.


REVIEWED BY TAREQ Y. ISMAEL, Department of Political Science, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alb., Canada; e-mail: tismael@ucalgary.ca

The road leading to the illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq was paved with deception. Whether one fell victim to that deception has much to do with how seriously one chooses to take evidence. These two books offer starkly different approaches to the issue of Iraq and serve to illustrate the importance of simple facts.

Raphael Israeli’s *The Iraq War: Hidden Agendas and Babylonian Intrigue*, researched and written in 2003, sets out “to analyze what kind of nation Saddam is bequeathing to his successors and to speculate on what kind of future awaits the new Iraq in the new Middle East” (p. 11). No doubt an admirable project, considering the dearth of understanding and rational discussion of Iraq prevailing before the March 2003 invasion; unfortunately, Israeli’s project is clearly part of that problem rather than any sort of corrective. Giving some indication of the level of ideology that clouds his analysis is the following: Israeli concludes that, after the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq, “[t]here can be little doubt that . . . a new era has dawned in the Middle East, an era that one hopes is not a false dawn” (p. 237).

Israeli opens with an entirely undocumented chapter, “Iraq under Saddam.” Beginning in 1975, Israeli deals with Saddam’s rise, the Iran–Iraq War of 1980–88, and the Gulf War of 1990–91 in just eleven pages without a single citation. Conveniently for the rest of his narrative, Israeli spares his readers any mention of the American role in supporting Saddam Hussein throughout his worst crimes. The Americans are part of a list of the “various foreign quarters” that “Saddam drew support from” in his war with Iran (p. 6), but no more detail is offered. Readers are informed that “Saddam achieved much of his weapons program objectives via collaboration with European and South American firms and governments” (p. 4), although the details of U.S. involvement were hardly obscure at the time Israeli was writing.

Israeli’s brief treatment of the Gulf War is no more insightful. For Israeli, it was “the pressure exerted by the Arab coalition partners” (p. 10), wielding their apparently decisive influence, that persuaded the United States to allow Hussein to remain in power in 1991. The chief diplomatic correspondent at Israeli’s favorite source, the *New York Times* (NYT), had a rather different—not to mention much more plausible—analysis: the Gulf War was “fought to restore the status quo,” Thomas Friedman wrote on 7 July 1991. “And, as every American policymaker knows, before Mr. Hussein invaded Kuwait, he was a pillar of the gulf balance of power and status quo preferred by Washington. His iron fist simultaneously held Iraq together, much to the satisfaction of the American allies Turkey and Saudi Arabia. . . . It was only when the Iraqi dictator decided to use his iron fist to dominate Kuwait and Saudi Arabia that he became a threat. However, as soon as Mr. Hussein was forced back into his shell, Washington felt he had become useful again for maintaining the regional balance and preventing Iraq from disintegrating.”

The reasons behind Hussein’s survival aside, Israeli further asserts that, “[a]s a result of his escape from heavy defeat, . . . Saddam returned to the development and proliferation of weapons” (p. 10). As we know from General Hussein Kamel, the former director of Iraq’s Military Industrialization Corporation in charge of Hussein’s weapons programs: “All weapons—biological, chemical, missile, nuclear—were destroyed” in 1991. Kamel had defected along with crates of documents on 7 August 1995, and the details of his testimony
were publicly available before the March 2003 invasion—and, therefore, at the time of Israeli’s writing. It is obvious that Israeli reads the NYT—his chapter on the Sunni region of Iraq draws more than 85 percent of its support from the NYT, and, of his chapters that have citations, a majority of them are to articles in the NYT (and all from 2003). Nonetheless, he ignored information in the NYT that was not in line with his own beliefs: Nicholas Kristof’s 6 May 2003 column, for example, which mentioned Kamel’s admission and the February 2003 leak of the transcript of his interview with weapons officials after his 1995 defection. Kamel has been selectively cited many times in the media in support of claims that Iraq still had chemical and biological weapons, even after the leak of his full testimony. Israeli is among those who cite Kamel to bolster his claims about Iraq’s WMD (pp. 167–68), although in the course of doing so, he is paraphrasing without citation Secretary of State Colin Powell’s 5 February presentation to the United Nations.

Therein lies the problem of uncritically relying on a handful of sources to write an entire book. Virtually Israeli’s entire bibliography consists of NYT articles from 2003. However, to say the least, the 2003 NYT could not be characterized as a bastion of critical reporting on Iraq. Another source favored by Israeli is the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), an Israeli/American organization that distributes translations of the Arab media to thousands of reporters, politicians, and activists around the world. Although its translations are accurate enough, it is MEMRI’s selection of material that is misleading. As the veteran Middle East correspondent David Hirst has correctly pointed out in The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Roots of Violence in the Middle East (pp. 75–77), the Arab politicians, columnists, and preachers MEMRI chooses to publicize range from rabid to outrageous. Its “tendentious choice of material casts the Arab world in a much worse light than their discourse, taken as a whole, could reasonably justify.” MEMRI is acknowledged in a majority of Israeli’s citations for his chapter “Arab and Muslim Fears: Images, Loyalties, Wishes, Delusions.”

Israeli’s shallow research and bias also result in a great number of factual errors that could have been prevented with more editorial attention. Although Israeli attests to having been a student of the Middle East for many years (p. ix), Imam Ali was not “the father of the Shi’a” (p. 57); Hilla is not a sensitive place in Shi’ite history (p. 62); the Talabani are a Kurdish family, not a clan (p. 89); Prince Faysal assumed the Iraqi throne in 1921, not 1922; and Najaf was not founded by Ali (p. 203). These are examples of the many basic facts Israeli got wrong, and reflect fundamentally flawed research at best, and at worst a “facts don’t matter” approach to research. They alone are ample reasons to take this scholar’s conclusion that “re-creating Iraq into separate, ethnically homogeneous states . . . may provide an answer to the country’s problems” (p. 232) with a mountain of salt. As a member of the steering committee of Israel’s hawkish Ariel Center for Policy Research, perhaps Israeli’s analysis offers more insight into the thinking of Israel’s right wing than it does into reality.

In Insurgent Iraq: Al Zarqawi and the New Generation, Loretta Napoleon deals with evidence quite differently. Napoleon’s volume is narrowly focused on Abu Mos’ab al-Zarqawi, a bit player in postinvasion Iraq or a singular threat to U.S. foreign policy interests, depending on whether or not one considers facts important. Like Raphael Israeli, Napoleon does not read Arabic, but unlike Israeli, she makes excellent use of the translations provided by the U.S. Government’s Foreign Broadcast Information Service. Napoleon’s use of a wide range of sources, from dissident journals such as Z Magazine to hawkishly right-wing outlets such as National Review online, as well as sources in French and Italian, allows her analysis to challenge many of the myths propagated by the official sources that Israeli uncritically accepts as fact. Accordingly, Napoleon makes a far more significant contribution to our present knowledge of Iraq than Israeli.

A brief comparison of Raphael Israeli’s treatment of Zarqawi with Napoleon’s illustrates the difference in their approaches and the stark contrast in the contribution of their analyses. Zarqawi receives a single paragraph worth of attention in Israeli’s book, in which his group
is attributed with facilitating the murder of American diplomat Lawrence Foley in Amman, Jordan in October 2002 (p. 54). As Napoleoni reports, although Jordan was quick to blame Zarqawi and the United States focused its investigation on him, there is no proof that links Zarqawi to the assassination (pp. 112–13). In fact, at the end of April 2004, an organization by the name of the Honourables of Jordan claimed responsibility for killing Foley and denied any involvement by Zarqawi. The shells that had been fired at Foley accompanied their message (p. 123).

The real reason for Zarqawi’s inclusion in Israeli’s narrative is as part of his long and tendentious attempt to link Saddam Hussein’s Iraq to al-Qa’ida—a key plank of U.S. propaganda leading up to the March 2003 invasion. Israeli concludes that “all experts concede” that the medical treatment Zarqawi supposedly received in Baghdad in October 2001 “could not have been offered to such a high-level terrorist without Saddam’s personal agreement” (p. 54). When one turns to the evidence Israeli offers in support of this claim, we find a reference to “Threats and Responses,” NYT, 6 February 2003. “Threats and Responses” is not the headline of any news report but rather the title of a reoccurring section within the NYT. On the day and pages cited by Israeli, that section consisted of the 11,000+ word transcript of Secretary of State Powell’s long since debunked 5 February presentation to the United Nations on Iraq’s alleged threat. Even without a cursory evaluation of their credibility, one can fairly ask whether the pronouncements of a government official are worthy evidence on which to base one’s analysis. Obscuring one’s reliance on such proclamations raises further questions about academic honesty.

In sharp contrast, Napoleoni remains properly skeptical of official claims, preferring to rely on a careful weighing of the evidence. For example, Napoleoni scrutinizes Powell’s claim that “[t]he ricin [poison] bouncing around Europe now originated in Iraq” (p. 115)—a reference to a camp in an area of northern Iraq controlled by Ansar al Islam and supposedly run by Zarqawi. Napoleoni quotes a similarly skeptical British journalist who concluded “the Americans used” the investigation into the supposed “ricin ring” to prove that “there was a link between Saddam Hussein and al-Qa’ida and for this purpose they came up with al Zarqawi” (p. 116). In the end, there never was any ricin, although that was not revealed until long after Iraq was under occupation. By then, the unsupported claims offered by American and British officials, and dutifully parroted by the press, had served their purpose. As Napoleoni points out in the introduction: “The response of Western countries to the 9/11 attacks, especially Bush and Blair’s ‘war on terror’ has greatly contributed to the evolution of terror. In a series of propaganda campaigns directed at their populations, Western governments have hidden the truth, manipulated the facts, and vigorously published fictions to justify their policies” (p. 20).

Although Napoleoni focuses on “their most extraordinary creation,” “the myth of al Zarqawi” (p. 20), her analysis obviously has much wider implications. Her short study deserves a wide audience as opposed to Israeli’s stenography of official propaganda, which can serve as little more than a case study in academia’s service to power.

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REVIEWED BY VINCENT CRAPANZANO, Programs in Comparative Literature and Anthropology, CUNY Graduate Center, New York; e-mail: vcrapanzano@earthlink.net

Despite manifest differences in personality styles, modes of thought, and behavior—and the articulation and evaluation of subjective experience across cultures and historical periods—psychological anthropology and comparative psychology have remained at the margins of their
respective disciplines. In part, this marginalization reflects the often crude methodologies, simplistic theories, and reductive generalizations, edging on stereotypy, that have characterized many studies. There have, nevertheless, been several more refined studies that now fall (if by word magic) under the rubric of cultural psychology: an ill-defined field of diverse theoretical orientations, which studies patterns of psychological development, attachments, values, identities, and pathologies within a particular culture. Although cultural psychologists have not especially focused on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), there have been a surprising number of psychological studies in the area both by Western and MENA scholars. Gary S. Gregg, a personality psychologist who spent five years doing ethnographic and life-historical research among Moroccan Berbers, presents us in his careful overview of such studies a perceptive portrayal of the cultural psychology of the MENA peoples, one that is not insensitive to the individual and his or her situation.

Recognizing the dangers of stereotypy, Gregg begins his work with an illuminating discussion of MENA stereotypes and is careful throughout his text to avoid such typifications. After considering MENA as a viable culture area—one characterized by Islam and an honor–modesty constellation of values, he organizes the remainder of his book in psychological developmental terms, along the lines of Erik Erikson, the Whittings, Robert Levine, and Dan McAdams, and not those of Piaget and his followers. Indeed, he is quite resistant to cognitive studies, in part because little research has been done in these terms in the MENA area. Gregg is careful to explain clearly each of these approaches, as he is the psychological studies he refers to and their ethnographic background. His book is certainly the most comprehensive cultural psychological study of any area of the world, as well as an impressive ethnographic introduction to MENA. It will certainly become standard reading in any course on the area.

Gregg’s work is, of course, limited by the quality and range of the studies carried out in the area, and although he reads these studies critically, he is at times caught within their framework. (I would argue, for example, that his stress on honor and modesty and Islam leads him to underplay other formative features of MENA “personality” such as attitudes toward language, emotional display, and tolerance toward ambiguity.) Sometimes, as when he makes comparisons with Japan, India, and Africa, he relies too heavily on problematic substantive conversions. His emphasis on the developmental cycle from infancy to the mature adult appears at times, despite his caveats, to overprivilege psychological determinants and suggests experiential continuities that are, in my view, questionable. Gregg himself is anxious not to overemphasize hybridity and discontinuity, as trenchant as they may be, at the expense of developmental continuities related not just to child-rearing practices and other common experiences. His discussion of different developmental periods is divided between traditional and modernizing, essentially urban patterns, the latter in tension with the former. Following Levine, he distinguishes between pediatric and pedagogic models of infant care; that is between constant mothering, nursing on demand, and dampening excitement purportedly characteristic of traditional societies, and face-to-face interaction, proto-conversation, and the eliciting of excitement prevalent in industrial societies and conducive to achievement motivation. He recognizes here and in other life stages tensions between traditional and modernizing practices but, owing perhaps to the absence of studies, is reluctant to describe these intermediate situations. He does stress the effect of the often tragic discrepancy between aspirations—dreams—people have and structural impediments to their fulfillment. Happily, he notes that MENA peoples, like others, “develop multiple self-conceptions that are called into play in different contexts” (p. 323). How these self-conceptions relate to conflict, contradiction, and paradox has yet to be determined.

Gregg discusses the effects and the conflicting demands of underdevelopment, political subjugation, and terrorism primarily in terms of adults. He focuses particular attention on the work of Lebanese psychotherapist Mustafa Hijazi, who looks at how tyranny undermines
the basic sense of security, efficacy, and self-regard and instills fear and anxiety—a sense of emasculation (Hijazi’s male basis is clear) that seeks at times remediation through both outer and inner directed violence, with women often its target. More cautious than Hijazi, Gregg recognizes that we know little of the effect of tyranny and terrorism on the individual, but along with Hijazi, Ali Zayrou, and Kanan Makiya, he acknowledges the insidious effect of subjugation and terror on the family and, thereby, on the development of the individual. One wishes that Gregg had given greater attention to fear, anxiety, fragmentation, and dissolution at all levels of development.

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REVIEWED BY KILIC BUGRA KANAT, Department of Political Science, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.; e-mail: kbkanat@maxwell.syr.edu

Violence has been a central concept in describing the politics and society of many Middle Eastern countries. It has determined not only the political developments of these countries, but it has also played a focal role in the perception of this region by outsiders. Many people living in different parts of the world are confronted daily with news about the violence in the Middle East. Suicide bombing, kidnapping, hijacking, and other forms of violence have become one of the central tenets of politics in this volatile region. Numerous studies have been done by scholars in the academic world regarding the roots of this violence. Economic problems, religious extremism, and a culture of violence have often been considered the usual suspects. This book intends to go beyond these explanations for the violence and emphasizes political structure as a major component of the emergence and transformation of violence in the Middle East.

Hamit Bozarslan first explains the gap in the literature regarding violence, which made writing such a book necessary. In the attacks of 11 September 2001, nineteen hijackers collectively transformed their bodies into weapons, which was the necessary condition for their actions. This weapons system, in which human bodies are used as integral parts of explosive munitions, has changed the form and meaning of violence in the Middle East, most noticeably in Turkey, Sri Lanka, and Palestine. According to the author, the mainstream models used by social scientists do not explain the peculiarly sacrificial forms of violence that we are now observing in various regions of the world. He emphasizes the necessity of new interdisciplinary approaches, attentive both to long-term structural factors and to sociocognitive discontinuities, and in the remaining pages of the book takes these factors into account.

The central claim of the book concerning the sporadic violence in the Middle East is that “the power relations and subjective perceptions that the authors of violence have of a given situation are heavily accountable for violence” (p. 8). There are three interrelated hypotheses related to this core argument. The first hypothesis is that “violence in the Middle East is a result primarily of political structures, i.e., the nature of the states and their power relations” (p. 8). This violence is very much related to the existence of the authoritarian states and power relations and marginalized social groups or ethnic and sectarian minorities within the borders of particular states. The intention of the people who engage in these violent movements is to change power relations and political structures.

The second hypothesis is that, although the violent movements “weaken as organized efforts in their later stages; they very often give birth to fragmented and privatized forms of violence” (p. 8). In fact, when a particular regime does not divest itself of its repressive
authoritarian structure, the violence of those who oppose it may lead to the overthrow of the regime, although there is no guarantee that the new regime will be more democratic. However, when violent struggle cannot achieve this end, the level of violence and organized movements that are behind it usually decline. This decrease in the level of violence does not mean the end of violence. It usually continues, reproduces itself, and sometimes turns into something else. For example, in some cases, it becomes detached from the ideological and political commitment that it used to serve, which leads the way to the privatization and professionalization of violence. This professionalization does not mean the total eradication of the political discourses, but the movement has lost its mobilizational force and has failed to enlarge the initial circles of militants by recruiting new fighters.

The final hypothesis is that, in some situations, “the decline of the collective movements leads not only to the privatization of violence but also to its metamorphosis into nihilistic, sacrificial, and/or messianistic forms” (p. 9). This form of violence can be seen as the tension between sacredness, which in the initial stages of the violence constitutes a sine qua non for an increasing mobilization and readiness to die, and rationality or pragmatism, which is the next move of the mainstream actors of opposition movements to achieve measurable goals. Consequently, the sacrality makes pragmatism unacceptable for the people in the movement. Nihilistic/self-sacrificial violence emerges among ordinary members at this point, when even the leaders of the struggle start to retreat and overcome this tension.

Bozarslan tests these hypotheses on cases from Middle Eastern countries, particularly Turkey, and provides an analysis of the violence from a historical, sociological perspective. The first two chapters deal with the Kurdish question in Turkey. Chapter 1 examines the relationship between minority issues and violence. In the second chapter, Bozarslan deals with the emergence and rise of violence among various groups, especially after the 1980 military coup. In the last chapter of the book, he looks at the emergence and transformation of violence in the broader Middle Eastern region. He particularly focuses on the role of power relations.

Although the book intends to cover the violence in the Middle East, it is more about the violence in Turkey than the Middle East in general. Especially the first two chapters of the book are discussions about the Kurdish problem and violence in Turkey. Although the book sheds light on some important issues regarding violence in the Middle East, it leaves some other issues unexamined, such as widespread blood feud and suicides.

Overall, the book reads well, with a good summary of violence in some parts of the Middle East. Bozarslan provides a first step for research about violence in the Middle East and opens a new horizon for further research in the field.
exceptionalism, instead inserting the politics of the Middle East into the broader framework of contemporary international relations approaches.

In his introduction, Hinnebusch argues for the necessity to adopt a multilayered approach to the international relations of the Middle East. Neorealism, he says, fails to offer a comprehensive explanation of the political dynamics of the region; therefore, other perspectives must be taken into account. It is around these approaches that the book is constructed. Thus, structuralism offers insights into the evolution of the regional state system and, in particular, its domination by the Western “core” in a classic core–periphery relationship, while constructivism helps us to understand the contestation between suprastate identities and state sovereignty. Pluralism impels us to disaggregate the state and challenges the realist assumption of states as cohesive units—this being particularly apt in the Middle East, where states have been, and continue to be, permeable and fragmented. Finally, Hinnebusch argues that realism does have a role, if limited, in explaining state behavior once war becomes pervasive and state elites follow raison d’État. Hinnebusch elaborates on all of this in a series of subsequent chapters, which reflect his theoretical concerns while being grounded in a rich store of empirical material.

A key concern for Hinnebusch is the dependent nature of states in the Middle East, which has dramatic implications for the nature of political life in the region. In a telling discussion of the 1973 oil crisis, he argues that the opportunity for a significant realignment of power relations between Arab states and the West was lost, as the combination of Egypt’s restoration to Western allegiance under Sadat and Saudi Arabian reluctance to challenge its Western supporters had the effect instead of accelerating Western penetration of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, such that the ruling families of the oil monarchies became junior partners in a “global bourgeoisie,” politically demobilizing populations and increasing the security dependency of Gulf oil producers on the West. More recently, he argues, patterns in state consolidation since the 1980s have led to the sacrificing of pan-Arab to individual state interests. The leaders of more radical states have tempered their radicalism: where once they harnessed their economics to foreign policy, now they harness foreign policy to economics, trading “Western-friendly foreign policy for economic aid and investment” (p. 87). At the same time, the oil monarchies have become even more dependent on Western protection as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait made manifest. Hinnebusch’s argument is compelling. However, if we add to it his earlier claim that there is no evidence that the increased strength of the Islamic movement leads to an “Islamisation” of foreign policy, then the question is raised as to where, and how, opposition to Western policies and actions in the Middle East will find expression.

This question leads inevitably to the questions of democracy and democratization. It is not surprising that Hinnebusch observes that, in the context of widespread co-optation or repression of political opposition, public opinion plays little direct role in the formulation of public policy. However, he points out that even limited democratization places pressure on elites to distance themselves from the West. One might reflect on events in Turkey in 2003 when a Turkish parliament dominated by the neo-Islamist Justice and Development party rejected U.S. overtures to support the then-proposed invasion of Iraq. More recent events have also illustrated the tension between Western (especially the American) policies of democracy promotion, which, if successful, are likely to empower only those forces opposed to other key aspects of Western policy in the Middle East (on, e.g., Israel/Palestine, the war in Iraq, and the “war” on terror).

Hinnebusch’s text sets the 20th-century history of the Middle East within a broader context of the interplay of international, regional, national, and subnational factors and actors, taking in patterns of state formation, the rise and decline of pan-Arab nationalism, the antagonistic relationship between “radical” and “conservative” states, the impact of the cold war, the Arab–Israeli conflict, the impact of globalization, and much more along the way.
In his concluding paragraphs (written before the 2003 invasion of Iraq), Hinnebusch notes, as others have done, the contradictions inherent in the U.S. role in the Middle East. American hegemony, he suggests, far from increasing individual or collective security, is counterproductive to regional order. This is because the continued application of American force in the region is essential to maintain the status quo but, paradoxically, undermines its legitimacy. Unfortunately, as he also points out, “U.S. Middle East policy seldom takes the form of rational calculation of national interests” (p. 220). The clarity of analysis provided by this book would go a long way to supplying the basis for the construction of just such a set of policies for the region. It should be essential reading not merely for scholars and students of the Middle East and international relations, but for anyone interested in contemporary international politics.

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REVIEWED BY MANOCHER DORRAJ, Department of Political Science, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Tex.; e-mail: m.dorraj@tcu.edu

Since 1979, Iran has been the subject of great intellectual curiosity and scholarly scrutiny. Numerous attempts have been made to explain causes and consequences of the “Islamic revolution” and to dissect Iran’s current political course in terms of its history and political culture. Indeed, without such a historical backdrop, the present political reality is incomprehensible. Moreover, it is significant to discern to what extent the Islamic Republic—its ideology and political agenda—is part of the main contour of Iranian political tradition and to what extent it is a deviation from it.

In Eternal Iran, Clawson and Rubin set out to illuminate some of these issues. The book is ambitious in its scope and range. It encompasses pre-Islamic imperial history, Islamic conquest and Islamization, and the emergence of the modern Iranian state. The main focus of the book, however, is the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and its aftermath. If readers are looking for a new theoretical analysis of Iranian history or the 1979 revolution, this volume will disappoint them. Much of the material presented here has been covered before. However, if they are looking for an accessible account of Iranian history and its present political dynamics, they will find the present volume to be “user friendly”—free of jargon, well written, and a comprehensive introduction to the subject matter.

The book has several distinct strengths. Unlike many other scholarly works on Iranian history and politics—marked by their dearth of analysis on the role of ethnic and religious minorities—this volume pays special attention to the plight and the role of minorities in Iranian history and politics. The treatment and the contributions of religious minorities such as Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians, and Bahai, as well as ethnic minorities such as Azerbaijanis, Kurds, and Baluchis are covered. The authors also attribute Iranian national pride—so omnipresent in political behavior on the global stage—to a distinct sense of identity that goes back to the mighty and cultured Persian Empire. With a history of more than 2,500 years of continuous civilization that dates back centuries before the Islamic conquest of Iran in the 7th century, many history-conscious Iranians take pride in their past and use it as a source of strength to cope with their present political predicament as a Third World nation on the periphery of the world’s economic and power structure. The current reality of Iran as a Third World nation that produces neither the technology, the capital, nor the intellectual, cultural, and military might that drives the engine of globalization has not prevented some Iranian political leaders before and after the revolution to envision Iran as “the Center of
the Universe.” This self-inflated image is often an obstacle to a sober assessment of Iran’s limitations of power on the international stage. The flip side of this inflated self-image is the “fear of inferiority.” Once a mighty civilization, Iran is now shunned by some in the global community as a pariah state. It is in the context of this defensive posture that Iranian self-image is constantly juxtaposed with the perception of Westerners. As the authors accurately observe, the looming political presence of the West has been an intellectual preoccupation in modern Iranian history.

The authors’ exploration of links between Iran’s domestic developments and foreign-policy agenda provides readers with a broader perspective on Iranian foreign policy. The book is also up to date and incorporates the latest political events in Iran, including the ramifications of President Ahmadinejad’s ascendance to power and the drama of Iran’s confrontation with the United States and the European Union over the nuclear crisis. The authors aptly point out the alienation of large sectors of increasingly sophisticated Iranian intellectuals and educated youth from the regime. A new generation of Iranian youth with no memory of the 1979 revolution has stepped into the political scene; for them, the revolution no longer serves as the source of legitimacy. This younger generation’s vision is westward looking, and they aspire to democracy and freedom. They are the major catalyst for any future social change in Iran.

The major weakness of the book, alas, is its ideological bias. The following examples demonstrate this problem. The authors’ endorsement of the International Monetary Fund’s glowing account of the Iranian economy’s performance under the Shah’s regime (p. 84) has been disputed by numerous scholarly analyses in the 1960s and 1970s. Embracing the U.S. State Department’s loaded characterization of the Islamic Republic as “the most active state sponsor of terrorism” (p. 184) is also dubious, to say the least. The authors are well-served to heed the adage that one side’s “terrorist” is the other side’s “freedom fighter.” To be sure, there are many examples of the Islamic Republic’s support for Muslim extremist groups, especially during the first decade of the revolution, when the revolutionary zeal was at its zenith and the desire to export Islamic revolution was at the top of Iran’s foreign-policy agenda. However, to cite the Iranian government’s attempt to take weapons in September 1992 to the Muslim Bosnians (p. 184), who were the target of genocide and ethnic cleansing by Serbian military forces and vigilante civilians alike, is a poor case to substantiate the authors’ point about the Iranian government’s “support for international terrorism” and is an example of ideological overreaching.

Despite the ideological edge discussed above, the book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on Iranian history and politics, and its accessible prose renders it appealing to a wider audience.

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REVIEWED BY RUDI MATTHEE, Department of History, University of Delaware, Newark, Del.; e-mail: matthee@juno.com

This book, which originated as an article in Dutch that Willem Floor wrote in 1979 in response to a request for greater knowledge about Iran in the wake of the Iranian Revolution, offers a detailed narrative of events involving the relationship between the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Safavid court in the mid-17th century. Its focus is the conflict that erupted in 1645, early in the reign of Shah ‘Abbas II (1642–66), over a disagreement about the conditions under which the Dutch conducted trade in Iran, causing them to blockade Bandar
`Abbas and attack nearby Qishm Island. This time is an episode in Iranian history that is at once minor and timelessly pregnant with significance for being an early example of the complexity of Iran’s relations with the outside world.

The book’s narrative addresses the conflict as part of a larger discussion of Dutch–Iranian relations from the beginning of VOC operations in Iran in 1623 until 1652, the year when the Dutch signed a new treaty with Isfahan. This treaty spelled out new conditions of trade, more specifically trade of silk, the main interest of the Dutch in Iran, thus ostensibly ending the dispute that had led to the confrontation in 1645. Six appendices present the translated texts of various Dutch reports on trade, the plan to attack Qishm, and VOC petitions to Shah `Abbas II. An addendum contains the transcribed Persian text of twenty-one (not thirty-one, as the authors claim in the preface) decrees written by Shah `Abbas II concerning the Dutch during the 1645 conflict. These documents constitute almost all that remains of what must have been a voluminous correspondence in Persian between the Safavid court and the VOC. As Floor notes, these documents are important not just for constituting rare documentation about the 1645 episode in Persian, all the more so because no references to the conflict are found in any of the Persian-language narrative sources, but also because they provide insight into titles used in official correspondence and the organization of Safavid bureaucracy.

The narrative of events is engaging if rather factual, with little consideration given to the workings of the Safavid government and the dynamics between Shah `Abbas II—at thirteen (not fifteen, as is claimed here) barely an adolescent in 1645—and his various court officials. What the book brings out most vividly is the fundamental incongruity between the premises and objectives of the Dutch and the Iranians, respectively. This begins with a different focus. Whereas the Dutch were concentrated on the coast and could not operate beyond the littoral for lack of manpower and military means, the Iranians, in the absence of a navy, were poorly equipped to control the Persian Gulf and its port cities. In addition, the entirely different assumption from which the two parties operated led to endlessly complicated negotiations, which for over a century revolved around the same issues: the Dutch wanted silk at cheap prices and with few political restrictions; the Iranians, meanwhile, were willing to concede privileges to the Dutch provided they remained tied to the court, paid prices set by the court, and provided services, including naval and protection services, to the court.

Despite their naval weakness, the balance of power in this interaction was heavily slanted in favor of the Iranians—who held all the important cards, including the right to renew or revoke trading privileges to foreign agents, thus giving the lie to all who want to see in the 17th-century activities of the East India companies—the Dutch as much as the English—a reach for geopolitical hegemony if not full-fledged imperialism. However, the ingredients of the later imbalance of power were there: in the absence of real military power, for the Dutch, blockading Iran’s main port was their only option, but by doing so, they also throttled their own access to the Iranian market. The Iranians, lacking any naval facilities of their own, could do little to prevent and lift the blockade at Bandar `Abbas. Despite reciprocal diplomatic bluster, pragmatism thus prevailed and arrangements were made to end or at least defuse the conflict. There may be a lesson here for the present.

Better written than most of Floor’s studies, the book is not free from awkward and mangled phrases, misspellings—“lend” for “lent” and “phase” for “faze,” to give just two examples—missing or superfluous apostrophes, and so on. The availability of a printed concordance that gives the corresponding VOC numbers for the old Koloniaal Archief ones in the Dutch archives, which since 2002 are to be abbreviated as Nationaal Archief rather than Algemeen Rijks Archief, should have made it unnecessary to switch back and forth between the two systems in the footnotes. One also regrets the lack of an annotated translation of the farmāns transcribed here.
This book makes important contributions to the continuing academic debates concerning the character of slavery in precolonial Africa and the significance of elite slavery in the Islamic world. Stilwell’s study focuses on the royal slavery in Kano, one of the leading emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate. Located in what is today northern Nigeria, the caliphate was established by the jihad led by the Islamic cleric and political reformer Usman dan Fodio in the early 19th century. In subsequent decades, slavery became a central social, economic, and political institution in the caliphate. The author argues that Kano’s royal slaves (whom he chooses for comparative purposes to call “Mamluks,” although they were never known by that term in Kano) were indeed slaves; nonetheless, they came to exercise considerable political and administrative power, and they developed a largely autonomous slave community and an extensive network of kin groups. These apparent contradictions are what lead Stilwell to use the phrase “paradoxes of power” in the title of his book. The book’s arguments are based on a careful study of colonial-era documents found principally in the Nigerian National Archives and on an impressive array of oral interviews, conducted by the author and others, among present-day holders of titled offices in Kano.

In the introductory chapter, Stilwell describes the emergence of the Sokoto Caliphate as a unified empire created from the ancient, disparate Hausa city-states of the west-central Sudan. He situates his work in the comparative context of studies of slavery in Africa and the Islamic world. Following the path-breaking work of Orlando Patterson and M.I. Finley, Stilwell defines his subjects, Kano’s royal slaves, as natally alienated, kinless, owned outsiders who lacked honor; not for him the “assimilationist” model of African slavery was developed by Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff. He also follows Paul Lovejoy and others in categorizing Kano (and the Sokoto Caliphate more generally) as a genuine slave society, although it should be noted that his is not a study of Kano slavery per se, but only of royal slavery in Kano. Indeed, his work focuses almost exclusively on the historical trajectory of a group of titled men who numbered only 150 in the mid-19th century.

Subsequent chapters describe and analyze in a more or less chronological manner the development of Kano’s slave offices and royal slave community from the reign of the first post-jihad emir to the conquest of the Sokoto Caliphate by the British in the early 20th century. In the first chapter, Stilwell discusses the origins of royal slavery in Kano. He rejects the idea associated with Patricia Crone and Daniel Pipes that Islam was at the root of the institution, arguing instead that royal slavery developed “as a political strategy” and grew out of pre-jihad Hausa household-style government (pp. 38, 44). Nevertheless, the institution came to be shaped by Islamic law and values. Royal slavery served to enhance the power of the emir over both the free, titled aristocracy and the ulama. The first post-jihad emir appears to have avoided making much use of slaves in his government, perhaps viewing the institution as an unsavory legacy of the displaced Hausa rulers. However, his successor, Emir Dabo, who came to power in 1819, had no such qualms and, with the endorsement of the caliph, recreated several pre-jihad titled slave offices in an effort to consolidate his power. Dabo was in effect the author of the system of royal slavery in Kano.

The next chapter takes a more thematic look at the operation of royal slavery under Dabo and a few of his successors. Stilwell focuses here (and in much of the remainder of the
book) on the three major slave offices of Shamaki, Sallama, and Dan Rimi. Although the relationship between the emir and his slave officeholders was nominally governed by the principle of amana ("trust," denoting the reciprocal, yet asymmetric obligations of patron and client), successive emirs curtailed the power of slave officeholders by removing those appointed by his predecessor and raising his own. Nevertheless, the political roles of royal slaves expanded as they became the mediators between the increasingly “sacred” realm of the court and the “profane” world outside. In the following chapter—which strikes this reviewer as the most innovative—Stilwell shows how the emirs’ crucial reliance on their political roles gave the slave officeholders the opportunity to create households and kinship networks among themselves and links with the free elite through the practice of concubinage. This compelling historical analysis of the emergence of a royal slave community constitutes a major contribution to the study of slavery in precolonial Africa.

Stilwell then examines a different, but equally interesting, aspect of the royal slaves’ growing centrality to Kano government: their appropriation of specialized administrative knowledge. Royal slaves acquired expertise in military matters, the recording of history, administration of the rural areas, and the management of royal plantations. Although this knowledge (the slaves’ “cultural capital”) served to enhance the power of the emir vis-à-vis the free aristocracy, it also increased the dependence of the emirs on the skills of their elite slaves. Even more revealing of this dependence was the fact that the sons and possible heirs of emirs were themselves trained in the households of slave officials. Thus, by the end of the 19th century, royal slaves were at the peak of their power in Kano. This finding was amply demonstrated by the crucial role they played in the civil war that broke out in 1893 over succession to the position of emir. The ultimate victory of Emir Aliyu Babba over his opponent (who was initially backed by the caliphat government) was ensured by the support of key segments of Kano’s royal slave community.

Paradoxes of Power retains some of the character of its origins as Ph.D. dissertation. It is a very focused study, in some respects too focused, and consequently sometimes gives short shrift to critical analytical issues that transcend slavery and yet are relevant to the analysis at hand. For example, a key concept that is used in every chapter is that of “patrimonialism,” yet the author never deals explicitly with the theoretical underpinnings of the term. A careful examination of Weber’s seminal writings would have helped refine the analysis of formal and informal power of Kano’s slave officials and the broader hierarchy of authority. The extent to which his study of Kano is relevant to the historical experiences of the other emirates, and even the caliphal government at Sokoto, is addressed in barely two pages, rather awkwardly attached to a chapter with a different theme. Stilwell uses quotation marks around certain terms so inconsistently that it is unclear what these are meant to flag. This is particularly the case with the term “free,” which he nowhere defines in the Kano context. Nevertheless, these criticisms do not detract from the fact that this is an important work that deserves to be read by all scholars of comparative slavery, particularly in the African and the Islamic worlds.

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Reviewed by Richard A. Freund, Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies, University of Hartford, Hartford, Conn.; e-mail: freund@hartford.edu

The title of this book foreshadows the rather complex tale that Andrew C.A. Jampoler, a retired naval aviator and author, sets out to narrate. It would have sufficed for Jampoler to
have dealt with the fascinating events surrounding the 1848 American expedition to the Dead Sea, but the additional “tease” of “the Search for Sodom and Gomorrah” gives a small taste of this epic tome. The actual events of the twenty-two day expedition might have warranted a much shorter work. In a way, the expedition serves as a pretext for Jampoler’s larger thesis, which is that this expedition represented, at least in part, American Zeitgeist of the period. In place of what might have been a rather dry accounting, Jampoler presents a dizzying window of topics. These topics are diverse: the beginnings of biblical archaeology in the Near East, U.S. naval and shipbuilding history, world politics of the era, eating/drinking and health habits of sailors, folkloric and artistic renderings of the period (including discussion of Mark Twain and David Roberts), and 19th-century medicine and medical facilities (including specific treatment of smallpox, fleas, cholera, tuberculosis, and dysentery). Unfortunately, these and a host of other digressions threaten to distract from the actual telling of the 1848 tale.

Seemingly focusing on the U.S. Navy expedition led by Lieutenant William F. Lynch to survey the Jordan River and Dead Sea in boats of copper and galvanized iron, Jampoler tells a tale of almost everything else that was happening in midcentury worldwide. The crew left New York on 27 November 1847 and returned to port on 8 December 1848 (over one year!). Despite the mission’s length and the death of one expedition member, the expedition was clearly successful. Lynch’s party came ashore on the Mediterranean coast of Palestine in April 1848; expedition members continued their work through May, when they finally began the trek back to meet their ship. Unfortunately for the one casualty of the expedition, Lieutenant Dale, they were unable to meet up with their ship until the end of July. Jampoler’s recounting of the individuals in the small team, including a small army of hired local Arabs, provides backdrop to the drama, which was at times a comedy of near-epic proportions. To be sure, the expedition did complete a scientific mapping of the area that continued to be accurate through this century and fulfilled its ultimate scientific goal of establishing the actual elevation of the Dead Sea (1312 feet below sea level, the lowest place on Earth), which up until then was widely speculated. Regarding the “search” for Sodom and Gomorrah, however, the reader will be left searching in vain for anything other than digression.

The Lynch expedition has been cited in several works on the Dead Sea region, but none have provided as much detail and depth of interpretation as this work. *Sailors in the Holy Land* is a rich book, one that, despite the many digressions (even for an experienced reader many will prove distracting), brings to life this historical event in a way that no other author has succeeding in doing. Jampoler is both writer and social historian, searching out the meta-reasons for the expeditions undertaken by Lynch and other explorers during the 19th and early 20th centuries. He follows Lynch from the end of the expedition through the publishing of his magnum opus, *Narrative of the United States Expedition to the River Jordan and the Dead Sea* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Lea & Blanchard, 1850), and his autobiographical work, *Naval Life, or Observations Afloat and on Shore* (1851), and right up to his Civil War service in the Confederate navy and his death. Jampoler explores Lynch’s state of mind, personal life, and religious upbringing as reasons for his original 1847 expedition proposal. Lynch’s work had enormous long-term significance for future explorations on the Dead Sea, providing vital background for the 20th-century discoveries and excavations at Masada, the Dead Sea Scrolls caves at and near Qumran, the nearby Bar Kokhba caves, those at Tiberias and around the Sea of Galilee, as well as at Akko, Jericho, and Ein Gedi.

Jampoler obviously did wide-ranging research and preparation for this book, including visits to many of the sites he writes about (at some points the reader is given modern road designations and other sites of interest). However, the book does not fulfill its promise as a serious investigation into questions surrounding Sodom and Gomorrah. A serious investigation of the work of geologists and seismologists in the region might have added to the list of digressions but would also have added substance to the issue raised in Jampoler’s subtitle.
In fairness, one chapter is devoted to the issue of Sodom and Gomorrah, but the arguments there are perhaps a little forced and lack the depth found elsewhere in the book.

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REVIEWED BY YOAV DI-CAPUA, Department of History, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Tex.; e-mail: ydi@mail.utexas.edu

This exciting tome examines the era that began with the formation of the Wafd, continued with the 1919 revolution, and ended with the coup turned revolution of July 1952. It binds together a plethora of historiographical approaches and moves from political history to sociocultural history and from legal history and gender relations to history of art. The lives of peasants, women, aspiring members of the middle class, military officers, and powerful pashas figure strongly in this volume. The diverse list of contributors consists of scholars from different professional generations and multiple scholarly traditions. Obviously, trying to fuse together such a wide range of scholarly approaches and thematic preferences into a coherent reevaluation of this period is an extremely ambitious goal. Although largely successful, the editors stop short of translating the richness of their collection into a reflective, critical, and focused statement on the overall nature of this era and its relation to adjacent periods.

For the most part, the inability to conceptualize, or reenvision, this era in new terms derives from two basic working assumptions. First, the editors argue that this era “continues to receive insufficient scholarly attention” (p. 2). Second, in contrast with existing scholarship, they propose that “this book invites the reader to reconsider the accepted wisdom on 1919–1952 Egypt. Rather than being a period of creeping decay, these years emerge as integral to modern nation-state formation and social transformation” (p. 6).

These two working assumptions are problematic, if not altogether mistaken. Although “sufficient attention” is a matter of degree and taste, this era has received—and continues to receive—unparalleled scholarly attention (it is the three decades that preceded 1919 that are relatively neglected), attention that the editors did not take seriously enough. Indeed, awareness of the academic literature on the period comes only as an afterthought when, in the last chapter, Arthur Goldschmidt uses his vast knowledge and provides a bibliographic inventory. As undeniably useful as this inventory is, it would perhaps have made better sense to examine the meaning and validity of previous scholarly achievements in a strong introductory chapter.

The “decay” assumption is a direct outcome of the editors’ cursory attitude to a long pedigree of literature. Although at times critical, this literature did not sweepingly condemn this era as one of corruption and decay. In fact, more often than not, it was quite appreciative of the “liberal experiment” and even celebrated it as the culmination of the entire nahda project and the birth of a mature modern public sphere (perhaps it is time to rethink precisely this image). Unless one is a staunch Nasserite who reads only Egyptian historiography of a certain cut, “decay” is not likely to be the “accepted wisdom” that one would encounter and that the editors seem eager to destroy. In the end, the many achievements of this project are hidden in its various parts, away from such claims of a historiographical wasteland and the easy victories they seem to offer.

Unlike many edited volumes, this compilation is homogenous in its high quality of research and its intelligent integration through countless cross-references (although the lack of an index should be lamented). For the most part, common concerns revolve around questions of social
justice and mobility, the meaning and scope of the elusive process of “Egyptianization,” the impact of mass media on the lives and preferences of ordinary people, and the nature and utilization of growing state power. Although not stated as such, a possible common denominator that clearly set this era apart from earlier times is the unprecedented creativity with which Egyptians tried to settle and resolve the many paradoxes and tensions of modernization that characterized this era. For instance, the schizophrenic dependency–fear approach of the elite vis-à-vis the lower classes figures strongly in this volume.

With this in mind, several contributions out of many good articles warrant special attention. James Whidden’s original chapter on the sociopolitical generations in the 1920s illuminates an entire array of ideological preoccupations with social illnesses and, thus, contributes to a more sophisticated understanding of party politics. It relates to Amy Johnson and Scott David McIntosh’s biography of social reformer Aziza Hussein in which they examine Hussein’s integrated philosophy of development that emphasized public responsibility for the malaise of the nation, namely, “poverty, ignorance, and disease.” Misako Ikeda’s study of parliamentary debates regarding free public education and the war against illiteracy illuminates the very notion of what “public” actually meant and who had the right to define it.

Connected to Tawfik Aclimandos’s detailed study of political activism in the military, Anne-Claire Kerboeuf examines the complexities of mass political violence. In an argument that echoes Latifa al-Zayyat’s al-Bab al-maftuh narration of the January 1952 burning of Cairo, Kerboeuf shows that the Egyptian historiographical obsession with the question who set the fire is a historiographical dead end. Instead, she examines in great detail how, over a long period of time, various political and social elements ambiguously contributed their share to the hidden hand of mass violence.

Related to political violence, Lucie Ryzova examines the so-called “trouble makers” of the era: the new effendiyya. Ryzova’s history of this class is one of the most notable contributions in this volume. Ryzova examines the multiple lives of the effendi from the perspective of habitus and, thus, coherently promotes a new notion of class as “always in the process of becoming something else” (p. 125). Her effendis emerge as financially unstable, intellectually curious, politically volatile, and relentless careerists. This study goes beyond the current academic consensus, which views the effendi mostly in the context of the literary revival of the nahda and the Habermasian public sphere. Her insights fit nicely with Barak Salmoni’s chapter on historical consciousness, which extensively explores the pedagogical usage of the past in the context of schooling and nationalization.

Turning the focus to the sociocultural structure of the family, an extremely important contribution by Hanan Kholussy deals with the way in which the state promoted the modern nuclear family by curtailing the marriage of minors, mainstreaming monogamy, and deterring divorce. Here, the nuclear family emerges as the core cell of economic activity, psychological comfort, moral upbringing, and general socialization into modern life. Methodologically, Kholussy’s research continues an emerging tendency to break away from the strict tradition of Islamic law through which marriage is often studied.

In the field of mass media, Shaun Lopez’s sensational urban tale of the two famous serial killer sisters Raya and Sakina illustrates how the mass media popularized the modern relation between body, mind, and morality at the expense of existing norms. Although Lopez is especially interested in the rise of mass media after World War I, the strength of his analysis lies in the examination of how modern categories of knowledge such as psychiatry and psychology marginalized well-rooted biomedical notions and promoted a new virtuous order. This approach, in fact, is also the direction that Nancy Gallagher follows in her interesting chapter on the role of female medical and public-health workers. In addition, Gallagher appears to be the only participant in this volume who is thinking of her work in more inclusive terms, as a research agenda for future inquiries.
This accurate panoramic view of work currently being conducted in the field makes this volume recommended reading for scholars. There is of course much room for future work, including methods and themes that are not represented in this volume, such as business history, history of science and technology, consumerism, social biographies of dominant households (the Abazas always come to mind), and, above all, innovative comparative work.

Finally, on a sad note, this was also the last work of the late Amy Johnson, a sensitive and gifted historian of Egyptian social history. Perhaps the best way to benefit from her perspective is articulated by her former adviser, Roger Owen, who in a reflective concluding chapter writes, “Let us hope that this book is translated as soon as possible into Arabic. Let us hope that its ideas and reassessments will be taken seriously enough in Egypt to provoke counter hypotheses . . .” (p. 501).