

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

*Islamic Art and Archæology in Palestine.* By Myriam Rosen-Ayalon. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2006. Pp. 216. Bibliography, glossary, index. \$29.95 (p). ISBN 1-59874-064-4.

Any search for monographs on the subjects of Islamic art or Islamic archæology in the regions known as Palestine and Israel will result in a very short list of relevant titles. Of the works one does find, most fall into the category of specialized studies focusing on one type of cultural expression—ceramics for example—or on a specific archæological excavation, such as the Crusader city of Acre. The absence of a general introduction to the architectural and cultural remnants of Islamic civilization in Palestine led Prof. Rosen-Ayalon (Mayer Professor of Islamic Art and Archæology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem) to compile this book which, in the form reviewed here, is a translation (by E. Singer) of her *Art et archéologie islamiques en Palestine* (Presses Universitaires de France, 2002).

*Islamic Art and Archæology in Palestine* consists of a brief introduction and six chapters, organized according to the chronology of Islamic history. The first chapter covers the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods, the second, the Umayyad dynasty, and the third, the Abbasid. The fourth chapter is devoted to the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras and the fifth to the long period of Ottoman rule over Palestine. A sixth chapter, more specialized than the preceding five, details the contribution of Armenian ceramics to Palestinian Islamic architectural monuments. Within each of the first five chapters, Rosen-Ayalon gives an overview of the most important sites for the period and reviews the significant Islamic structures (or their ruins) found there. She describes the buildings and their decoration and elaborates on the importance of each building or site for our understanding of that period's Islamic art and archæology.

Each chapter then proceeds to detail the various kinds of artifacts belonging to that time and found in the course of excavations at the various locations. These chapter sections vary according to the types of artifacts found, but most cover such things as coins, metal and wood objects, ceramics and inscriptions. The several elements are then placed in broad historical context and their place in the wider realm of Is-

lamic art is addressed. Some twenty-two line drawings and black and white photographs supplement the text. Arabic words and phrases are given in italics. At the end of the book is a brief but useful glossary of technical terms for those less familiar with the field. An extensive bibliography lists the relevant secondary literature as well as primary works in Arabic on Islamic Palestine. A comparative table of dates listing contemporary events in other parts of the Islamic Empire helps to place Palestine in historical perspective. An index of relevant terms, architectural landmarks, persons and geographic locations completes the volume.

The need for a general introductory volume on the art and archæology of Palestine, accessible to non-specialists and novices in the fields of Islamic art history and, more important, of Islamic archæology in Palestine, is evident from the virtual absence of comparable volumes in the literature. While numerous valuable articles and book chapters focusing on specific archæological sites or tangible forms of cultural expression have been written, only two surveys akin to Prof. Rosen-Ayalon's have been undertaken. Ugo Tarchi's *L'architettura e l'arte musulmana in Egitto e nella Palestina* (Torino, 1922) is primarily a collection of plates depicting important buildings and artifacts from Palestine and Egypt; with only eighteen pages of text, there is little in the way of analysis or explication to be found there. That work, as indicated in its title, covers Egypt and therefore has a broader focus. A second work, *al-Āthār al-Islāmīyah fī Filastīn wa-al-Urdunn* by Maḥmūd ʿĀbidī (ʿAmman, 1973), while textually more substantial, also divides its attention between Palestine and Jordan. Moreover, the fact that it is written in Arabic places much of the potential audience for such research at a linguistic disadvantage. Given the dates of publication for these two works, a new treatment of the subject was certainly in order.

Prof. Rosen-Ayalon takes what she calls a “textbook” approach to her subject (p. 10). Although the meaning is never given explicitly, it becomes apparent that what is intended is an exposition that addresses broad trends and movements in the art and architecture of the several periods covered as evidenced by the major architectural landmarks and representative historical artifacts. The author does an outstanding job of contextualizing the evidence provided by the material she surveys, presenting a very clear case for reciprocal influences passing between the region's successive Muslim hegemony and the traditions first, of their Byzantine predecessors, and second, of the brief reign of the Cru-

saders who interposed themselves for a century or so in the Muslims' midst. Such exchanges as occurred among these groups are appropriately illustrated by drawings, photographs and plans. The author makes a convincing case for the importance of intercultural encounters, often through pilgrimage-makers, for developments and advances in the artistic and architectural forms she discusses. More important, perhaps, is the notion that whatever contributions to material culture were made by the Muslims were part of a continuum connecting the pre-Islamic past with the present.

It is in the nature of such works that they rely heavily on secondary literature, and this book is no exception. The bibliography reveals an intense and exhaustive use of primary scholarship by archaeologists and art historians whose names are well known among those familiar with the fields of art history and archaeology in Palestine and Israel. The list of works cited thus serves as a valuable resource in its own right for those who would embark upon more narrowly focused investigations in the field. Their work is drawn upon in such a manner as to create a narrative that highlights the most important landmarks of Islamic culture in Palestine while at the same time introducing the reader to lesser known sites that add to our understanding of how the region as a whole functioned at various points in its history under Islamic rule.

In stark contrast to the utility of the book's bibliography, the citations are disappointing in their lack of useful elaboration. Most of the endnotes consist of a simple citation, even where an explanatory sentence or two would seem to be in order for the reader to gain a clearer understanding of the phrase or concept noted in the text. For example, the author twice (p. 22 and 74) refers to ceramic pieces nicknamed "hand grenades" by archaeologists, yet she offers no definition for this type of pottery, nor any clue as to their function or purpose. In similar fashion, she mentions something called "stilts" (p. 73), which also have to do with pottery production, but fails again to provide an explanation for the term, neither in the notes, nor in the glossary. There are one or two incidental typographical errors, most notably "*amir al-hu'minin*" for "*amir al-Mu'minin*" (p. 27), and some carelessness with regard to the transliteration of some Arabic terms. For example, the word *turbah* (mausoleum) is transliterated *turbe*, which is no doubt due to the translation of the original text from French. Because of their reduced size, the maps at the end of the volume are difficult to read, and the text used to identify locations on map 2 tends to blend into the shading of the topographical features in places. At least one location mentioned

in the text—Tantura (p. 130)—is not identified on the maps. One final matter to note is that the title on the book cover (*Islamic Art and Archaeology of Palestine*) differs from the title on the title page (*Islamic Art and Archaeology in Palestine*).

These are minor annoyances, however. In view of the fact that no comparable work exists, *Islamic Art and Archaeology in Palestine* is an extremely useful handbook for those wanting an introduction to the physical remains of the Islamic period in Palestine. The author, having written extensively on the topic, is eminently qualified to undertake such a work and has rendered a masterful introduction to the subject. The book should find an appreciative audience among art historians, aspiring Islamic archaeologists, travelers wanting an expert overview of the Islamic remains in Palestine and readers wanting to familiarize themselves with the basics of the Muslim presence there. This work also would prove useful to undergraduates engaged in the study of Middle Eastern Islamic history. One cautionary note: Librarians considering the purchase of the volume would be well advised to consider spending the extra money on the hardback edition. The reviewer's "perfect bound" copy has not lived up to its name; after four weeks of relatively gentle reading, several leaves have already become detached from the binding.

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*Enigmatic Charms: Medieval Arabic Block Printed Amulets in American and European Libraries and Museums.* By Karl R. Schaefer. Handbuch der Orientalistik. Erste Abteilung Nahe und der Mittlere Osten ; 82. Bd. Leiden: Brill, 2006. Pp. xiii, 250, [64] color plates. Bibliography, indexes. \$233.00 (hardcover). ISBN 90-04-14789-6.

The existence of block printing technology in the Middle East before the advent of printing in Europe has been much ignored, even in contemporary histories of that art. Part of the problem may be in the wide range of uses to which the technology of impression has been put, begging the question of where the line separating stamps and printed text should lie. Karl Schaefer, Professor of Librarianship in Cowles Library at Drake University and MELA member, provides examples of

this range of impression technology in the Middle East. At one end are the cylinder seals of ancient Egypt and signature seals of later date, meant to be pressed into soft clay or wax and leave a mark in relief only. Then we have dye stamped onto textiles and decorative embellishments stamped onto pages of books in which the text is handwritten. Finally, we have an early, failed attempt to circulate block printed paper currency in late 13<sup>th</sup> century Persia and the primarily textual block printed amulets that are the focus of this study.

No matter one's prejudice in favor of moveable type, the lattermost must be considered printing, defined as the mechanical reproduction of text meant to be read in two dimensions. (Although block printing, like moveable type, leaves a slight impression in paper, ink is used rather than relying on the shadow created by the dimension of depth to discern the figures thereon.) Was Arabic block printing continually dismissed as a curiosity by Western historians because there is not evidence the technology was used to produce works longer than one sheet, such as full-length books? Is it because of the innate medieval Middle Eastern preference for authenticated copying with traceable lines of transmission? Or is it the evidence that some of the producers of block printed amulets were charlatans passing off printed charms and spells as the supposedly superior handwritten product?

*Enigmatic Charms* was designed to shed light on the oft-overlooked method of block printing, which predated moveable type printing in the Arab world, as it did in East Asia and Europe. It covers both the history and the historiography of Arabic block printing. Its four introductory chapters touch on many of the fascinating particularities of the history of the written word in the medieval Islamic world, including an excellent briefest possible introduction to the history of paper and printing in that region. Another chapter is devoted to elucidating the religious diversity of the late antique Near East and the rich tradition of popular practices, among which the use of amulets flourished.

Arabic block printed amulets generally seem to date from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries C.E., although dating them is difficult, as dates are not marked, and using calligraphy style as a clue can be unreliable. A review of the literature on the amulets, extant examples of which have been discovered in diverse libraries and private collections, reveals that they have been repeatedly forgotten and rediscovered, but never before studied as a group. Schaefer analyzes six passages from medieval Arabic and Persian texts that seem to refer to block printing, making the case that the puzzling references were not understood by later copyists of the

manuscripts and may have been distorted in the process. Extant block printed amulets may provide the strongest evidence for interpreting the texts as referring to this process.

The bulk of the book consists of a catalog of all known block printed amulets held in European and American libraries and museums. Organized by institution, it includes a detailed description of each amulet featured, a transcription of the text in Arabic, with reconstructions and lacunae indicated as necessary, and a translation of the text. The amulets themselves are reproduced in color plates at the end of the book. Schaefer thoroughly describes each item, listing dimensions, number of lines, type(s) of script used, height of letters, and coloring and other physical aspects of the manuscript, including damage. Occasionally the description includes a personal touch, such as this line regarding item E32 in the Michaelides Collection at the Cambridge University Library: “The script is a straightforward, pleasing combination of angular and cursive elements (quite elegant, actually)” (p. 73).

The same adjective may be applied to Schaefer’s writing. He reveals important insights into the significance of his study and makes suggestions for further research. Among the former is the interesting point that most of the block printed amulets include qur’anic passages “and are thus the *earliest printed Qur’ān* passages by several hundred years” (emphasis in original, p. 38). The book is tightly edited with only the most minor of copyediting errors. Following the catalog of amulets is provided a hand list of the same items plus a few pieces which had been held by museums and libraries in the United States and Europe but cannot be located at this time. The hand list includes a briefer description of each print and references to any previous publication on it. The thorough study with its absorbing introductory material does indeed serve as an invaluable collocation of that which is known about Arabic block prints, and as an inspiration for further research. Though the price will give any buyer pause, it is an important addition to any Middle Eastern collection and may also be valuable to Library and Information Studies libraries.

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*Daughters of the Nile: Photographs of Egyptian Women's Movements, 1900–1960.* Edited by Hind Wassef and Nadia Wassef. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2001. Pp. 176. Bibliography. Paperback. \$24.50. ISBN: 977-424-602-0.

Hind Wassef is involved in research on violence against women. Her interests include gender issues and education. Nadia Wassef, author of many books, is an independent researcher on gender issues. Her activism and research cover a range of issues including histories of women's movements and organization, masculinity and violence against women. This bilingual book, entitled *Banāt al-Nīl* in Arabic, is designed by Wafaa Ismail.

*Daughters of the Nile*, published by AUC Press, comprises twelve sections: Acknowledgments, p. ix – Foreword by Marie Assaad, Aida Guindy, and Aziza Hussein, p. xi – Introduction, p. 1 – Pioneering Women, p. 16 – Feminists Making History, p. 47 – In the Service of the Nation, p. 62 – The Women's Press Reaches Out, p. 83 – Collective Initiatives, p. 88 – Women on the Campaign Trail, p. 109 – Gatherings and Celebrations, p. 122 – Departures, p. 131 – Women Taking Action, p. 140 – Bibliography, p. 153.

*Daughters of the Nile* is the first book to provide photographic documentation of Egyptian women's movements during the first half of the twentieth century. It is a compilation of archival photographs of key figures in the movements, demonstrations, election campaigns, different sorts of women's activism and women pioneers.

The majority of the pictures, originally published in magazines and journals, are compiled to illustrate the story of women's movements more fully. The knowledge provided by this collection of photographs enriches our understanding of women's movements and will act as a model for the future generations.

To familiarize the reader with the book, I shall describe here few examples of these photographs: There are beautiful pictures of Hudá Sharāwī and the Star of the Orient (Kawkab al-Sharq) better known as Umm Kulthūm, in the early years of their careers. There is a photo of Gertrude Labib Nasim working in her chemistry lab. She is one of the first Egyptian women to hold a Ph.D. degree in chemistry. There is a good picture of Durrīyah Fahmī during one of her many broadcasts on music and French literature for the BBC in Egypt. Also young 'Ā'ishah 'Abd al-Raḥmān as Bint al-Shāṭi' (Daughter of the Shore) who entered Cairo University's faculty of arts and then did her M.A. degree

in 1941 and obtained her Ph.D. in 1950. The authors should have written more about her life: Bint al-Shāṭiḥ was not her real name; a woman in Egypt at that time was not supposed to be a writer, philosopher, and literary critic. That is why she had to use a pseudonym. She wrote her own autobiography: *‘Ala al-jisr bayna al-ḥayāh wa-al-mawt: sīrah dhātīyah*. Cairo, 1967. Reprinted 1986. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān portrayed her life in ten chapters describing her entire life from birth until her imaginary death. In total she authored more than sixty books. *Daughters of the Nile/Banāt al-Nīl* should be read in conjunction with the written histories of the Egyptian women’s movements. This work would have been easier to consult if it had an index of the pictures.

AUC Press did an excellent job in the production of *Daughters of the Nile*. It is elegant, artistic, and easy-to-handle kind of a book. This collection stresses the diversity of women’s struggles: right to vote, education and women’s participation in the Egyptian political struggle. I conclude by quoting the dedication of this book: ”In celebration of those who created these images, those who see themselves in them and those who will produce more in the future”.

SALWA FERAHIAN

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How Can We Watch the Film With Sand in Our Eyes: A Round Up of Current Middle Eastern Feature Film on DVDs. Part 1: The Turks Are Coming! The Turks Are Coming!

As I am sure everyone is aware, in the past 2–3 years there has been a veritable flood of films, both new releases and classics, available to us, most with English subtitles. It is hard for the non-film specialist, especially laboring under budgetary constraints as we all are, to know what to consider adding to the collection. This brief round up is conceived as a quick guide for the perplexed on this subject. It has no claim to be either comprehensive or authoritative. It represents the experience and tastes of the author, who has organized regular series of Middle Eastern films since 2001 at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA, at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, and for the past few years at Stanford University, is part of the selection board of the Arab Film Festival in San Francisco, and is a frequent watcher, thinker, lecturer and writer on the subject. Please forgive me if I have slighted your personal favorite.

Some suggestions for easy, reliable, inexpensive sources for these films: Turkish films—[www.tulumba.com](http://www.tulumba.com)

**Turkish film** is, in my opinion, the next big thing for world cinema. The productions are up to Hollywood standards in every way, and they exhibit a creativity unmatched in any other cinema outside of Europe proper. I omit here the works of Yılmaz Güney (*Yöl*), Nuri Bilge Ceylan (*Uzak*) and Zeki Demirkubuz (*İtiraf*, *Masumiyet*). These directors are well enough known in the West, and all of their available films are essential for a collection.

#### Recent Must Haves:

*Kurtlar Vadisi Irak* (Serdar Akar, 2006) — the movie the American right doesn't want you to see; a spin-off of the hit TV series, this more than an action flick is a cultural icon in Turkey

*G.O.R.A. (A space movie)* (Ömer Faruk Sorak, 2004) — fantastic sci fi spoof with the brilliant comedian Cem Yılmaz

*Organize İşler* (Yılmaz Erdoğan, 2005) — a modern master strikes again

*İki Genç Kız* (Kutluğ Ataman, 2005) — captivating film about women's relationships, props to veteran actress Hülya Avşar

*Duvara Karşı* (also known as *Gegen die Wand*) (Fatih Akin, 2004) — gritty Turks in Germany

*Anlat İstanbul* (various directors, 2005) — symphony of a great city  
*Meleğin Düşüşü* (Semih Kaplanoğlu, 2005) — new director, think "Uzak"

*Yazı Tura* (Uğur Yücel, 2004) — new hot director, about two soldiers returning from the army to a life of disillusionment, and psychological scarring

#### Classics (Must Haves):

*Vizontele* (Yılmaz Erdoğan, 1997)

*Eşkiya* (Yavuz Turgul, 1996) with Şener Şen

*Tabutta Rövaşata* (Derviş Zaim, 1996)

*Ağır Roman* (Mustafa Altıoklar, 1997)

*Bir Kadının Anatomisi* (Yavuz Özkan, 1995)

*Balalayka* (Ali Özgentürk, 2001)

*Güneşe Yolculuk* (Yeşim Ustaoglu, 1999)

**Gems, Small but Notable:**

*Bulutları Beklerken* (Yeşim Ustaoğlu, 2004) — art film

*Hırsız Var!* (Oğuzhan Tercan, 2005) — fantastic new comedy with a gay hero

*Herşey Çok Güzel Olacak* (Ömer Vargı, 1998) — great comedy with Cem Yılmaz

*Mustafa Hakkında Herşey* (Çağan Irmak, 2004) — modern film noir, think Memento

*Kalbin Zamanı* (Ali Özgentürk, 2005) — great psychological thriller à la Hitchcock by this veteran director

*Hababam Sınıfı Merhaba* (Kartal Tibet, 2004) — a revival of the classic comedy series

*Gönül Yarası* (Yavuz Turgul, 2004) — a finely crafted film with a great cast

*Karpuz Kabuğundan Gemiler Yapmak* (Ahmet Uluçay, 2004) — art film, think Nuri Bilge Ceylan

*Kaç Para Kaç* (Reha Erdem, 1999) — another fine Turkish film noir

*Oğul* (Durul ve Yağmur Taylan, 2004) — a Turkish take on the high school horror genre

*Filler ve Çimen* (Derviş Zaim, 2001) — anything by this director is worth having

*O Şimdi Asker* (Mustafa Altıoklar, 2003) — excellent comedy

*Neredesin Firuze* (Ezel Akay, 2004) — stylish musical comedy

*İmam* (İsmail Güneş, 2005) — not a great flick, but worth having as an example of how Islam is permeating Turkish popular culture these days

*Vizontele Tuuba* (Yılmaz Erdoğan, 2004) — surprisingly good sequel to the original (see above)

*Yara* (Yılmaz Arslan, 1998) — arty German-Turkish film

*Filler ve Çimen* (Derviş Zaim, 2001) — anything by this director is worth having

*İstanbul Hatırası* (Fatih Akın, 2005) — symphony of a great city version 2

*Beyza'nın Kadınları* (Mustafa Altıoklar, 2005) — psychological thriller

*Şellale* (Semir Aslanyürek, 2001) — acting tour-de-force from veteran Hülya Koçyâğıt

*Türev* (Ulaş İnaç, 2004) — arty, new hot director, good debut

**Box Office Fodder (avoid):**

*Sinema Bir Mucizedir* (Tunç Başaran, 2004)

*Güle Güle* (Zeki Ökten, 2000)

*Gönderilmemiş Mektuplar* (Yusuf Kurçenli, 2003)

*Nihavent Mucize* (Atif Yılmaz, 1997)

*İnşaat* (Ömer Vargı, 2003)

*Kahpe Bizans* (Gani Müjde, 1999)

*Komser Şekspir* (Sinan Çetin, 2001)

*Propaganda* (Sinan Çetin, 1999)

*Banyo* (Mustafa Altıoklar, 2005)

*Yeşil Işık* (Faruk Aksoy, 2002)

*Hemşo* (Ömer Uğur, 2003)

*İstanbul Kanatlarının Altında* (Mustafa Altıoklar, 1996)

*Film Bitti* (Yavuz Özkan, 1990)

There are also an incredible array of classic Turkish films from the 1950s–1980s available in VCD format. These are useful for researchers/serious scholars, but somewhat less useful for the general academic community, as they lack subtitles and are usually poor quality transfers.

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How Can We Watch the Film With Sand in Our Eyes: A Round Up of Current Middle Eastern Feature Film on DVDs. Part 2: Egyptian Films: Hollywood on the Nile and After.

As I am sure everyone is aware, in the past 2–3 years there has been a veritable flood of films, both new releases and classics, available to us, most with English subtitles. It is hard for the non-film specialist, especially laboring under budgetary constraints as we all are, to know what to consider adding to the collection. This brief round up is conceived as a quick guide for the perplexed on this subject. It has no claim to

be either comprehensive or authoritative. It represents the experience and tastes of the author, who has organized regular series of Middle Eastern films since 2001 at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA, at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, and for the past few years at Stanford University, is part of the selection board of the Arab Film Festival in San Francisco, and is a frequent watcher, thinker, lecturer and writer on the subject. Please forgive me if I have slighted your personal favorite.

Some suggestions for easy, reliable, inexpensive sources for these films: Egyptian films — [www.fineartfilm.com](http://www.fineartfilm.com) Also, Arab Film Distribution (AFD) ([www.arabfilm.com](http://www.arabfilm.com)) has two series of Egyptian film classics that are a good place to start.

**Egyptian film** has a long, proud history. From the 1940s through the 1960s, the Egyptian cinema was the dominant one in the Arab world, and rightly enjoyed a high reputation as the Hollywood on the Nile. Since the 1970s though, like the economy and society that sustains it, it has undergone a slow decline. Most of the current films from Egypt are box office fodder with production values that are no where near Hollywood standards. The Egyptians, however, are proud of their contributions to world cinema, and are hungry for recognition. This is good for us as collectors, because it means that many of the Egyptian classics are available on DVD, in formats friendly to American use, with English subtitles. It is bad for us as collectors, because the market is also flooded with similar DVDs of the latest Egyptian films, most of which are only worth adding to a collection of representatives of the current decline of Hollywood on the Nile. I will omit the films of Yūsuf Shāhīn. His work is so outstanding and well known in the West. It should be part of any collection of world cinema. Note: I have given English titles as the films are most easily located in dealers' catalogs this way.

#### **Hollywood on the Nile (Must Haves):**

There are so many of these. I will group them by notable stars or directors. In the interest of economy, I will list what I consider the best available films from these artists, although all of their works are worth having.

Farīd al-Aṭrash (Farid El Atrache) and Samia Gamal (Sāmiyah Gamāl) — these are prime examples of the film musical, a genre that the Egyptians brought to its highest accomplishment ever outside of Hollywood.

*Don't Tell Anyone* (1952, directed by the man who was the Egyptian film industry in himself Henri Barakat)

*The Last Lie* (1950, directed by the finest musical director Aḥmad Badrakhān)

*Of Course I Love You* (1949, Aḥmad Badrakhān)

*Afrita Hanem* (1950, directed by Henri Barakat)

*Time Oh Love* (1974, directed by ʿĀṭif Sālīm (Atef Salem), an autumnal tour-de-force by Farid El Atrash)

ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ḥāfiẓ — a later 1960s development in musical films

*The Sins* (1962, directed by the master Ḥasan al-Imām)

*Street of Love* (directed by ʿIzz al-Dīn Dhū al-Fiḡār with actor Sabāḥ)

*Song of Loyalty* (directed by Ḥasan ʿImārah, with Shādiyah)

*My Father is in the Tree* (1969, directed by Ḥusayn Kamāl, one of the greatest Egyptian musicals)

Umm Kulthūm — (nuff said)

*Fatma* (1947, directed by Aḥmad Badrakhān)

*Dananeer* (1940, directed by Aḥmad Badrakhān)

*Wedad* (1936, directed P. Kramp and Jamāl Madkūr)

Farīd Shawqī (the drama/action star of the 1950s)

*The Charmer* (1958, directed by comedy master Faṭīn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb)

Omar Sharif:

*A Man in Our House* (1961, directed by Henri Barakat, story by Iḥsān ʿAbd al-Qaddūs)

*Struggle on the Nile* (1959, directed by ʿĀṭif Sālīm, with two other greats—Hind Rustum and Rushdī Abāzah)

*Date with the Unknown* (1958, with Samia Gamal, directed by ʿĀṭif Sālīm—it just doesn't get any better than this!)

*Rumor of Love* (1959, directed Faṭīn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, great comedy with Suʿād Ḥusnī)

Drama Queens: Suʿād Ḥusnī and Fāṭīn Ḥammāmāh

*Sleepless* (1957, directed by master Ṣalāḥ Abū Sayf)

*The Open Door* (1963, directed by Henri Barakat, social commentary)

*Hasan and Naima* (directed by Barakat)

*Insatiable* (1969, directed by the Egyptian Hitchcock, Kamāl al-Shaykh)

*Something of Desire* (a psychological drama masterpiece, directed by Ṣalāḥ Abū Sayf)

Ismāʿīl Yāsīn (THE funny man)

*The Inspector General* (1957, with dancer-actress Taḥīya Kāriyūkā, directed by comedy/musical master Ḥilmī Raflah)

*Ismail Yasin For Sale* (1959, directed Ḥusām al-Dīn Muṣṭafá)

*Hasan and Marika* (1959, with ʿAbd al-Salām al-Nābulṣī)

*Ibn Hamido* (1957, with Hind Rustum)

Rushdī Abāzāh (The heart-throb)

*Wife No. 13* (1962, classic comedy with Shādiyāh, directed by Fāṭīn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb)

*The Three Prisoners* (1968, directed by Ḥusām al-Dīn Muṣṭafá, with steamy Shams al-Bārūdī)

*The Bad Guys* (1970, directed by Ḥusām al-Dīn Muṣṭafá, with sexy Nāhid Sharīf)

#### **Other Classic Must-Haves:**

*Everything is All Right* (1937, with Nagīb al-Riḥānī, early comedy masterpiece)

*Chased by Dogs* (1962, directed by Kamāl al-Shaykh from a story by Nagīb Maḥfūz)

*Love and Revenge* (1944, with the brilliant Asmahān, and director/writer/star Yūsuf Wahbī)

*Shore of Love* (1950, directed by Barakat, with Leila Murād, a musical legend)

*Glass and a Cigarette* (1955, directed Niyāzī Muṣṭafá, a star dramatic turn for Samia Gamal)

#### **Twilight in Hollywood (The 1970–80s: Must Haves):**

Aḥmad Zakī (the new dramatic action hero)

*The Addict* (1983, directed Yūsuf Fransīs, social drama)

ʿĀdil Imām (the new funny man)

*We Are the Bus People* (1979, directed by Ḥusayn Kamāl, biting political satire)

*Al-Halfoot* (1985, directed by master Samīr Sayf, social drama)

*Some Marriages Don't Last* (1978, social satire with Nūr al-Sharīf, Mīrvat Amin)

*Forbidden on the Wedding Night* (1976, directed by Ḥasan al-Sayfi)

*Naughty Husbands* (1977, with Nāhid Sharīf)

Najlā Fathī (the new drama queen)

*Remember Me* (1978, directed Barakat, with Maḥmūd Yāsīn)

*Foolish Love* (1977, directed by melodrama king Nādir Jalāl, with heart throb Ḥusayn Fahmī)

*My Blood, My Tears & My Smile* (1973, directed by Ḥusayn Kamāl, with Nūr al-Sharīf; story by Iḥsān 'Abd al-Qaddūs)

**Other Must-Haves from the 1970s-80s:**

*Where is My Mind?* (1974, with Su'ād Ḥusnī, directed by dramatic master 'Āṭif Sālim)

*Word of Honor* (1972, with Hind Rustum and Aḥmad Maḥzar)

*The Bullet is Still in my Pocket* (1974, a landmark film of the 1967 war)

*Karnak* (1975, a milestone film in its depiction of the crimes of Nasser's security forces)

*Chit Chat on the Nile* (1971, directed by master Ḥusayn Kamāl, with an ensemble cast of virtual who's-who of Egypt best character actors)

*Woman with a Bad Reputation* (1973, directed Barakat, social drama, with Shams al-Bārūdī)

*M Empire* (1972, directed Ḥusayn Kamāl, socially conscious comedy with Fāṭin Ḥammāmah)

DAVID GIOVACCHINI

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*Modern Iraqi Arabic with MP3 files : A Textbook.* By Yasin M. Alkalesi. Second Edition. Washington, D.C. : Georgetown University Press, 2006. Pp. x, 344. Glossary. \$49.95 (Hardcover w/CD). ISBN 1-58901-130-9 / 978-1-58901-130-4.

It seems that Arabic language textbooks come in two flavors—really awful and really spectacular. I'm pleased to report that Yasin M. Alkalesi's *Modern Iraqi Arabic with mp3 files* fits the latter category.

I approached *Modern Iraqi Arabic* with a smattering of Iraqi dialect under my belt taught in the classroom at Diplomatic Language Services (Reston, VA), as well as a short stint in Iraq in 1990/1991. I found the explanations given in this work of phonetic and semantic differences between Iraqi dialect and Modern Standard Arabic to be clear and easily understood. The mechanics of the book are well laid out, beginning with an introduction, a note on the transliteration system used (more on this later), and a note on the arrangement of the lessons. Like most language-learning textbooks, this piece starts easy, with lessons on pronunciation and simple greetings, then works up to more complex sentences. The lessons are situational, from a trip to Babylon (Lesson 12), to medical care (Lesson 17). There are a total of 20 lessons (four new since the first edition.) This second edition contains Arabic script as well, a shortcoming of the first edition.

The lessons are divided into component parts, with basic dialogue followed by additional expressions, vocabulary, grammar, and finally drills and exercises. These are well written and easy to follow. Subsequent lessons build upon vocabulary and syntax learned in previous lessons.

The included audio CD contains mp3 files for each section of the lessons. While they are not organized into subdirectories on the CD, each mp3 file is clearly labeled with its lesson number and section title. The spoken Iraqi dialect Arabic is clear, well enunciated, and easily understandable.

The transliteration system used by the author I found to be somewhat difficult to use. In my twenty one years of experience as a student of Arabic, I have never been confronted with this system, based according to the author's notes on the arrangement of the book, "on the system used in the *The Concise Encyclopædia of Islam*, p. 7, by C. Glassé." The main culprit of confusion is the appearance of the number nine (9) standing in for the letter *ayn*. In addition, the transliteration system appears to be based on the sounds formed rather than on a straight letter-for-letter basis. For example, *lil-siyāṣah* is transliterated *lis-siyāṣah*, showing the elision of the letter *ṣīn*. For someone learning this transliteration system first, it would not be too challenging, but for me, I found it difficult to adapt.

To conclude, this 344 page work clearly covers the syntactic and phonetic variances found in the Iraqi dialect. The situations chosen by the author are comprehensive and cover a wide range of scenarios

in which a traveler might find him or herself. An attempt is made to expose the reader to Iraqi folklore and culture through the selected scenarios, additional notes included in the lessons, and the illustrations that accompany the chapters. All in all, this is a work that encompasses all that is needed for a beginning student of Arabic to learn the basics of the Iraqi dialect, or for a student already practiced in Arabic to convert to Iraqi dialect.

JONATHAN HOPWOOD

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*A Dictionary of Syrian Arabic: English-Arabic: English-Arabic.* By Karl Stowasser and Moukhtar Ani, editors; foreword by Elizabeth M. Bergman. Georgetown Classics in Arabic Language and Linguistics, Karin C. Ryding and Margaret Nydell series editors. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2004. Pp. xxv, 269. ISBN 1-58901-105-8. )Paperback) \$39.50.

Originally published in 1964 as part of a series produced by the federally funded Arabic Research Program at Georgetown University, *A Dictionary of Syrian Arabic* has been reissued as one of the titles in the Georgetown Classics in Arabic Language and Linguistics series. The Arabic Research Program series admirably strived to provide “practical tools for the increasing number of Americans whose lives bring them into contact with the Arab world” (vii). Recent events have only accelerated the need for useful references and texts for this purpose, though it is perhaps surprising that a work published over forty years ago continues to hold a significant place among Arabic dialectal dictionaries.

The dictionary is based on the spoken language of educated Damascenes that has more in common with the dialects of urban Beirut and Jerusalem, than with those of rural Syria or employed by Syrian Bedouins. The dialect in Arabic, the editors note, is the accepted means of oral communication, an instance of diglossia wherein the written language must be acquired through education, although it is perceived as the model of Arabic language.

In their exemplary introduction, the editors begin by revealing the importance that the “profound social upheaval” of the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century has had on language through modernization and the expansion of universal education, and likewise the spread and influence of the media. They found a “remarkable and far reaching socio-linguistic

phenomenon: the blurring of the line between dialect and written language and the emergence of a spoken idiom containing so many features of written Arabic that it can almost be called a third language” (xiii). Following this statement are examples of these variants that illustrate this conclusion.

The introduction next discusses the organization of the dictionary’s entries by parts of speech categories: nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Sound and broken plurals of nouns are noted; for adjectives only the broken plurals are provided. The verbs, as is usual, are presented in perfect tense third person singular masculine. First form trilateral verbs are succeeded by the imperfect tense stem vowel, verbal noun(s) and the passive. Verb forms II–X only have the passive represented.

Transcription practices used in the dictionary are succinctly described in corresponding columns: the transcription letter symbol; the symbol’s pronunciation details, often with English equivalents; and, the Arabic script letter. Conventions of this particular system are the use of ‘?’ (? minus the period) for the ‘*hamzah*’/glottal stop; ‘q̣’ for the ‘*qāf*’; and what appears to be a handwritten ‘*ayn*’ for its Arabic equivalent. The editors also note significant characteristics of the colloquial language, such as the elimination of the classical interdental spirants (*thā*, *dhāl* and *zā*), the “helping vowel” akin to the ‘*ə*’ and the current use of the classical ‘*qāf*’ in some words.

The preface concludes with clear descriptions of the essential characteristics of spoken Syrian Arabic: velarization, the important distinction between long and short sounds, accentuation and assimilation. A clear understanding of these features and careful attention to the pronunciation instructions given sufficiently prepares an American speaker to successfully tackle the dialect.

The entries and subentries, numbering approximately 15,000, and defined by both synonyms and useful contextual examples, are as neatly produced as they were forty years ago, no revision having been made to the text or content. While the reprinting of this dictionary is significant as no later works have truly supplanted it, nor has it been out of print, it is unfortunate that the current publishers did not take the opportunity to update the content to account for inexorable global changes in communication, technology, the environment and the political realities of Arabic speaking world, to name a few of the most obvious areas that are reflected in everyday vocabulary. It would also be a worthy aspiration for the Georgetown program to realize the goal of the original

series editor, Richard S. Harrell whose untimely death prevented the completion of the work, to produce the complementary Arabic-English dictionary of Syrian Arabic.

For travelers seeking out a handy dictionary to use on their journey to Syria, this volume is not a pocket sized reference; but for students and users of the spoken language, this rigorously accurate work will be useful for accessing standard, if not recently coined, vocabulary. As with other titles in this reprint series, if your library already owns a serviceable copy of this work, it is not necessary to acquire this one.

KRISTEN KERN

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*The Top 1,000 Words for Understanding Media Arabic.* By Elisabeth Kendall. Washington, D.C. : Georgetown University Press, 2005. Pp. 90. ISBN-10: 158901068X. ISBN-13: 978-1589010680. \$11.95 (paperback).

This short book attempts to present the most common and/or important vocabulary needed to understand "Media Arabic," the language of printed and broadcast news. The vocabulary is organized into eight lists, each treating one of the following categories: general, politics, elections, military, economics, trade and industry, law and order, and disaster and aid. One must not expect too much from this book however. It contains no grammatical notes, or texts containing the vocabulary items, nor does the book provide sentences using the terms and phrases in context. Each Arabic item is printed on the left side with the English translation (or equivalent term) on the right. The introduction suggests that "this book is best used in conjunction with Julia Ashtiany's excellent *Media Arabic*," but the vocabulary lists do not correspond to the texts or exercises in that book. One must do a lot of individual work to use the two books together effectively, and because the terms and phrases are not alphabetized in Arabic or English, and there is no index, one cannot use this book as a glossary for easy reference. The author considers alphabetical order an impediment to memorization, so one is expected to use the book as a learning tool rather than as a reference source.

This difficulty of use leads one to question the manner in which Georgetown University Press is promoting this book. The back cover, for example, asks the questions “What is the Arabic term for ‘suicide bombing’? What phrase would be used to describe ‘peace-keeping forces’ in the Arab media? Or ‘economic sanctions’?” If one were to see this book in a bookstore, or library, one might be tempted to purchase or borrow this book based on the teaser questions, but as this book is not a dictionary, it might require flipping throughout the entire book to answer these questions.

Nevertheless, the choice of vocabulary items is good and contemporary and should meet the needs of the intermediate student and above. The cost is not prohibitive, \$11.95, but perhaps more than what one should expect for vocabulary lists. Moreover, the paperback binding may not be suitable for extensive use. If one is seeking a reference source, the *Interpreter’s Thematic Dictionary* by Hussein Abdul-Raof, published by Librairie du Liban in 2005 might better serve that need. It seems to cover the same vocabulary items as Kendall’s book, but in a dictionary format. For the student wishing to learn and expose him/herself to the vocabulary of the Arab media however, the book under review might be more suitable, though it may become obsolete within a few years.

SHELTON HENDERSON

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*History of Printing and Publishing in the Languages and Countries of the Middle East.* Edited by Philip Sadgrove. *Journal of Semitic Studies* ; supplement 15. [Oxford ; New York] : Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the University of Manchester, 2004, c2005. Pp. vi, 209. \$15.95 (Paperback) ISBN: 0198568754

The title is slightly misleading. This book is neither “a” history nor “the” history of printing and publishing in the languages and countries of the Middle East. Rather, this volume consists of 13 papers from a symposium held at the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz, Germany, September 8–13, 2002, as part of the first World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies. The papers treat a wide range of topics, and it is a bit of a stretch for the editor to suggest a common theme among them (as evidenced by the broad title).

The volume begins with Cheng-Hsiang Hsu's "A Survey of Arabic-character Publications Printed in Egypt during the Period of 1238–1267 (1822–1851)" after a short preface by Philip Sadgrove, the editor. Olympiada P. Scheglova next discusses "The Repertoire of Books in Persian Published Lithographically in Turkestan during 1883–1917." In "TULLIP: A Projected Thesaurus Universalis Libri Lithographici Illustrati Persorum," Ulrich Marzolph writes about a projected union catalog of illustrated Persian lithographed books. Then Nedret Kuran-Burçoğlu considers "Osman Zeki Bey and His Printing Office the *Matbaa-i Osmaniye*." The Turkish press based in London, but produced for the Istanbul public is the topic of Christiane Czygan's "From London back to Istanbul: The Channel of Communication of the Young Ottoman Journal *Hürriyet* (1868–1870)." Ami Ayalon follows with "The Beginnings of Publishing in pre-1948 Palestine," and René Wildangel explores "The Emergence of the Public: Arab Palestinian Media in British Mandate Palestine 1929–1945: Arab Palestinian History and the Arab Press as a Neglected Subject." In "Why Did Baghdadi Jews Stop Writing to their Brethren in Mainz?—Some Comments about the Reading Practices of Iraqi Jews in the Nineteenth Century," Orit Bashkin investigates the Hebrew and Judeo-Arabic presses and the reading habits of Iraqi Jews in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, not only in Iraq, but also in Europe, India, and Palestine, and the eventual decline of those presses and replacement by an Arabic one. Next, Geoffrey Roper treats "Arabic Books Printed in Malta 1826–42: Some Physical Characteristics," and Heather J. Sharkey "Christian Missionaries and Colloquial Arabic Printing." Philip Sadgrove then discusses "The Press: Engine of a Mini-Renaissance in Zanzibar (1860–1920)." Relli Shechter adds "From Journalism to Promotion of Goods: Why and How Did Press Publishers Establish Advertising Agencies in Egypt, 1890–1939?" Finally, Huda Smitshuijzen AbiFarès concludes with "Arabic Typography: Call for a Cultural Rebirth."

Because of the diverse subject matter covered in the book, most research libraries would find this volume a welcome addition to their collection. It is not expensive and should not require rebinding, though it is a paperback. The book is nicely printed, and most of the articles have good illustrations, some in color. Readers should have no trouble finding something of interest within the pages, and if s/he is interested in researching one of the topics further, most of the contributions have footnotes (rather than bibliographies) with bibliographical references.

SHELTON HENDERSON

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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*Al-Qurʾān: A Contemporary Translation.* By Ahmed Ali. Bilingual. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2001. 9<sup>th</sup> paperback ed., newly comprising revisions last made by the author. Pp. 572. Notes and index. ISBN 0691074992.

Translations are always problematic, especially so when they involve a text as difficult, nuanced and charged as the Qurʾan. Indeed, it has been argued that creating a translation that conveys the meaning of the text for a non-Arabic speaking audience is impossible. Indeed, to borrow a phrase from the title of A.R. Khidwai's masterful survey article of English Quranic translations, it can be considered tantamount to "Translating the untranslatable". Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall echoes this sentiment in the foreword to his translation of 1930: "... The Qurʾan cannot be translated. ... The book is here rendered almost literally and every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the Glorious Qurʾan, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy. It is only an attempt to present the meaning of the Qurʾan—and peradventure something of the charm in English. It can never take the place of the Qurʾan in Arabic, nor is it meant to do so ..." However, since fewer than 20 percent of the world's Muslims know Arabic, not to mention the millions of non-Muslims who come to the Qurʾan seeking an understanding of Islam, which seems increasingly at odds with their own faiths and civilizations, attempts continue to render a useful, correct English translation. Indeed, no fewer than three new(ish) English translations of the Qurʾan have been made available or re-available to the public recently through scholarly presses. (The work here under consideration, as well as Majid Fakhry's *An Interpretation of the Qurʾan:*

*English translations of its meanings* (NY: New York Univ. Press, 2002), and M.A.S. Abdel Haleem's *The Qur'an: A New Translation* (NY : Oxford University Press, 2004.)

There are of course, many older translations still extant against which new works must be judged, and most scholars, including this writer, have one (or more) which has become a trusted favorite. Before we see how Ahmed Ali's work matches up, allow me to admit my preference for the translation of Yusuf Ali (*The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary*, first printing 1934). In my opinion, the Qur'an can only be truly understood if it is read in conjunction with the other Islamic literature like the *tafsirs* and *hadith*, which elucidate its meanings. These texts all refer and interact with each other to form a complex tapestry of belief. Any attempt to separate the Qur'an from this supporting literature inevitably leads to distortion and misunderstandings. Yusuf Ali's translation with its copious notes is the only available work which attempts to provide some part of these essential background texts. Further, any translation, again especially of a text like the Qur'an, is essentially a interpretation. Yusuf Ali has provided in his notes the grounding from the Islamic tradition for the meaning his translation has given to the Qur'anic text. Of course, Muslim writers have sometimes criticized Yusuf Ali for his choice of noted commentary texts, but that is to be expected given the divergence of opinion on the meaning of the Qur'an within Islam itself. Indeed, he has been labeled both too Sufi and paradoxically a Saudi/Wahhabi apologist! Perhaps a greater criticism for non-Muslim users is that Yusuf Ali's translation is not elegant or easily understandable, instead employing an obtuse, convoluted, archaic English style.

Ahmed Ali (1910–1994), Pakistani novelist, poet, critic and diplomat has sought to present in this translation (first published in the US in 1988) “a translation, not an interpretation, theological or otherwise”, and his success in this task is such that in the words of Dr. F. E. Peters of New York University: “Ahmed Ali's work is clear, direct, and elegant—a combination of stylistic virtues almost never found in translations of the Qur'an. His is the best I have read.” He has, however, almost totally eschewed providing any notes to explain or defend the meaning he has rendered from the text. Further, his translation has been criticized in Muslim circles for being too liberal and rational. Khidwai in his article “English translation of the Holy Qur'an: An Annotated Bibliography (<http://alhafeez.org/rashid/qtranslate.html>)” notes that it “con-

tains unorthodox, apologetic and pseudo-rationalistic views on the hell, stoning of Abraha's army, the Tree, the Verses II:73, 248 and 282, III:49 and IV:01." Also, Khaleel Muhammad, writing in the *Middle East Quarterly*, ("Assessing English Translations of the Quran", Spring 2005) found that Ali's rationalism has led him to downplay fantastical narratives, many drawn from Torah or Christian sources, and so to distort the Biblical underpinnings of the Quran. He declares,

"In dealing, for example, with the Qur'anic version of Moses's anger at the Jews for worshipping the golden calf, he translates the [f]'*aqtulū anfusakum* [Qur. 2:54] as 'kill your pride' rather than the literal 'kill yourselves' which is how it also appears in Exodus 32:27. The Qur'anic retelling and reliance on the Biblical narrative to demonstrate the seriousness of idol worship is thus lost . . . 'Ali also seeks to downplay Christian parallels within the Qur'an. He translates Jesus's speech in 3:49 as, 'I will fashion the state of destiny out of mire for you, and breathe (a new spirit) into it, and (you) will rise by the will of God.' The literal translation is, 'I will fashion from you, from clay, the likeness of a bird, and will breathe unto it; and by God's will it will fly.' Ali's footnote does not acknowledge that the Qur'anic view parallels the Gospel of Thomas. These departures from the literal portrayal of events from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament are important because they might lead lay readers to miss the Qur'anic imperative to seek the history of the prophets from the earlier scriptures."

This only serves to make clear the fact that any translation is essentially an interpretation of the text by the translator. It must render text, and meaning from one language context to another. In the case of the Qur'an, a translation's grounding in Islamic tradition, medieval or modern, must be provided for the reader in notes. This is an essential part of the translator's task. Unless seeking to create a poetical work as Arberry was in his masterpiece, we as readers must know on what authority other than his own (again modern or medieval) the translator has attached sometimes elusive meaning to the often obscure text. Ahmed Ali cannot escape this. I am not ready to give up my Yusuf Ali just yet.

DAVID GIOVACCHINI

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*The Arabic Language and National Identity: A Study in Ideology.*  
By Yasir Suleiman. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press,  
2003. 288 pages. Bibliography, index. \$24.95 (paperback) ISBN: 0-  
87840-395-7.

Yasir Suleiman, Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Edinburgh University, here attempts to fill what he sees as two gaps in the literature, producing a work of Arabic sociolinguistics that will focus on ideology rather than quantitative measures, and an analysis of the role of language attitudes in nationalism drawn specifically from the Arab case. The book is in seven chapters: besides an explicit introduction and a conclusion, it offers a basic exposition of nationalism theory, a run-through of traditional native attitudes to the Arabic language ('The Past Lives On'), a history of the rise of Arab self-consciousness in the final century of the Ottoman empire ('The Arabic Language Unites Us'), a longer analysis of the positions of two pan-Arabist theorists of this period, ('Arabic, First and Foremost') and a look at the role deemed right for Arabic in the territorial nationalism of three post-Ottoman states—Syria, Egypt and Lebanon.

Suleiman is conscious of two readerships for his book, with disjoint backgrounds, essentially political theorists and sociolinguists. So he begins the substance of the book by expounding the areas of knowledge which he thinks they lack, respectively theories of the nation and the attributes of a language community. In the former area, he distinguishes objective and subjective definitions of a nation, and also (orthogonal to this) the civic-political as against the cultural-ethnic criterion for nationhood. Objectively, a nation will be defined in terms of (some set of) territory, state, language and religion; subjectively, all that is required is national consciousness, the will to be a part of one. In the latter area, he offers guidance on the place of language in defining national identity, emphasizing Benedict Anderson's concept of a language as key to imagining the community of which one is a part. Situating Arabic within these different viewpoints is hard, not least because Suleiman is reluctant to pick one analytical framework and stick to it, and the book is never an easy read.

The simplest chapter, however, is the next one in which he draws out clearly a number of ways in which the language has traditionally been praised by its speakers, making them subjectively a highly language-centred community. These points, as quoted in Arabic maxims (e.g., "Adam is the master of men, . . . the master of birds is the eagle, the

chief of months is Ramadan, the chief of weekdays is Friday and Arabic is the master of speech.”), are so unabashedly vain and self-regarding that they draw attention to Suleiman’s resolution never to offer any judgement on how reasonable any of the nationalist claims he discusses may be. But the reader is left feeling that Arab nationalism must be very weakly based if such claims are simply promoted and accepted at face value, an implication which may be a disservice to the attentive student.

In the next chapter, Suleiman well shows how Arab linguistic nationalism arose in the same context as, and partly as a response to, the growing Turkish linguistic nationalism of their rulers in the declining decades of the Ottoman empire. Some of the unease generated by the previous chapter is relieved as one sees more objective origins of Arab linguistic nationalism: the Arabs notice the traditionally high prestige of their own language among Turks (which makes Turkic nationalism itself a struggle); they press for it to be accorded official status alongside Turkish—and failing that to urge fellow-Arabs at least to be language-conscious and keep up its use.

Suleiman then moves into a number case-studies of intellectual theorists of the status of Arabic, culminating in the language philosophies of two early twentieth-century thinkers of a pan-Arabist persuasion: al-Ḥuṣrī, which emphasizes in a highly convincing manner the importance of education in Arabic, both in increasing people’s capabilities and reinforcing their identification in terms of the language; and al-Arsūzī, who had a quasi-mystical view of the Arabic thought as expressed in its word-structure and sound-symbolism, but commanded very little credence.

These are contrasted with several more recent linguistically-oriented thinkers, dedicated to the nationalism of particular Arabic-speaking countries. The ambivalent status of Arabic as the native tongue for many non-Muslims, principally Christians, while still being Islam’s dedicated language, provides an important argument that one cannot identify Arabic community with the Muslim *umma*, or even the elite core of the *umma*. While the thinkers accept the unifying role of Arabic in their home countries, they are committed to finding the essential attributes of the nation elsewhere—e.g., in the territorial identity of Syria, in the pharaonic history of Egypt, in the bicultural (and bilingual) role of modern Lebanon. Or they may urge—especially in the case of Egypt, which has both the most divergent vernacular and the largest population—that their own spoken version may be given greater weight.

In general, these theorists of the political status quo have more moderate views on the overall significance of linguistic identity—although ‘Awad’s speculations about the Arabs’ primeval home in the Caucasus, to explain supposed deep similarities with Indo-European, strain credence historically as the early maxims did ethically.

The book ends with some reflexions on the Janus-like status of nationalism, which seeks to validate identities in a shared past of some sort, but always look to the prospects of a redeeming modernization in the future—a process which may involve revising out of existence some of those old commonalities.

One joy of the book for the foreign student of Arabic is the fact that Suleiman often cites (in romanized script) the original of various maxims that characterize the different theoretical positions. It has 17 pages of notes, 12 of (romanized) Arabic bibliography, and 10 of other languages. It is too full of ideas, or different sets of ideas, to have a clear point; yet it gives a sense of the variety of approaches to language, some extremely penetrating, devised to buttress the identities of the many peoples who came out of the Ottoman empire still speaking Arabic.

NICHOLAS OSTLER

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*Formal Spoken Arabic Basic Course with MP3 Files.* By Karin C. Ryding, David J. Mehall. Georgetown Classics in Arabic Language and Linguistics. 2nd edition. Georgetown University Press, 2005. Pp. 365 \$39.95. ISBN: 1589010604. LC: 2005040093

*Formal Spoken Arabic FAST Course with MP3 Files.* By Karin C. Ryding and Abdelnour Zaiback. Georgetown Classics in Arabic Language and Linguistics. Georgetown University Press, 2004. Pp. 222 (Includes 1 audio CD with MP3 files) \$39.95 ISBN: 1589011066. LC: 2004040881.

“Designed to provide beginners in Arabic with maximum linguistic and cultural exposure in a short period (about 100 hours of contact time), this book consists of 16 lessons with dialogues and exercises dealing with day-to-day scenarios—among them: greeting people, getting a taxi, making phone calls, asking directions, discussing the weather, and effectively communicating with police and duty officers. The lessons help the reader to navigate

situations at gas stations, marketplaces, restaurants, and in their own households.

“Originally created for diplomats, this is an expanded and enhanced edition of a work originally developed by the U.S. State Department as a six-week intensive, or FAST (“Familiarization and Short-Term”) course, and easily adaptable for students in Middle East area studies. Travelers heading for posts in the Arab world who quickly need to gain a basic ability to converse in day-to-day situations will find Formal Spoken Arabic FAST Course an invaluable companion.” (From the Publisher)

Formal Spoken Arabic (FSA) is a kind of *lingua franca* that is more natural than speaking Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the literary form of the language. FSA uses the shared features of the various urban colloquial dialects, defaulting to Levantine (terms common to Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan) where the spoken dialects diverge. Each lesson includes cultural notes on American-Arab interactions, notes on learner strategies for managing Arabic conversations with a limited amount of language, and grammar explanations in clear, non-technical language. Although the main dialogue for each lesson is presented in Arabic script, transcriptions are used to accelerate spoken performance. The FAST Course includes grammatical explanations, English-Arabic and Arabic-English glossaries, appendices listing common idioms, courtesy expressions and other useful terms, instructor’s notes, and drills aided and accompanied by the CD. A glance at the contents page is appropriate to get a bird’s eye view.

**Contents:** Lesson 1: Who are you? p. 1; Lesson 2: Taxi, p. 13; Lesson 3: On the phone, p. 27; Lesson 4: I need help, p. 41; Lesson 5: At the gas station, p. 51; Lesson 6: At the market place, p. 61; Lesson 7: At the restaurant, p. 71; Lesson 8: At an Arab home, p. 83; Lesson 9: Before the party, p. 95; Lesson 10: On the phone, p. 107; Lesson 11: Around the house, p. 121; Lesson 12: The duty officer, p. 133; Lesson 13: Weather and leisure time, p. 143; Lesson 14: Problems with the police, p. 157; App. I: Names of the months of the year, p. 171; App. II: Arabic names of government ministries, p. 172; App. III: Arab countries and their capital cities, p. 173; App. IV: Courtesy expressions & idioms of the Arab East, p. 174.

*Formal Spoken Arabic* is a very handy, integrated and updated learning tool. For those who plan to learn Arabic, this is an effective and authoritative source. And, this authoritativeness, the result of long experience in the field, lends strength to the book. The authors' professional approach is evident in the way they integrate the text and the audio-book and its companion CD-ROM to facilitate easy and quick comprehension.

However, the book would be even more effective if it offered the facility for teacher interaction, i.e., learning is not a one way process, anywhere and in any field. The book lacks alternative learning techniques, such as, questions and answers, quiz, answer key to the lessons, etc. This lack of interactiveness is a minor weakness of this publication.

Nevertheless, the authors might consider creating an online discussion forum and thereby build a communication bridge between the expert and the learners. The Internet has no dearth of such tools to facilitate adding value in the life-long learning process. This book is, then, primarily useful for formal education, both in individual and collective setting—and this is true because the book grew out of a class room environment. Thinking of such a class room, although informal, one recalls the once successful “Arabic by Radio” program from Radio Cairo. Radio Cairo had produced a textbook series to accompany its “Arabic by Radio” program. The student had this text in hand while the lessons were heard in English on the radio.

Understandably no language proficiency comes in a moment, and for that matter Arabic with its cultural, social and regional specifics, does demand more of the western student than what may be necessary in learning formal spoken English. In this context of attention, effort, and time, *Formal Spoken Arabic* may need the investment of a few extra weeks of learning time for any one to get the real benefits. Also, it is a good tool for those working in Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, and Lexicography.

MOHAMED TAHER

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*A Threat From Within: A Century of Jewish Opposition to Zionism.* By Yakov M. Rabkin. New York: Zed Books, 2006. (Originally published in French in 2004 as *Au nom de la Torah: une histoire de l'opposition juive au sionisme* by Les Presses de l'Université Laval). Pp. ix, 261. ISBN: 842776983.

As the second Palestinian Intifada broke out in the year 2000, and as Israeli repression of the uprising intensified, criticism of Israel's tactics inevitably grew. To counter the criticism, pro-Israeli supporters reverted to two basic strategies: non-Jewish critics were labeled anti-Semites, while Jewish critics such as Americans Noam Chomsky and Norman Finkelstein (whose parents were Holocaust survivors) and Israelis Ilan Pappé and Tanya Reinhart were labeled as "self-hating Jews" or "traitors".

As Yakov M. Rabkin, a professor of history at the University of Montreal specializing in the history of science and contemporary Jewish history, reveals in his highly recommended book *A Threat From Within: a Century of Jewish Opposition to Zionism* (which was originally written in French and translated into English very seamlessly by the author and Fred A. Reed), it is very difficult for pro-Israeli sympathizers to hurl the epithet of "self-hating Jew" at another group of critics of the Israeli state—a segment of the *haredim* or "strictly observant" Jews, who are usually referred to as "ultra-Orthodox." As Rabkin observes, this group of Jews, together with a fair number of liberal Reform Jews have virulently opposed Zionism since its inception as an ideology in the late nineteenth century. As the world has entered the twenty-first century (and as Israel veers towards being a failed state), Rabkin notes that these groups early criticisms of Zionism appear prescient, even prophetic.

Anti-Zionist Jewish religious groups consider Zionist ideology and practice to be fundamentally opposed to the doctrines of Judaism. The *haredim* consider Zionism to be a heresy and a violation of the promise made to God not to acquire the Holy Land by human effort, and they view the condition of exile as a divine decree visited upon the Jews as punishment for transgressions against the Torah. In the run-up to the establishment of Israel in 1948, anti-Zionist rabbis attempted to conclude separate agreements with the Arab leadership, and following the declaration of independence in 1948 they organized demonstrations under white flags. Needless to say, their views are totally contrary to the religious Jews (Rabkin calls them "National Religious") who have

allied with the Zionists and “recruited God” for military ends. For the *haredim*, the National Religious are accomplices to murder as they sanctify violence which has killed thousands.

Meanwhile, many Reform Jews as early as 1885 rejected all forms of Jewish nationalism, especially the Zionists’ conclusion that anti-Semitism was an inevitable fact of life for Jews everywhere. As Reform Jews stated: “The outlook of Reform Jews is the world. The outlook of Zionism is a tiny corner of western Asia.” As both Reform Jews and *haredim* have observed, the Zionists essentially agreed with anti-Semites on three key issues: Jews were not a religious group but a distinct nation; Jews could never integrate in any country in which they lived; and the solution to the Jewish problem was for the Jews to leave.

For the *haredim*, Zionism was simply one of the many secular nationalisms that came to dominate the twentieth century. Indeed, one of the early Zionist strategists, the Russian-born Vladimir Jabotinsky admired Mussolini (who reciprocated the admiration), while in the *haredim* view other Zionists adopted the language, the violent tactics, and the disregard for human life that typified the Bolsheviks.

Early Zionists specifically denounced the divine nature of the Torah, and while traditional Jewish religious identity has not delineated a common language or territory, language and territory became the fundamental principles of the newly-formed Jewish state. While the Torah required Jews to be bashful, merciful, compassionate and humble, the Zionists from the beginning substituted these values for those of strength, self-affirmation, egotism and combativeness.

In an important chapter, Rabkin outlines how the *haredim* and some Reform Jews condemn the appropriation and manipulation of the Holocaust as a justification for establishing a Jewish state, noting that Zionist violence with the Arabs in Palestine forced the British authorities there to limit Jewish immigration from 1930 on. Above all, they argue, Zionism was an ideological movement that first and foremost sought a Jewish homeland rather than saving Jews from the Nazis. In fact, critics argue that the Zionist leadership undermined efforts to move Jews anywhere but to Palestine and resisted planned attempts to save Jews from extermination. The *haredim* and Reform Jews were the first to compare the Zionists and the Nazis, citing both groups’ definition of a Jew, the cult of strength and the worship of the state. Meanwhile, they note Holocaust survivors arriving in Israel after the Shoah encountered

scorn and even hostility, for in their weak and humbled condition they did not live up to the requirements of the new and confident “Israeli.” Meanwhile, loyalty to Israel replaced Judaism as the cornerstone of Jewish identity.

Ironically, both the *haredim* and certain Reform Jews have reached the same conclusion for ending the Palestinian conflict as many secular Jewish intellectuals, such as Ilan Pappé, Tanya Reinhart (and before them the philosophers Hannah Arendt and Martin Buber), as well as Palestinians such as Edward Said and Ali Abunimah: all have advocated the replacement of the state of Israel and the occupied territories with a secular state based on the equal rights of all its citizens.

As the state of Israel, despite all its military prowess, its attachment to the most powerful nation on earth, and its possession of nuclear weapons, comes to the realization that none of these guarantee its security (particularly after the failure and defeat of the aggression on Lebanon in 2006), it is difficult not to view the *haredim* and the Reform Jews’ (not to mention Hannah Arendt’s) early warnings as prophetic. Indeed, as Israel today forms an unholy alliance with anti-Semitic American Christian Zionists, and as nuclear war really could lead to global Armageddon, it is more than ever necessary to turn to the Jewish religious dictum cited in Rabkin’s book stating that the one who is the greatest hero is the one who has turned an enemy into a friend.

Professor Rabkin’s book should be seen as a required book for all academic collections dealing with religion, peace and conflict studies, and Near and Middle Eastern Studies. It has a most useful glossary of Hebrew terms and is quite extensively referenced using the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh* for most Biblical quotes. The biographical notes and list of Zionists, *haredi* figures, Reform Jewish figures, and others are excellent and are useful both for experts and those newly approaching the topic.

BLAIR KUNTZ

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*The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development.* By Wadie Jwaideh; with a foreword by Martin van Bruinessen. Mohamed El-Hindi books on Arab culture and Islamic civilization. Contemporary issues in the Middle East. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2006. Pp. xx, 419. ISBN: 081563093X (pbk. : alk. paper); 9780815630937.

As an ethnic group, the Kurds, who are now dispersed in the countries of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Armenia, represent the largest nationality in the world without their own homeland.

In modern times, their ambitions have been marked with a stark betrayal by greater, often Western powers, whose largesse towards neighboring states have in the end left the Kurds divided and alone.

Today, with the establishment of the autonomous Kurdish zone in northern Iraq, and renewed activity by the rebel group the PKK in Turkey, the plight of the Kurds continues to attract the world's attention.

The great value of Wadie Jwaideh's *The Kurdish National Movement: its origin and development* is that it shows that Kurdish nationalist aspirations in fact have long roots. Jwaideh, an Iraqi Arab Christian who was born in Basra but later moved to Baghdad, founded the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures at Indiana University. In fact, this work is Jwaideh's Ph.D. thesis submitted to Syracuse University in 1960 but which was never published in his lifetime. Apparently, the thesis' fame spread by word of mouth, and it became an essential source for the study of the earlier phases of Kurdish nationalism, as well as a framework for understanding later developments. Because of his penchant for perfectionism, it is the only publication that Jwaideh produced.

Despite its reputation as a classic, it must be stated that, probably because it is a Ph.D. thesis, the prose is often unexciting and ponderous. At times, too, especially in an early chapter entitled the "Social Organization of the Kurds," Jwaideh sounds like an Orientalist detailing the strange habits of an alien species. In other places where Jwaideh makes such pronouncements as "the Kurds, like most primitive and warlike people are inveterate hero worshippers," he sounds frankly pejorative. It must be noted, too, that he often relies on western sources such as American Archie Roosevelt and American missionaries, rather than relying on the voices of the Kurds themselves. In addition, there is only one map that often does not include the place names he talks

about, and because the chapters divide the history of the Kurds into whichever country they inhabit, it is difficult to obtain a unified picture of the Kurdish struggle in general. The photographs he has chosen, however, are most interesting.

Nonetheless, as an early study of the Kurdish cause, Jwaideh's study deserves its classic status, detailing as it does the long history of Kurdish nationalism and the effort to form a common cause. It also details the efforts that have been made by a variety of powers to suppress semi-autonomous Kurdish regimes. Furthermore, as the foreword to the book indicates, instead of viewing Kurdish nationalism through the lens of the dominant groups in the state, Jwaideh's was the first serious study to focus on Kurdish nationalism as a movement in its own right.

Using a chronological approach, Jwaideh reaches back to Muhammad Pasha of Rawunduz from the early nineteenth century to the emergence of Kurdish shaykhs, notably Shaykh Ubayd Allah, as national leaders who first sought to unite Kurds in an independent state and sought to find a basic similarity among Kurdish people. He details Dhaykh Ubayd Allah's invasion of Persia in 1880, and notes that even at this early stage the suspicions of greater powers. For instance, in the invasion, Russia viewed Turkey as the instigator of the invasion.

Jwaideh details the impact of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution on Kurdish nationalism, noting that Kurds played an important role in the Young Turk Committee since its inception. After a counter-revolution in 1909, however, the Young Turks brief flirtation with various non-Turkish non-Ottoman nationalists came to an end. Nationalist ideas gradually found their way into religious orders, and eventually Kurdish shaykhs made a set of demands that have not been met to this day; for instance, the adoption of Kurdish as an official language and as a language of instruction in Kurdish areas. In response, however, the Young Turks began implementing forced Turkification. Russian efforts to win the Kurds over to their side, however, did not succeed, and during World War I, influenced by pan-Islamic ideology, they rallied to the Ottoman side, and Russia began demanding more reforms for the Armenians. After the Second World War, however, the Russians began favoring the Kurds and used them as a disruptive element against the Western powers.

Nonetheless, the Kurds suffered heavy losses during the First World War, and may have lost 300,000 men in battle. Both before and after the Russian Revolution, Armenian units of the Russian army massa-

cred large numbers of Kurds, and in response they joined the Turks in attacking Armenians. At this time, only a small number of Kurds living abroad continued to advocate for an independent Kurdistan. Still, the abortive Treaty of Sèvres, signed in August 1920, called for an autonomous Kurdish state in eastern Anatolia and what is now Iraqi Kurdistan. The Treaty, however, was swept aside by Atatürk in 1923 and was superseded by the Treaty of Lausanne which eliminated any possibility of an independent Kurdish homeland.

After this period, relations between the Kurds and the Turks rapidly began to deteriorate, especially since they now formed the largest ethnic group left in Turkey, and the use of the Kurdish language was prohibited. The 1925 Kurdish rebellion did save the Kurdish enclave of Mosul from Turkish domination, but it resulted in harsh measures being enacted in Turkey with fifty-three Kurdish leaders condemned to death, and the Turkish government continued its policies of centralization, Turkification, secularization and westernization.

The remainder of Jwaideh's book details the Barzani rebellions in Iraq in 1931 and 1932 and later in 1943 and 1945, and the establishment of the short-lived Republic of Mahabad led by Qadi Muhammad (who was executed) in Iran after the Second World War. As Jwaideh notes, these rebellions were indications of a desire for independence, but unfortunately they remained local outbursts that never resulted in a unified rebellion. Furthermore, the growth of Soviet influence in the Middle East, prompted the Western powers to stand with the governments of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq, an attitude that was strengthened by the Kurds drift towards communism. Even the Soviet Union, however, failed to sponsor the case of the Kurds before the United Nations. Like today, the place where the Kurds enjoyed most influence was in Iraq, especially after the ascension to power of Abd al-Karim Qasim. Kurds were said to be "co-partners" of the regime and gains in the cultural field were spectacular.

Despite its faults, Professor Jwaideh's book is a classic for its time, and it provides an essential reference for understanding the Kurds' current plight. Thus, it remains an essential addition to any Middle Eastern or World History library collection.

BLAIR KUNTZ

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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*International Change and the Stability of Multiethnic States : Yugoslavia, Lebanon, and the Crises of Governance.* By Badredine Arfi. Bloomington, Indiana : Indiana University Press, 2005. Pp. 305. Includes bibliography and index. ISBN 0253344883 (Hardback).

The title of the book clearly describes the book's aim and content. The author, an assistant professor of political science at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, discusses the effects that the changing international political environment has on states that are inherently unstable because of the diverse makeup of their ethnic communities.

In Part I of the book, the author lays the theoretical groundwork for his work. He discusses three factors, namely intercommunal vulnerability, intercommunal trust, and distribution of institutional power, that affect the stability of a multiethnic state. As these internal conditions fluctuate under pressure from international changes, the consequences for the state range from consolidation to total collapse.

In Parts II and III, Arfi applies his theory to actual states at different periods of time. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss Yugoslavia and the effect that Cold War has on its communities and the stability of state governance. Chapter 4 deals with the period of 1947–1953, the beginning the Cold War, while Chapter 5 looks at the state again at the end of the Cold War, as it is spiraling towards total collapse.

Chapters 6 and 7 turn their attention to Lebanon. The three factors affecting state governance and stability are discussed in light of a complex international political environment which includes the Cold War, the rise of Nasserism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Chapter 6 looks at the period of 1957–1958, and Chapter 7 analyzes the events of 1973–1975, which end with the collapse of the state and the outbreak of civil war.

This scholarly book focuses on theoretical political science, and it assumes a basic knowledge of the history of the events under discussion. Its intended audience consists of political science theorists, as well as scholars interested in the practical politics and history of Eastern Europe and/or the Middle East. If the book has a weakness, it is that the author belabors his points and tends to repeat his arguments. Despite the book's tedious style, the ideas presented are intriguing and thought provoking. The book would be a valuable addition to any academic library that collects in the above mentioned fields.

CATHERINE ROCKWELL

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

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*Muslim Youth: Tensions and Transitions in Tajikistan.* By Colette Harris. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2006. Pp. xiv, 192 : ill., 1 map ; 23 cm. Includes bibliographical references (p. 175–185) and index. ISBN: 0813342945.

The title gives the appearance that the book's focus is youth. In reality, family structure is the true focus, and the experiences of a limited number of youths are used to demonstrate changes in roles, expectations and power structures within families. Ms. Harris has regularly done field work in Tajikistan for over ten years. She begins by clearly setting forth the circumstances in which she has interacted with her subjects, her methodology and the usages of terminology particular to this work and to Tajik society. She continues with a short summary of traditional Tajik family structure and Soviet efforts to reshape society and the family in Tajikistan.

The bulk of the book covers the post-Soviet period, i.e., from 1991 on. Each chapter consists of an example of a problem experienced by a woman Ms. Harris knows and a discussion of where the problem fits on a continuum between traditional and modern expectations and how both sets of expectations contributed to it. The first example describes the family life of an elderly woman. It is used to establish the contrasting values and power structures of modern, mainly Russian families versus those of traditional Muslim Tajik families. It is made apparent that the deliberate Russian manipulation of society has left many Tajiks unable to fully identify with either set of values. The other examples depict gender roles and the power structure that support or break down those roles; the relationship of education and individual skills to

the potential for earnings versus the importance of social competence and the extended family as a safety net; expectations based mostly on age as to whether to accept a change from the seclusion of women to considering acquaintance between unmarried members of the opposite sex appropriate; and finally, stresses within marriages between individuals from families at different stages between traditional and modern familial structures.

*Muslim Youth* is the only book on youth in Tajikistan in English listed in OCLC Worldcat. It is also the only such book specifically on the post-Soviet period. Even in Russian or Tajik, there are few books on Tajik youth and the family. The work is even more valuable in that it is suitable for both undergraduate and graduate students. Footnotes are appropriate and useful. The work regularly refers readers to relevant theoretical sociological works, to other relevant fieldwork, and to historical works on Central Asia. This is very helpful, since generally it is not easy to track down material on Central Asia. The examples and their analysis provide an easily understood picture of Tajik family structures as well as a construct which could be used in evaluating change in other traditional societies

MARY ST. GERMAIN

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Inshallah : *In Pursuit of My Father's Youth*. By Viviane Wayne. Santa Barbara, Calif. : Fithian Press, 2002. Pp. 159. 12 b&w photographs. \$12.95 (paperback). 1564743810.

Forced to flee their homes during the Inquisition, Spanish Jews were offered a safe haven in Turkey by the Ottoman Sultan, Beyazit II. Nearly 30,000 sought asylum in Constantinople, where they were allowed to settle peacefully and pursue their own practices and culture. Viviane Wayne is a descendant of this Sephardic community, the daughter of Turkish Jews who left Constantinople for New York in 1920. She is a travel writer and poet, with work published in the *San Francisco Examiner*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. She currently resides in southern California. This book is a story of her personal search for identity, an attempt to recapture the Ottoman past of her father's youth and find meaning in the memories and legends passed down from her mother, aunts and uncles. Their lives had been

tempered by a philosophy of *inshallah* which contrasted sharply with the optimistic, can-do attitude of Wayne's American husband, leaving her uncertain about how to reconcile the two perspectives. After her mother's death, she sets off to explore the country where her parents had grown up. The book is an account of her two visits to Turkey (the first in 1977, the second in 1991), liberally interspersed with family reminiscences and meditations on her cultural heritage.

As a travel narrative, the author's encounters with vendors, tour guides, *hammallar*, and other local characters are told with an engaging curiosity and sense of humor. Her first trip covers only Istanbul and surrounding areas, as her visit is cut short after she narrowly escapes gunshot fire during a leftist protest in Taksim Square. The story resumes fourteen years later in a more modern, stable, and tourist-friendly Turkey. During this second trip, Wayne shares her personal reflections on the people and places she encounters during her travels along the Aegean coast and in central Anatolia. Though her journey does not extend to eastern Anatolia, the Mediterranean or Black Sea coasts, the author still manages to convey a sense of Turkey's multi-layered history and the contradictions within its society, most notably the conflict between religious fundamentalism and secularism.

For the reader interested in Sephardic culture or Judeo-Turkish society, the book provides relatively little detail. The Diaspora is evoked through stories told of extended family members, spread across the globe from Mexico to France to South Africa. Allusions are made to the "Gallic threads" that ran through their community in Turkey, including the use of Ladino and the presence of French language and culture in the Jewish schools established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Alliance Israélite Universelle. Brief glimpses into the attitudes of Turkish Jews can be gleaned through Wayne's reminiscences and reflections on her own family's history. For example, her grandfather, whose house was burned down as a result of his unpopular view that their community owed the country military service for having been offered sanctuary during the Inquisition.

After reviewing the lives of her parents and grandparents and exploring the world they inhabited, the book culminates with a visit to her father's ancestral home on the Princes Island of Buyukada. In the end, not a lot is revealed about her father's past, but the author's satisfaction, having completed a journey of discovery, can be felt in her conclusion: "he is buried in half-remembered truths—the bricolage of family legend, on top of which often-told but unexamined tales have

been added . . . Now I, too, would add to this *hoyuk* (mound) of his total existence . . .”

As a source of Sephardic history and culture, the book barely skims the surface, but as a personal search for cultural identity, the book has value and provides a good read. The story is enhanced by several black-and-white family photographs taken during the early 1900’s. The absence of any map is regrettable, as the book is as much a travelogue as it is family memoir. Strongly recommended for anyone planning a trip to Turkey, but also suitable for public or undergraduate college libraries with collections in Jewish or Turkish studies.

REBECCA ROUTH

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

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*Behind the Veil: An American Woman’s Memoir of the 1979 Iran Hostage Crisis.* By Debra Johanyak. Series on International, Political, and Economic History. Akron, OH: The University of Akron Press, 2007. Pp. vii, 258. Black and white photographs, bibliography, index. \$49.95 (cloth) ISBN: 1-931968-38-1 (paperback) \$24.95. ISBN 1-931968-38-1.

Written with the intention of advocating diplomatic ties between Iran and the United States, the memoir of Debra Johanyak’s experience while living in Iran after the government had already changed from a constitutional monarchy to an Islamic Republic, is an intriguing book that one does not want to put down until the very end.

*Behind the Veil: An American Woman’s Memoir of the 1979 Iran Hostage Crisis* is an account of the author’s experience while living in Iran as an American woman married to an Iranian man in a country with a new regime that is in opposition to the author’s socio-cultural, religious, and political beliefs. The author’s memoir also informs readers about the 1979 hostage crisis of the United States Embassy that took place on November 4, 1979. Using letters, periodicals, and her personal journal for most of the narrative, Johanyak discusses the dilemma she faces because of the government’s demand on society to conform to Islamic standards. But Johanyak also lightens up the book, by providing detailed descriptions of some of the Iranian cultural traditions she encounters, as well as picturesque accounts of the sites she visits while living in Shiraz, Iran.

In chapter one, Johanyak describes how she first meets her future Iranian husband, Nasrolah Kamalie in Ohio, while he is a university student there. His respect for her, good looks, and acceptance of her son, Jason, who was born out of wedlock, as well as her feelings of loneliness, entice her to accept his marriage proposal. In 1977, during the time of the reign of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Johanyak, her husband; Jason, who was adopted by Nasrolah, and their second child, Matthew, move to Shiraz, Iran. But Johanyak's stay is only brief because of her anxiety over her health as a result of appendicitis surgery compounded by a feeling of homesickness for the United States. After living in Ohio for two years, the author and her husband decide to go back to Iran in the summer of 1979, but by this time, the Shah had been overthrown and replaced by a government that would be ruled as a theocratic regime, specifically, under an Islamic cleric named Ayatollah Khomeini.

After only a few months of moving back to Shiraz, the growing resentment of Iranians against the American government's support of the Shah escalates in "militant students" invading the United States Embassy on November 4, 1979. During this time, the author not only feels frightened for the hostages, but she begins to worry about her own safety as someone with U.S. and Iranian citizenship and as a woman who refuses to wear the chador (veil) in public. She then begins to integrate into the culture by wearing a headscarf when she goes out. Then one day, Shiraz University, where she teaches English, is invaded by an angry crowd of students, who believe the foreign teachers there are imperialists. While hiding in one of the rooms with several of the other teachers and in fear of being attacked by the students, Johanyak wishes she had the chador that her sister-in-law had given her as a gift to wear. Safe after being released, she rushes home and slips on the chador for the first time and then begins to wear it "whenever . . . in public." Later on, Shiraz University closes in order to change the curriculum from a western to an Islamic one.

After several months of debating with her husband, the author and her children go back to the United States, but her husband stays behind. But when he later joins them, they cannot "reconcile" and end up getting divorced.

Although living in Iran was psychologically frightening at times for the author because of the growing resentment against the United States government, the author also vividly describes warm memories she shares with her Iranian in-laws. With detailed descriptions of Iran's

nature as well as the hospitality of the Iranian people, one cannot help but want to read more about this country, its culture and its people.

Johanyak transliterates Persian words into the Latin alphabet accurately and consistently. Her translations of Persian words into English are also usually consistent. Her efforts make the book more accessible to the English reader. The bibliography is a very good source for anyone wishing to read more about the 1979 hostage crisis, as well as about the Iranian revolution in general. The notes section and the index are thorough. The photographs of her American and her Iranian family help the reader to put a face on the people she describes in detail. In the epilogue, Johanyak makes some recommendations for Iran and the United States to encourage diplomatic ties between the two countries after twenty-seven years of political estrangement.

It is crucial to read different perspectives about the Iranian people with regard to their opinions about U.S. foreign policies toward Iran in order to gain a real understanding of the resentment against the United States government, and in some cases against individual U.S. citizens. It is also vital not to form the stereotype that all Iranians are gun-carrying militants who hate Westerners. This book is valuable because it reveals the divided nature of the different opinions of Iranians about people from the United States and their government. This book is directed towards an audience with an interest in the 1979 hostage crisis, one woman's dilemma in trying to assimilate into another culture, as well as about Iranian culture in general. Johanyak's book is appropriate reading for college-level students and will be a valuable addition to academic and public libraries.

NANCY BEYGIJANIAN

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

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*Silent No More: Special Needs People in Egypt.* By Lesley Lababidi, in collaboration with Nadia El-Arabi. Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2002. Pp. 195. Appendices, bibliography and index. ISBN 977-424-693-4; \$19.95 (hardcover).

*Silent No More* is an unusual book about assistance to special needs people in Egypt. Author Lesley Lababidi, who is the founder and sponsor of the Middle East and North Africa Youth Leadership Initiative, was asked by a publisher at the American University in Cairo Press

to produce this book with the assistance of Nadia El-Arabi, a graduate student and researcher. The vision they shared was to chart the progress Egypt has made in the field of special needs, as told primarily by the people actually involved. Following an introductory chapter on the history of and aid to special needs people in Egypt, the book contains a survey of governmental and non-governmental organizations and activities dedicated to improving the lives of these people. The specific categories included are the mentally retarded, deaf, blind, and physically disabled. Other topics treated are street children, Special Olympics, and veterans.

The authors identified schools and organizations and the persons to interview. Interviews were conducted with directors of government schools, leaders in non-government organizations, and teachers, therapists, family members, and several disabled persons. Their interviews yield a well-rounded view from various perspectives. To standardize the interviews, a questionnaire was developed by Lababidi. Many of the groups are doing similar things, so the entries cover similar topics; however, the record of personal quotes and discussions still make them interesting to read.

H. E. Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, wife of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, wrote the Forward which is appropriate because of her strong interest and support in the movement to improve conditions of the disabled. Her involvement and efforts are praised throughout the book, including her establishment of the Integrated Care Society (ICS) in 1977, which opened a center for children with special needs in 1992. ICS has been a primary innovator in the field.

People with special needs received increased attention worldwide with the United Nations' International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981 and the subsequent International Decade for the Disabled 1982–1992. In Egypt, the Ministry of Social Affairs, established in 1939, now has charge of government involvement with the disabled. Under the 1950 Social Security Law, the disabled could find services that would help them prepare for suitable jobs. In 1966, the Law of the Child was passed for the protection and development of children in Egypt, including those with special needs, and rehabilitation for the disabled in agriculture was started. President Mubarak declared 1989–99 as the First Decade for the Protection and Welfare of the Egyptian Child, which was followed by the Second Decade from 2000–2010. These declarations focus attention and efforts on children, including those who are disabled.

Prior to 1970, there was little knowledge about or concern for people with special needs in Egypt, and disabled children were kept at home and often hidden from the community. But as the Government, various NGO's, and individuals educated and trained in special needs became involved, the development of schools and programs grew quite rapidly. Historically, charitable organizations and religious groups performed the outreach. In the last 50 years policies affecting the disabled have grown out of charities, religious piety, individual initiatives, government schools, associations, athletic programs, and health care (p. 23). A sampling of places where the authors interviewed are: Experimental School for the Mentally Retarded (Abbasiya), al-Amal school for the Deaf (Abbasiya and Helwan), The School for Vision Retention (Shubra), al-Wafa wa al-Amal (for physically disabled), Hope Center for the Mentally Retarded (al-Mansuriya), SBR project at al-Zawya al-Hamra, Nida Society (for the deaf in Heliopolis), Shams al-Birr Society (for the blind in Giza), Pediatric Learning disability Center (Ma'adi). Although various organizations are involved, they have one characteristic in common, regardless of their funding or affiliation, and that is the "commitment to help improve the quality of life and promote advocacy for people with special needs" (p. 63). The services and organizations are helping those in need, but as the author states, "If society does not accept differences, integration cannot be successful. Our focus should be more on changing social attitudes and social thinking than on changing the disabled" (p. 16). This book represents one way of encouraging that change of attitude and perception among the populace.

This is one of the first full-length books on this topic for the Middle East countries. A survey of the literature reveals one other book on Jordan and numerous articles on various aspects concerning the disabled in countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Cyprus, UAE, Israel, Palestine, Tunisia, Turkey, Afghanistan, etc. In addition to the main body of Lababidi's book, the authors include Appendices containing Declarations and the Child Law which impact special needs children particularly. The book is documented with Notes and a Bibliography. There is also a useful directory of schools, organizations, and associations for people with special needs, giving addresses and phone numbers. *Silent No More* provides a good index and several pictures which put a human face to the statistics and the interview text.

What has been accomplished in Egypt, especially in the last four decades, is commendable. However, there is still much to do to aid all the disabled. It is estimated that 2% of the total population and 6% of

children between the ages of two and fifteen have special needs. Even with the progress, only 5–7 % receives assistance (p. 22).

Some aspects that stood out for me as I read the book are: the great outreach efforts throughout the country; the wonderful progress that has been made; all types of special needs are covered; number of Christians Churches that work with Muslims; the variety of organizations and government programs involved. This book demonstrates how Egypt is moving forward in giving place to special needs people in society. Many of these people now have a greater sense of belonging, and, indeed, are no longer hidden or silent.

CONNIE LAMB

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

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