

Book Reviews

Documenting the Roots and Dynamics of the Syrian Uprising

Review Article by Raymond Hinnebusch

Syria: The Fall of the House of Asad, by David W. Lesch. London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012. 288 pages. \$28.

Syria: A Decade of Lost Chances: Repression and Revolution from Damascus Spring to Arab Spring, by Carsten Wieland. Seattle: Cune Press, 2012. 336 pages. \$19.95.

Ashes of Hama: the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, by Raphaël Lefèvre. Hurst: London 2013. 288 pages. \$29.95.

Western students of Syria are like the blind men and the elephant: the country's complexity and impenetrability to outsiders means that each researcher tends to see a particular aspect with clarity, possibly to the neglect of others. Each of these books exposes a particular aspect of the roots and dynamics of the Syrian Uprising and thereby provides a valuable service to students of the country. Their authors share a deep familiarity with Syria from years of study or residence and access to Syrians, but the special strengths of each are reflective of the particular Syrians to whom they had access: Lesch enjoyed access to the political elite, including the president himself; Wieland enjoyed extended discussions with the secular traditional opposition, notably Michel Kilo, while Lefèvre managed to get exceptional access to the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood. Each book is chock-full of valuable information and insights: Each strives for objectivity with reasonable success, even if they sometimes rely a bit uncritically — in view of the wars of disinformation being waged over Syria — on information provided by the opposition.

All three books offer explanations for the Syrian Uprising. Lesch ably summarizes the structural factors for and against the spread of the Uprising to Syria by considering the degree to which Syria was different from and similar to the other Arab Uprising countries. He recounts how Bashar al-Asad imagined his case was different because the latter was in touch with nationalist opinion, while al-Asad saw the overthrown Arab leaders as Western lackeys. Asad was, however, still very cautious about political participation, seeing it as leading either to chaos or institutionalization, and Syrians seemed to agree: having seen the chaos in Lebanon and Iraq from democracy promotion, Syrians were thought to value stability, which the regime was credited with having delivered. Other factors that could have been expected to deter a rebellion were the substantial stake in preventing Islamic fundamentalism by minorities and the secular middle class and bourgeoisie — who could account for half the population in Lesch's calculation (p. 52); the fragmentation of opposition; Asad's relatively good image as a youthful reformer with a still-modest lifestyle; and the absence of a viable alternative to him. Moreover, some reforms had been positive: private banks and an inflow of Gulf investment in tourism and real estate, plus the spread of private educational institutions, had provided jobs, profits, and opportunities for the urban middle classes.

In fact, though, Lesch argues, Syria had many of the same problems as the other Arab republics (pp. 44–48, 55–68): rapid birth rates, combined with free education, hence a rapid growth of unemployed educated youth that the economy could not absorb; an attempt via *infatih* to restart the private sector while also privileging cronies, with the best of the new jobs going to the well-connected. The economic reforms had their down sides: the social safety net was shaved (30% fell under the poverty line and 11% below subsistence) and conspicuous consumption for the new rich burgeoned; market reforms had not gone far enough to spur much investor confidence but far enough to stimulate a takeoff in corruption and to expose the country's manufacturing industries to ruinous foreign competition. Reneging on the social contract meant people were not protected from global food price increases. Rural neglect and drought drove up urban overcrowding. Repression was arbitrary and burdensome, a prime grievance of protestors for years.

Nevertheless, for Wieland in particular, it is *agency* that explains the Uprising. One of his main concerns is what he considered the opportunities missed by the president to carry out political reforms that might have headed off revolution. He believes this would have entailed minimal risk for, as intelligence boss Bahjat Sulayman acknowledged, the traditional opposition was loyal and moderate and its political incorporation could have enabled a gradual and peaceful transition to a more democratic and legitimate regime and would have strengthened the hand of reformers, including the president. Unlike other Arab states, foreign policy stands over the wars in Iraq (2003), Lebanon (2006), and Gaza (2008–2009) had endowed the regime with nationalist legitimacy that would have made a transition less risky. Failure to pursue this option, Michel Kilo remarked, meant the post-Ba'ath transition Asad initiated was being achieved by an alliance of the *mukhabarat* and the new rich (interview, p. 54).

Both Lesch and Wieland provide insights into why the regime was unwilling to risk political reform. In the Damascus Spring, according to Tayyib Tizini quoted by Wieland, some of the opposition asked for too much too soon: "They wanted all or nothing....They wanted to storm the Bastille" (p. 107). Asad, having just assumed office and aware of his weakness, opted for stability and capitulated to the hardliners like 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam. After the 2003 fall of Baghdad, the opposition petitioned Bashar to strengthen the country by broadening political inclusion. Regime, opposition, and public were in accord on the Iraq war, and Bashar's opposition to the invasion (alone among the Arab rulers) was highly popular. The domestic opposition refused cooperation with the US-sponsored exile opposition led by Farid al-Ghadri. The war was thus an opportune moment to broaden the regime's base, but was largely missed. Although the regime briefly relaxed controls at this time, the new pressures on it over the assassination of Rafiq Hariri again raised its sense of threat. In October 2005, the opposition, sensing regime weakness over the forced exit from Lebanon and the Hariri tribunal, announced the Damascus Declaration and also brought the Brotherhood into the opposition coalition. The Declaration criticized the regime's adventurous short-sighted regional policies, namely in Lebanon, and called for a new social contract, pluralism, peaceful transfer of power, and rule of law. The signatories rejected violence and totalitarianism of both the Ba'ath and Islamist variety. In May 2006 Michel Kilo, Anwar al-Bunni, and others signed the Damascus-Beirut Declaration jointly, with the Lebanese. The Declaration urged Syria not to interfere in Lebanese affairs, and its promulgation on eve of a draft US-French-British UN Security Council resolution against Syria on Lebanon made it look as if the signatories aligned with foreign powers and anti-Syrian Lebanese. The regime was in a panic over the tribunal, especially after the defection of Khaddam, who accused Bashar of murdering Hariri, and who allied with the Muslim Brotherhood. Many expected the regime's days were numbered. The opposition believed it was protected by Western pressure on a highly vulnerable regime and was encouraged by Western diplomats to be aggressive. However, the opposition miscalculated: they were out of touch with public opinion which, valuing stability and fearing the international sanctions over Hariri and external threats, gave the regime support on patriotic grounds (Wieland, p. 73). In 2006, the regime, having weathered the worst of the external pressures, launched a wave of repression.

By 2008, however, the regime had weathered the worst, and 2008–10 was a period of foreign policy success that also benefited the regime internally. Asad's stature, so precarious after the withdrawal from Lebanon, had recovered over his firm stand in the 2006 war on the side of Hizbullah, enabling him to orchestrate in 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections on a wave of popularity. In parallel, Syria's external isolation crumbled in Europe and Bush left office in the US, much reducing the external threat. Bashar could have used this opportunity for political reform. Yet instead, the regime's toleration of dissent and even of criticism among its own supporters declined. Still seeing enemies everywhere, but with few remaining external constraints on it, the regime launched a third wave of repression from 2008, further contracting room for dissent and putting the opposition on the defensive such that, at the end of 2010 a weary Riyad Sayf acknowledged that it had won the battle. If external pressure had been counterproductive, the hope that Syria would reform when such pressure was lifted had also been disappointed.

Another issue the three books deal with is the trigger of the Uprising. Both Lesch and Wieland believe that the protests did not have to turn into an uprising. Early protests did not attack the president and, in Wieland's view, Asad could have won a free election in 2011 had he embraced the demands of the opposition, portrayed himself as the solution rather than the problem, and led the transition to democracy. Most Syrians would have welcomed this. Instead Asad played the sectarian and security cards, destroying his status as a secular popular leader (p. 56). Wieland believes the security solution was decided beforehand by a special committee that concluded that the Tunisian and Egyptian regimes had fallen because they had used insufficient repression. Moreover, repression had always been the regime's habitual response to challenges. How, Lesch muses, did Bashar al-Asad, a man who had appeared to him as "a relatively ordinary person," quite different from the princelings in other authoritarian regimes, become drenched in blood? Lesch argues that he and his circle do see foreign conspiracies everywhere and believe any concession seen to be made from weakness only encourages enemies. Once the killing reached a certain point, there was no way back. Talk of the International Criminal Court and escalating foreign sanctions meant the inner core had burned their bridges and the regime elites would either sink or swim together. They counted on creating a favorable stalemate — to survive by hunkering down — as the regime had survived and wriggled out of many tight spots in the past.

Wieland also gives insights into why, unlike other Arab presidents, Asad was still in power two years after the beginning of the Uprising. By contrast to other fallen regimes, the Ba'ath was able to mobilize large numbers in pro-regime demonstrations — civil servants, trade unionists, and party members — indicative of its superior organizational capacity — plus minorities and pro-regime nationalists (p. 79). The regime had forged alliances with businesses and Islamists in Damascus, reaching out to Aleppo, also; hence, these two cities remained immune to the Uprising for some time.

Yet, if the regime proved more durable than expected, so did the opposition. This raises the question: why did repression not work as it had in the past, especially since it was not restrained, as were regimes in the other Arab states, by an unwillingness of the army to kill protestors? What explains the audacity of the protestors? The protests were stimulated by the breaking of the fear barrier with the success of revolution in other Arab states. Kilo observed that while the older generation had been cowed, the revolution was led by youth that had not experienced Hama (p. 48). Each killing created new enemies among the friends and relatives of the deceased, stimulating a desire for revenge, and with funerals, new occasions of confrontation. At a certain point, neither side could afford to de-escalate the conflict for fear that the other would exploit any compromise or weakness to seek revenge. Opposition activists believed that they could only be safe if the regime were totally destroyed, since if it survived, the regime would seek to eliminate any fifth column. The security dilemma gave the Uprising its own momentum.

Raphaël Lefèvre's book sheds valuable light on the Islamist movements that seem poised to take power in a post-Ba'ath Syria. It draws on new primary sources, such as interviews with and memoirs of Brotherhood leaders and Western government archives. The definitive study of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, it also throws new light on its jihadi offshoots.

Lefèvre's account of the origins and development of the Brotherhood stresses its moderate ideology and peaceful engagement in the democratic process in the 1940s and '50s, although he also recounts its ongoing battles against secularism, particularly over the role of Islam in the constitution. He sees its turn to violence in the late seventies, leading to the anti-Ba'ath Uprising in the northern cities and the showdown at Hama in 1982 as an anomaly that requires explanation. His account is particularly valuable in recording the perceptions of Muslim Brotherhood leaders on the origins of the conflict. In their view, repression by the Ba'ath provoked the rise of Qutbist radicals, initially led by Marwan Hadid in Hama, on the fringe of the organization who, in turn, forced a military confrontation with the regime that dragged in the whole Brotherhood organization. Specifically, a Hama-based radical splinter, the *al-tali'a al-muqatila* (fighting vanguard) that advocated violent confrontation with the Ba'ath, though officially disowned by the Damascus-based Brotherhood leadership, enjoyed support from the northern branches, particularly in Hama, where membership in the two sometimes overlapped. The Brotherhood leadership split between the northern militants and the Damascus moderates and, with the departure of the latter, the former took over. The Qutbists sectarianized the struggle, framing the regime as a heretical minority; sowing sectarian discord was meant to mobilize the Sunni majority against the regime (p. 74), although in fact it was more successful in generating solidarity among the 'Alawis. The *tali'a's* self-styled caliph in the late 1970s, 'Adnan 'Uqla, engineered the massacre in the Aleppo artillery school of 'Alawi cadets to provoke a regime repression that he hoped would drag the whole Islamic movement into confrontation and also split the army along sectarian lines; and this is what happened. 'Uqla also mounted the Uprising in Hama in the hope this would spark a nationwide uprising but in this he miscalculated. His strategy enabled the regime to ignore the distinctions between the historically peaceful Brotherhood and its radical offshoots and to discredit the former by association with the latter, much as the regime is trying to do today. As today, the Uprising was backed, armed, and funded by neighboring Sunni states, while Islamic Iran backed the regime.

Having won the military showdown, the regime moved internally to strike a deal with non-political moderate Islamic leaders, notably the grand mufti Ahmad Kuftaru and Muhammad Said al-Buti who had denounced the *fitna* sowed by the Brotherhood; similarly opposed to the current Uprising on these grounds, he was killed in a terrorist bombing in March 2013. As part of the deal — described by Kilo as — “ours is power, you get society” — the regime allowed a substantial Islamization of society, via the spread of Islamic schools, charities, and publications, at the expense of secularism. Although this was a Sufi-oriented nonpolitical Islam, the deepening of Sunni identity provided fertile ground for the current Islamist insurgents to mobilize support against the regime.

However, the immediate aftermath of the 1980s conflict had left the Brotherhood without a base inside Syria, its exiled remnants split between the Amman-based Aleppo clan of moderates and Iraq-based Hamawis sponsored by Saddam Husayn to carry on jihad against Damascus. The regime conducted negotiations with exiled Brotherhood leaders, aimed at further splitting them, allowing some to return as individuals on condition they eschewed politics. In a reaction to the tragedy of Hama, the moderates recovered their influence in the mainstream Brotherhood and even militants such as Sadr al-Din al-Bayanuni, who served as leader in the 1990s–2000s, now eschewed violence and sought a peaceful removal of the regime, in alliance with other opposition forces and under the banner of democratization. The Brotherhood joined the 2005 Damascus Declaration and in 2006 linked up with Khaddam, who was expected to be able to encourage defections from the regime at a time of intense international pressure over the Hariri killing; for this, the Brotherhood were accused of opportunism and lost credit.

Meanwhile, the regime was playing with Islamist fire (Wieland, pp. 176–180). It let radical Islamists emerge as a tool in its foreign policy — specifically, against the US in Iraq. Thus, the regime fostered the radical Aleppo cleric Abu al-Qa'qa', who encouraged Syrians to fight in Iraq, and whose followers were probably behind terrorist bombings against Syrian targets at the end of the 2000s. In return for their support against Western pressures,

the regime made concessions to the Islamists. The regime's parallel alliance with Hamas and Islamic jihad also had internal benefits when, at an international meeting of the Brotherhood, the Syrian branch was criticized for opposing the only Arab regime backing the resistance to Israel. Indeed, during the Gaza war, the Syrian Brotherhood suspended its opposition to the regime. But the election of the Hamawi, Riyad al-Shuqfa, who had been involved in the Hama uprising and his sidelining of the Aleppo moderates under Bayanouni in July 2010 signalled a return to militancy and opposition.

In parallel, the remnants of the *al-tali'a al-muqatila*, morphed into transnational jihadis, went to Afghanistan where their guerrilla skills were valued and played a role, with Egyptian counterparts, in the formation of al-Qa'ida. One, Abu al-Mus'ab al-Suri, joined bin Ladin and became a theorist of decentralized transnational jihad while still continuing highly-sectarianized attacks on the Syrian regime typical of the 1980s. After Afghanistan, a new generation of jihadis got their battle credentials in Iraq after their transit there had been facilitated by the Syrian regime.

Lefèvre argues that the current Uprising has been shaped by memories of Hama. The desire for revenge motivates some of the insurgents. The regime's shelling of Sunni neighborhoods and unleashing of the 'Alawi-dominated *shabbiha* further fostered sectarianization of the conflict. Sunni protestors shouted "Christians to Beirut, 'Alawis to coffins." Extremist shaykhs, such as the Saudi-based 'Adnan al-'Ar'ur, used sectarian discourse in calling for jihad against the regime. On the other hand, the solidarity of the regime was forged in the conflict of the seventies and memories of the Brotherhood assassinations of 'Alawis and of its sectarian discourse at the time have sustained this solidarity to this day (p. 184). Asad declared that the Ba'th had been fighting the Brotherhood since the fifties and portrayed the regime as the alternative to radical Islam and civil war. Certainly, the salafi-jihadi trend grew parallel to the violence of the conflict. The regime is said to have deliberately released Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, imprisoned since 2005, to foster the discourse of jihadi terrorism. Al-Qa'ida-affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra, which brought suicide bombings to Damascus and Aleppo in 2012, was evidently a descendent of the *al-tali'a al-muqatila* exiles, who after Hama had helped found Al-Qa'ida.

As for the mainstream Brotherhood, to unite the organization and take advantage of the great opportunity of the Uprising, the Hamawi leader Riyad al-Shuqfa co-opted the Aleppo Bayanuni as his deputy. The Brotherhood appeared as the driving force of the exile-opposition Syrian National Council, even though it and other Islamists, not all allied with it, only controlled 35% of the seats, sharing power with liberals and minority representatives. The Brotherhood, however, had the money, cohesion, and organization to put it in command, and the Brotherhood controlled the key finance and military bureaus through which it dispensed money from rich business donors to rebuild a base in liberated areas and in refugee camps. When the regime switched from the security to the military solution, the Brotherhood was at first reluctant to abandon its nonviolent strategy, having learned from Hama the high costs of violence, but it soon opted in March 2012 to support and arm the Free Syrian Army on grounds of self-defense. The Brotherhood soon controlled about 20% of the fighting units and 60–65% of those in Homs (Lefèvre, pp. 181–200).

What are prospects for the Brotherhood to emerge as a dominant force after Asad, as it has in Egypt and Tunisia? It is creating a political party to compete in elections and could, Lefèvre estimates, get 25–30% of seats and lead a coalition government, building on its superior organization and discipline, finances, the lack of viable alternatives, its long history of principled opposition to the Ba'th, its historic alliances with element of the religious-oriented wing of the business class, and its outreach to the rural areas where some of its activists had taken refuge after Hama, and where it found fertile ground as the Ba'th under Bashar abandoned its historic rural constituency. The Brothers also enjoy the backing of Turkey's AKP government. One main weakness is the mistrust of many secularists owing to the Brotherhood's 1980s record of violence and sectarianism. As in Egypt, the middle ground occupied by the Brotherhood will make it hard to satisfy either secularists or radical

Islamists. Tellingly, Lefèvre (p. 174) quotes a Muslim Brother ideologue explaining that in an Islamic state, sovereignty is “shared” between God and the People, a formula that seems to have been institutionalized in Iran, even though the Brotherhood has explicitly rejected the Iranian in favor of the Turkish AKP model.

A generational gap also afflicts the Brotherhood — the dominance of elderly leaders, lack of turnover, and weak recruitment among youth. Youth splinters from the Brotherhood have emerged as rivals, usually conservative modernists of the AKP variety who take religion as chiefly a matter of personal ethics. One is Ahmad Ramadan’s Bahrain-based National Action Group rooted in Aleppo with its pro-business rhetoric. There is also the London-based Movement for Justice and Development made up of liberal technocrats, which criticizes the Brotherhood as undemocratic internally. However, it was exposed for taking money from the US for its Barada TV.

At the same time, the Brotherhood is sure to face competition from the radical jihadis, who are on the ground with fighters while the Brotherhood remains in exile, as was the case in its relation with *al-tali’a* in the eighties. The radicals enjoy the support of the al-Qa’ida network, notably in Iraq, and are liberally funded by Gulf sources. By contrast to Egypt and Tunisia, where the organized Brotherhood filled the gap after the quick fall of presidents, the protracted struggle in Syria has generated sectarian hostility and uncompromising militancy; and led to the exile of moderate Syrians, to the advantage of radical jihadis. The longer the violence goes on and the more arms from outside sources fall into their hands, the stronger the militants’ position will be, unless they are contained by some brokered transition that maintains the Syrian state and army.

None of the authors of these books sought to place their study within a theoretical framework or the debates on Syria among other scholars. This is not necessarily a weakness, since their purpose is to address the general reader, and to contribute to establishing the historical record. But their narratives are, to an extent influenced by the dominant scholarly paradigms, and they provide valuable evidence that can be used to validate one or the other.

One such paradigm is the democratization or transition model, which, though widely criticized in the 2000s, was given new credibility by the Uprising, with “democracy spotting,” again, very much the order of the day in the early days of the Arab Spring. In this paradigm the stress is on agency, elites’ choices that enable or obstruct democratization, with the key to democratic transition a pact between moderates in the regime and in the opposition. The books reviewed do seem to fit most comfortably with this paradigm, with Lesch and Wieland assuming that a pact was possible and also showing why it failed. Wieland’s narrative is organized around the notion of the lost opportunities of Bashar al-Asad to make the transition. Lesch too, seeks explanation in agency: he begins and ends the book with the lament “it wasn’t supposed to be this way;” and though he qualifies the remark with the aside, “but maybe it was inevitable,” this inevitability itself was only because of the regime’s habitual repressive response to any demands for political reform.

Certainly the Uprising seemed, at first, to validate the global hegemony of democratic ideology with the protestors, secular or Islamist, widely seeming to accept democracy as the solution to their countries’ problems. Most remarkable is how far this ideal was absorbed even in Syria, to the point of protestors inviting intervention from the West, in spite of the less-than-encouraging examples of US democracy promotion in neighboring Iraq and Lebanon. Some of this optimism has dissipated as sectarian narratives take over. Observers are now less certain whether post-Uprising regimes will prove very democratic, very stable, or very effective in solving deep-seated structural problems. Indeed, the global hollowing out of democracy by neoliberalism, reflected recently in the external pressures on post-revolutionary Egypt to succumb to highly unpopular economic “reforms” demanded by global financial institutions, suggests that the big socioeconomic issues that affect people’s lives will be removed from political agendas, and electoral competition will turn on identity politics. Syria is likely to be even more dependent than Egypt on external funders to reconstruct the country.

The main rival of the transition paradigm, that of authoritarian resilience or upgrading, stressed authoritarian regimes' ability to co-opt new constituencies, even as they abandoned the old populist "social contract" with the masses. These self-reinvented "post-populist" regimes used privatization to foster new crony capitalists; exploited the divisions of secularist and Islamist to divide and rule; allowed safety valve political pluralism, including semi-free elections to some offices; and used the War on Terror to acquire protective global alliances. There is empirical evidence in the books reviewed that Syria had followed this path of upgrading, even if later and less completely than Egypt and Tunisia. Recently published work that interpreted Syria effectively via this paradigm, included that by Haddad, King; and Heydemann and Leenders.¹

On the face of it, of course, the upgrading paradigm failed along with the authoritarian regimes it had analyzed. What it underestimated was that for each gain from authoritarian upgrading, there were hidden costs whose accumulation reached a tipping point in the Uprisings. Bashar al-Asad had mistakenly believed his nationalist foreign policy would immunize his regime from such costs. Yet, the survival of his regime two years after the Uprising started does suggest that in some respects, upgrading did increase the regime's resilience. If this survival is chiefly a function of repression, one can only repress when a critical mass of supporters is willing to help, or at least refrain from, joining the opposition, and Asad's regime had managed to co-opt new constituents that more or less stood with it.

Both of these paradigms stress the choices, interests, and strategies of elites and counter-elites as the keys to understanding democratization or authoritarianism. Yet, we cannot understand agency adequately without the context of structure. When it comes to structure, historical sociology offers a promising approach, showing particularly how the interaction of the international and internal levels each constitutes the other. In the Syrian case, and this is relevant to the Levant generally, the weak state paradigm appears most useful. In this narrative, the post-Ottoman breakup of the Arab region into a series of artificial states left identity and legitimacy deficits in each, with state elites having to compete with sub-, trans-, and supra-state identities to legitimize their rule; and several identity groups (Palestinians, Kurds) deprived of statehood. The post-World War I Versailles settlement arguably set up these states to fail. How elites played their hands mattered, but the hands they had been dealt were more or less poor. After the post-independence failure of liberal oligarchies in Syria and Iraq, state-building under Ba'athist populist authoritarianism appeared to consolidate durable regimes built around army, party, Arab nationalism, and oil rent. Yet, the Ba'athist state-building formula had numerous built-in flaws, notably its reliance on repression, sectarian solidarity, and legitimacy from conflict with the enemies of the Arabs. This made it vulnerable to various combinations of external destabilization and internal revolt. Saddam Husayn gambled on Arab nationalism and war to address Iraq's vulnerabilities which, however, invited global intervention and the deconstruction of the Iraqi state. Bashar al-Asad used a combination of neoliberal reform and nationalist foreign policy; the former alienated the Ba'ath's traditional constituents, and the latter provoked its traditional external enemies. The deconstruction of the two Ba'athist states now threatens to reopen the Versailles settlement, with borders in question and warring identities — Sunni, Kurdish, non-Sunni Arab — in flux. Whether post-Ba'athist state building in Syria will start from scratch, as it did in Iraq, depends on whether the state establishment survives the Uprising; to the extent the Iraqi precedent is replicated, the outcome in Syria will be something between a failed state and a "sectarian democracy," penetrated and buffeted by trans-state identity wars and the rivalries of global and regional powers. This will shape a structural context extremely daunting and constraining for local actors.

1. Stephen King, *The New Authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2009); Bassam Haddad, *Business Networks in Syria: the Political Economy of Authoritarian Resilience* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012); Steven Heydemann and Reinoud Leenders, *Middle East Authoritarianisms: Governance, Contestation and Regime Resilience in Syria and Iran* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press 2013).

The books reviewed here are particularly good on agency — explaining the choices of actors, both regime and opposition, and showing why these made a difference. And agency does matter, with the fateful decision of Bashar al-Asad to resort to the security solution in 2011 setting Syria on a tragic path that might just have been avoided had his choice been different. But such choices can also be seen as path-dependent outcomes of the initial structural framework within which regional actors have had to operate since the post-WWI birth of the states system — a birth amid a “peace to end all peace,” as David Fromkin (1989) put it, that continues the haunt the region.²

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2. David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Avon Books, 1989).

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan in Transition: Beyond 2014?, ed. by Shanthie Mariet D'Souza. New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2012. 206 pages. \$31.

Reviewed by Robert D. Crews

What are Afghanistan's prospects following Barack Obama's pledge in May 2012 to "responsibly wind down the war in Afghanistan"? By 2014, the US and NATO hope to have in place Afghan security forces numbering 352,000 men and donor pledges to cover their annual expense of \$5–7 billion. Beyond this basic scheme, dozens of questions remain. Will Afghan forces prove effective? Will the US maintain bases? What will happen to an economy that depends on aid for 70–90% of its GDP? Will the political system survive, or should Afghans brace for the return of the Taliban and another round of ethnic mobilization and proxy war fueled by Afghanistan's neighbors?

Amid this uncertainty, *Afghanistan in Transition* represents a timely challenge to focus the attention of policy-makers on the multifaceted issues at stake. Shanthie Mariet D'Souza has crafted a thoughtful and comprehensive guide to the thorny politics of the American drawdown. This volume makes an important contribution to policy debates by highlighting what she and her contributors identify as "an Afghan perspective," which, they hope, might inform an "Afghan-led" and "Afghan-owned" process of stabilizing the country. Drawn from a workshop at the Institute of South Asian Studies in Singapore in January 2012, the collection features 13 brief contributions by former officials and advisors, NGO activists, and scholars — nearly all Afghan — on crucial aspects of the transition.

In mapping out the many and varied dangers facing this project, the contributors offer differing perspectives, but share two broad areas of agreement. The first is that the Afghan state is deeply flawed and in urgent need of sweeping reforms. In an incisive chapter surveying the transition process, Ali A. Jalali observes that the Af-

ghan constitutional order accords too much power to the executive branch; it is at once too centralized when it comes to offering services, and too decentralized to make local elites accountable. Corruption and criminality flow from the structure of the state. "The centralisation of power, budget and appointments from Kabul, as well as the weakness of judiciary and legislative institutions," Ahmad Wali Masoud argues in his chapter, "have led to widespread corruption and the emergence of a powerful economic mafia with [a] nexus with the government" (p. 79). Focusing on communication strategies, Muhammad Sabir Siddiqi contrasts the clumsiness of the Karzai administration with the forceful clarity of the Taliban, a distinction made more pronounced by the former's propensity to address its audience as "subjects" rather than "citizens" (p. 121).

The second area of consensus at the core of this book relates to the authors' assessment of the responsibility of the international community. Rather than view corruption as an endemic feature of Afghan culture, as foreign observers are inclined to do, Jalali insists instead that it is a function of an "accommodating" style adopted by the Afghan leadership and its international partners with local power holders and patronage networks" (p. 29). Similarly, in an insightful essay critiquing myths about Afghan governance, Shahmehood Miakhel faults the international community for undermining democratic processes: the US and its allies not only spent billions of dollars without accountability, but they ignored the democratic will of Afghans and failed to display any interest in institution-building. Najeeb Ur Rahman Manalai and Rangina Hamidi point to the need for greater coordination of development efforts and call for the demilitarization of aid. Noting that some 80% of foreign aid has bypassed government channels, Manalai adds that international support for "parallel institutions" have simultaneously shortchanged the Afghan state by siphoning off local professional staff. Hamidi presents the most damning illustration of mismanagement in the much-celebrated construction, by foreign NGOs, of two dormitories for female students at Kandahar University. Despite increasing female enrollment, none

moved into the new facilities. Meanwhile, the university remained without power and water, and students were relegating to studying outside the unoccupied dormitories.

Sharp disagreements among the contributors emerge when they turn to the Taliban, however. Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai sanguinely calls for the acceleration of negotiations as a critical component of the transition process, and Rasul Bakhsh Rais's chapter on Pakistan depicts Islamabad as a firm backer of a political settlement. Others remain more cautious, with Masoud rejecting talks outright. In a similar vein, Marvin G. Weinbaum's chapter on the US role warns that "the Taliban alone continue to believe in a military outcome" (p. 191). If this very valuable book has any shortcoming, it may be that this last essential piece of the puzzle — how the Taliban see the transition process — may merit much more of our attention in the years to come.

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ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Pathways to Peace: America and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, ed. by Daniel C. Kurtzer. New York. Palgrave Macmillan. 2012. 237 pages. \$30.

Brokers of Deceit: How the US Has Undermined Peace in the Middle East, by Rashid Khalidi. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. 2012. 167 pages. \$25.95.

Reviewed by Dr. Douglas Little

Twenty years ago this summer, Israeli and Palestinian leaders meeting secretly in the land of the midnight sun hammered out the parameters for a two-state solution based on the principle of peace for land. In September 1993, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leader Yasir 'Arafat shook hands in the Rose Garden and, with US President Bill Clinton's blessing, unveiled the Oslo Peace Process that was supposed to produce a final agreement ending three generations of

conflict in the Holy Land. Two decades later, however, the two sides are farther apart than ever, hundreds of Israelis and thousands of Palestinians have died at each other's hands, and US policy-makers seem to regard the conflict as insoluble. The two books under review here offer radically different explanations of what went wrong and what must be done to secure a just and lasting peace.

Daniel Kurtzer's *Pathways to Peace* is a collection of essays by veteran American, Israeli, and Palestinian "peace processors" who remain convinced that a two-state solution is still the only way to end the conflict. Three experienced US negotiators — Kurtzer, William Quandt, and Aaron David Miller — all of whom began their careers during the 1970s, point out that the Arab-Israeli conflict has always seemed unripe for resolution, even on the eve of major breakthroughs like the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference. All three now feel a great sense of urgency because if the United States cannot jump-start the stalled peace process very soon, the steady expansion of Israeli settlements on the West Bank and growing cynicism among the Palestinian people and their leaders will make the dream of two states, one Jewish and the other Arab, living side by side in the Holy Land, impossible.

The Arab contributors to this volume insist that despite Israeli claims to the contrary, the PLO remains a reliable partner for peace. Marwan Muasher, a Jordanian diplomat who served as King 'Abdullah II's foreign minister for two years, argues that the key to keeping the Palestinians on board is to breathe new life into the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, a Saudi-backed proposal that promised unconditional Arab recognition of Israel in exchange for Israel withdrawing to "the Green Line" that demarcated its pre-1967 borders. Samih al-Abid and Samir Hileleh, who held positions in the Palestinian Authority throughout the Oslo era, contend that the biggest obstacle to the resumption of peace negotiations is Israel's knee-jerk bashing of the PLO to score debating points with American Jews. And Ghassan Khatib, who served on the PLO's negotiating team during the 1990s, blasts the United

States for failing to condemn Israeli foes of the two-state solution such as Michael Freund, an aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who brazenly remarked in 2011 that “the Green Line is dead and buried” because “it is no longer of any relevance, politically or otherwise” (p. 77).

The Israeli contributors to *Pathways to Peace* support the two-state solution not merely as a matter of simple justice but also as the only way to avoid a binational one-state solution that would eventually make Jews a minority and Palestinians a majority in a single political entity west of the Jordan River. Avi Gil, the director-general of Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Ariel Sharon, says it all in the subtitle of his essay: “Don’t Wait for the Dust to Settle; Act Now.” Yossi Alpher, a special adviser to Prime Minister Ehud Barak at the abortive 2000 Camp David II Summit, says that American officials must walk a diplomatic tightrope, assuaging Israeli anxieties about Palestinian untrustworthiness while curbing Israel’s appetite for more land on the West Bank.

The most interesting essays in this collection examine the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the bottom up. Journalist Gershon Gorenberg urges US policy-makers not to exaggerate the influence of the ultra-Zionist settlers and to remember that Israeli moderates, who overwhelmingly favor a two-state solution and oppose new settlements, hold the balance of power. Robert Malley, who rode shotgun with Bill Clinton at Camp David in 2000, argues that America’s refusal to talk with Hamas leaders, who have recently hinted that they might recognize Israel, only plays into the hands of even more extreme Palestinian groups like Islamic Jihad. Robert Danin, an adviser to Quartet representative Tony Blair, reminds readers not to underestimate the accomplishments of Palestinian technocrats like Prime Minister Salam Fayyad in building viable economic institutions. P. J. Dermer and Steven White, who worked closely with US security coordinator Keith Dayton on the West Bank, make a similar case for recognizing the PLO’s achievements in controlling terrorism.

Pathways to Peace ends with Daniel Kurtzer’s brief blueprint for a set of US parameters for a two-state solution, the

most important of which is the creation of a “physical template” outlining permanent borders for both Israel and Palestine. “President Obama got it right in May 2011,” Kurtzer writes, “when he urged that negotiations [must] produce borders that are based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps” (p. 197). Kurtzer implies the United States does not need to reinvent the wheel but merely to dust off the Oslo playbook and update it for the 21st century.

In *Brokers of Deceit*, Rashid Khalidi, who holds the Edward Said Chair of Modern Arab Studies at Columbia University, argues that Kurtzer and company have gotten things backward. Far from being the key to a solution to the conflict, the United States has been a principal part of the problem. Khalidi begins with a very edgy but also very readable account of America’s persistent tilt toward Israel from the 1940s to the 2010s, which he argues has prevented progress toward peace and justice for the Palestinians. He is especially critical of the “Orwellian language” consistently employed by US officials (“peace process;” “security;” “terrorism”), which has over the years concealed more than it revealed. Khalidi insists that peace process was a code word for bad faith, that security only mattered for Israel, and that terrorism was in the eye of the abhorrer.

Khalidi uses three case studies — the 1982 Reagan Plan, the Oslo Peace Process of the 1990s, and the stillborn policies of Obama’s administration — to demonstrate that the United States has not been an “honest broker” in the Middle East, but rather “a broker of deceit.” American policymakers may have started with good intentions, but the reluctance of oil-rich “Arab despotisms” like Saudi Arabia to support the PLO’s nationalist aspirations and the power of “the Israel Lobby” in Washington made it all too easy for US officials to disregard the interests of the Palestinian people.

The rambling chapter on the Reagan Plan actually begins with a scathing account of the 1978 Camp David Summit, where according to Khalidi, Jimmy Carter and Anwar Sadat sold out the Palestinians in order to secure Israel’s agreement to withdraw from the Sinai. By failing to define “autonomy” themselves, Carter and Sadat enabled Prime Minister Me-

nachem Begin to impose his own exceedingly restrictive definition that stopped well short of real self-determination and eventual Palestinian statehood. When Ronald Reagan tried to step between the Israelis and the Palestinians in the wake of Begin's invasion of Lebanon, he had nothing of substance to offer Yasir 'Arafat, largely because Tel Aviv, not Washington, defined what was possible. Khalidi says that Reagan's attempt to cast himself in the role of honest broker was all the more insulting because his peace plan did not refer to "Palestinians" but rather to "refugees."

The chapter on the 1990s makes especially good reading because Khalidi served as a Palestinian advisor on the Jordanian delegation to the 1991 Madrid Conference and also participated in the follow-up talks with the Israelis in 1992. He is brutally honest regarding his own opposition to the subsequent Oslo Peace Process. Despite assurances from Bill Clinton and Yitzhak Rabin, Israel continued to expand its settlements while refusing to accept real self-determination for the Palestinians. Although Khalidi blames the PLO for being too eager to make a deal at Oslo and for being unaware of the havoc wreaked by Jewish settlers after Fatah departed the West Bank following the June 1967 War, he recognizes that Arafat desperately needed Israeli recognition to enhance his influence in Washington. The bigger culprit was the United States, which was unable to prevent the Israelis from building new settlements beyond the Green Line, particularly after Benjamin Netanyahu became prime minister in 1996.

In his final case study, Khalidi paints an extremely unflattering portrait of Barack Obama's half-hearted efforts to broker peace. Despite the good intentions articulated in his speech at Cairo University in June 2009, Obama failed to deliver the freeze on settlements that he promised President Mahmud 'Abbas, largely because of pressure from AIPAC and the Israel Lobby. To be sure, Khalidi does note that Netanyahu's reelection in 2009, the Tea Party upheaval that rocked the US Congress in 2010, and the fallout from the Arab Spring in 2011 made Obama's attempt to revive the peace process well-nigh impossible. Yet Khalidi also insists that Obama relied too heavily on pro-Israel advisers like Dennis Ross and main-

stream Democratic pollsters who worried that his head-butting with Netanyahu would cost him Jewish votes in November 2012.

Khalidi's take-away message is quite straightforward: The United States cannot be an honest broker while serving simultaneously as "Israel's lawyer." The way most Palestinians see it, the "peace process" favored by Carter, Reagan, Bush "41," Clinton, and Obama was a clever trick to divert and placate them while the Israelis gobbled up more and more territory, so that by 2012, a two-state solution is no longer possible. What is to be done? Khalidi argues that to achieve self-determination, Palestinians must seize control of their own destiny and practice "self-reliance," rejecting Fatah's gerontocracy in favor of younger leaders and ignoring the siren song intoned by peace processors like Daniel Kurtzer and Aaron Miller.

Will Palestinians channel their inner Ralph Waldo Emerson, as Khalidi recommends? Or will they channel their inner Reinhold Niebuhr, whose therapeutic "serenity prayer" sounds an awful lot like Kurtzer's pathway to peace? ("God grant us the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, the courage to change what can be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference," Barack Obama's favorite theologian wrote a few years before the children of Isaac founded the State of Israel.) Given the ugly stalemate in the Holy Land today, most Palestinians will likely put their money on Emerson, while most Israelis remain eager for the children of Isma'il to embrace Niebuhr.

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EGYPT

Nasser's Gamble: How Intervention in Yemen Caused the Six-Day War and the Decline of Egyptian Power, by Jesse Ferris. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012. \$45.

Reviewed by W. Andrew Terrill

The Yemen War of 1962–1970 often appears as a largely forgotten episode of Egyptian military intervention into a coun-

try known for its well-armed, tribal population and its willingness to wage unrelenting combat against foreign invaders. To the extent this conflict is remembered at all, it is often characterized as “Nasser’s Vietnam,” a long, frustrating, guerrilla war that dissipated the strength of the Egyptian Army in the five years before the June 1967 war with Israel. In reexamining this important but overlooked war, Jesse Ferris adds a tremendous amount of meticulously-researched detail to our understanding of the conflict while underscoring the war’s significance within the regional history of that era. Ferris also elegantly makes the case that the intervention in Yemen helped lead to the Egyptian brinkmanship that ignited the June 1967 war with Israel, which in turn led to the subsequent reordering of the Arab regional political system.

Egypt’s intervention into Yemen took place shortly after a September 1962 coup in which Yemen’s ruling Imam was deposed by a group of army officers inspired by the Egyptians. The intervention occurred during the “mature phase” (p. 299) of the Arab Cold War, which involved furious ideological conflict between revolutionary republics such as Egypt and conservative monarchies led by Saudi Arabia. As with some more recent wars, Egypt’s intervention into Yemen was supposed to have been easy. Egyptian planners believed that the Yemeni revolutionaries struggling to create a pro-Nasser republic could brush aside reactionary forces with only the assistance of a limited number of Egyptian commandos for a couple of weeks (p. 62). Instead, Yemen turned into a “hive of wasps” (p. 224) requiring the Egyptians to escalate the number of troops in the country for their forces to remain capable of effectively waging war. At the height of the Egyptian presence, they may have deployed as many as 70,000 troops in Yemen, a huge portion of their army. Still, this force could not comprehensively defeat their Yemeni enemies. Royalist tribal forces with strong financial and material support from Saudi Arabia fought hard and effectively to defeat the Egyptian-backed republican regime. Moreover, once the Egyptian-supported Yemeni government began to appear totally subservient before Cairo, indigenous sup-

port for the new regime plummeted. Egyptian leaders then felt they had to defend the revolutionary government themselves if they wanted it to survive.

While Egypt found it easy to enter and then expand the Yemen War, it was much more difficult to extricate itself from the conflict. The war and the threat Nasser presented to Saudi Arabia also severely damaged Egypt’s relations with the United States, which had previously been providing generous grants of food aid. The Soviets took advantage of Cairo’s declining ability to play off the superpowers and began placing tough demands on Egypt. As the economy suffered and international problems multiplied, withdrawing from Yemen seemed important, but there was also the question of sunk costs. The Egyptian public had endured a number of shortages and other economic deprivation due to the war; it would be difficult to explain that this was for nothing. And then there were the soldiers. The danger of tens of thousands of disgruntled soldiers returning to Egypt frightened Nasser for a number of reasons. In particular, the Egyptian president feared a situation in which a coup might spring from defeated military forces just as his own coup in 1952 had its roots in the defeat of the Egyptian army in the 1948–1949 Arab-Israeli war.

The regional situation changed in spring 1967 as Syrian-Israeli tensions flared and threatened to engulf the region in war. While many authors portray Nasser as being sucked into this conflict by faulty Soviet intelligence regarding a possible Israeli attack on Syria, Ferris portrays him as seizing the perceived opportunity presented by the escalating conflict. The Egyptian leader believed that confronting the Israelis while not actually provoking war could revive his image as an Arab hero and make it more difficult for Riyadh to stand against him in Yemen. Nasser also hoped to undermine Saudi efforts to build a rival regional bloc built around an “Islamic Pact.” He further used the crisis to extract additional concessions from the Soviets and remind the United States of his “capacity for trouble-making” (p. 270). Nasser’s efforts to both threaten the Israelis and deter them from a first strike through the use of international

and regional political moves involved significant risk but also a tremendous payoff had he been successful. Ferris quotes one American diplomat as stating that Nasser was on the verge of achieving “his largest political victory since Suez” (p. 270).

Instead, Nasser’s mistakes caught up with him. The crisis he thought he could manage below the threshold of war was not contained. Once the war started, Ferris maintains, catastrophic Egyptian defeat was a predictable outcome since the military had been primarily structured to be coup-proof and thus rewarded cronyism over competence. If Egypt lost the June 1967 War, Ferris is nevertheless not certain that Israel completely won the conflict due to the need to fight “a bloody war over the same territory six years later” (p. 290). Instead, Ferris sees the true jackpot winner as Saudi Arabia, which saw its greatest Arab rival defeated and humbled. At the 1967 Khartoum Conference from August to September, Nasser agreed to withdraw his troops from Yemen in exchange for Saudi aid to the crippled Egyptian economy, transforming the Egyptian president from “arch-nemesis to supplicant” (p. 298). Surprisingly, the Yemeni republic survived, although it too needed to show lavish respect for Saudi sensitivities.

Overall, the strengths of this work are tremendous. The author has presented an exceptional strategic analysis of the motivations and actions of a multiplicity of regional and extra-regional actors during an era of turbulence and struggle in the Middle East. The author also informs his work with a solid understanding of diplomatic actions and military strategy and tactics. The archival research is especially impressive, drawing on sources in English, Arabic, Hebrew, and Russian. As a result, this book will probably stand as the most important academic work on the Yemen War until a variety of currently closed archives are opened and a new scholar of Ferris’ capabilities examines the documents inside.

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IRAQ

Reclaiming Iraq: The 1920 Revolution and the Founding of the Modern State,

by Abbas Kadhim. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2012. 213 pages. \$55.

Reviewed by Stacy E. Holden

Abbas Kadhim sets out to qualitatively change our understanding of the critical political events of 1920 in *Reclaiming Iraq: The 1920 Revolution and the Founding of the Modern State*. That year, anti-British sentiment in the nascent mandate of Iraq came to a head, leading Sunnis and Shi’a alike to engage foreign troops in a heady effort to regain a measure of freedom from the oppressive colonial system emerging at the hands of the British. Ultimately, this insurgency, heretofore deemed a “revolt” by historians, cost the British 400 lives and 40 million pounds. Kadhim insists that the term “revolt” does not adequately describe a movement in which participants intended their liberation. He argues that “the 1920 Revolution was a genuine attempt by the Iraqis to attain freedom from oppressive occupation” (p. 168). Ultimately, however, the author’s argument seems premised more on semantic hairsplitting than on an overarching reevaluation of this event.

One problem lies in the fact that the author’s exploitation of primary sources is not an exhaustive accounting of the insights and information available to historians. The author has not visited archives, depending instead on published memoirs and a handful of published documents. At a minimum, Kadhim should have considered the use of Cengage Learning Historical Archives of Iraq, which, edited by Charles Tripp, include documents on “the Arab Uprising of 1920” (<http://www.tlmea.com/iraq/index.htm>). Further, the British memoirs on which the author relied could have been contextualized, as in the case of Lieutenant-General Sir Aylmer L. Haldane, who is not even introduced by his first name (p. 72). Who is he? Why should the reader trust him as a historical source for the events of 1920? The list of published British memoirs used by Kadhim is not exhaustive, and so he relies (too) heavily on Gertrude Bell and Haldane.

That said, the author has unearthed some truly remarkable sources of Iraqi participants, both through memoirs and interviews. In one case, an interview with a participant's son reveals that a tribe lost 25 people to a British bombing campaign, including the interlocutor's stepmother (p. 77). However, given the importance that the author places on incorporating the views of these Iraqi freedom fighters, one wonders why he did not include mention of the memoir *Batal al-Islam* by Mahdi al-Khalisi's son Muhammad in the 1920s.³

Some chapters are disorganized and without clear purpose. For example, the fifth chapter treats "Revolutionary Networks," and its analysis of tribalism begins — ahistorically, in my opinion — with the onset of Islam in the 7th century. It would have been much more useful for the reader to have learned a lot more of Ottoman policies regarding tribes, which, as notably argued by Hanna Batatu, led to the creation of wealthy landowners.⁴ For some reason, Khadim does not examine Ottoman policies with respect to the tribes until the end of the chapter, well after his (otherwise interesting) discussion of one wealthy tribal leader, the influential Sayyid Muhsin Abu Tabikh (pp. 123–130). A discussion of Ottoman changes in land tenure would have contextualized the life and economic circumstances of this revolutionary.

More editorial attention may have helped mitigate the monograph's organizational deficiencies. I will only mention the occasional absence of pronoun antecedents or what is at times a confusing overuse of passive voice. The most egregious example of the need for editing is undoubtedly the fact that a lot of critical information is embedded in the footnotes. At various points in the book, crucial information, such as the

geographic location of a particular tribe or the difficulties encountered by the British in reaching it, is found in a footnote (e.g., fn. 25, 26, 77, and 182).

In short, *Reclaiming Iraq* does not carry through on its alluring promise of becoming the definitive account of the Revolution of 1920. Although the author has usefully excavated some of the lost voices of this Revolution, the glaring gaps in source material and the internal disorganization of the chapters ultimately makes this a difficult monograph to engage.

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ISRAEL

The Triumph of Israel's Radical Right, by Ami Pedahzur. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 277 pages. \$29.95.

Reviewed by Gideon Rahat

This book presents the fruit of almost two decades of research by the most prominent scholar of the Israeli radical right today. As Cas Mudde notes at the back of the book, Pedahzur is indeed the successor of the late Ehud Sprinzak. The book is, first of all, the most detailed, systematic, and comprehensive work on the subject to date. If one wants to acquire a general knowledge of Israel's radical right, this is the book to read. If one aims to study a specific aspect of the phenomenon (e.g., Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination or the disengagement from Gaza), a specific grouping (e.g., a political party, an organization, or social movement) or a certain personality, this is the place to locate it, and then place it in its proper context. These details, reinforced by a timeline of major events, an appendix with figures concerning the settlements and the settlers, a table that presents the electoral achievements of the right, and illustrative maps, make this a must-have book for any scholar of Israeli politics. Beyond that, *The Triumph of Israel's Radical Right* should

3. For the French translation of this manuscript, see Pierre-Jean Luizard, trans., *La vie de l'ayatollah Mahdi al-Khalisi par son fils* (Paris: Editions de la Martinière, 2005). The original Arabic manuscript is due to be published this year.

4. Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 73–79.

also be of interest to comparativists, especially those who deal with the radical political right, because, as the author claims, Israel is the only case within the democratic world, at least, in which the radical right became such a central political force.

Second, without sacrificing contextual factors and an analysis of unique elements (such as the centrality of religion for the Israeli right), the author succeeds in placing the Israeli case within a cross-national comparative perspective. Actually, the book starts with the understanding that the radical right is much more than the idea of Greater Israel. Using analytical tools that were taken from the comparative literature (the three elements of nativism, authoritarianism and populism), the author convincingly demonstrates that central elements of the radical right ideology and perceptions can be found within parties that are identified as moderate (Likud) and as mainly religious (the ultra-Orthodox parties).

This brings us to the third achievement of the book: the framing of the Israeli story as the development of a new radical right that replaces the old radical one. That is, beyond all the details, beyond the explicitly loose theoretical approach that describes the radical right as a network, lies a very parsimonious claim. We read here a fascinating account of how a force that includes energetic activists sends arms to all of the relevant arenas: civil society, parties, parliament, cabinet and the bureaucracy. At the same time, the force that is the far right cannot be identified with a single party or civil association. If one thinks that one must centralize power in order to make a change, Pedahzur proves them wrong; he convincingly demonstrates that decentralization can be an equally successful strategy. This is a very important theoretical claim and the author could have made much more of it. (It is, of course, not too late).

Writing an academic study about Israel, especially about its radical right, is not an easy task. Everything you write might be politically (mis)interpreted. Pedahzur succeeds in maneuvering around this problem and presenting a sound academic account. I believe that it is thanks to the deep knowledge and personal contact he developed over so many years with the subjects of his

research, together with his ability to retain a critical view of them, and of Israeli society and the polity as a whole. Indeed, among the nice surprises that this otherwise academic work offers are accounts of the author's personal experiences. But, or rather in view of his long experience, one cannot ignore the author's warnings that some of the ideas coming from what has widely been thought of as a fringe group, started by ultraradical Meir Kahane, have made their way into what is considered to be a legitimate discourse and to political parties that are considered to be mainstream.

When I finished reading the book, which ends with an account of the electoral victory of the right in 2009 and its consequences, I wondered what the author would say about the 2013 election results. It seems that beyond the rhetoric of "new politics" the triumph of the ideas (even if not all the forces) of the radical right continue to have a strong influence on the Israeli polity. It would also be interesting to know more about the connections that exist between the Israeli and the European radical right, which would only substantiate Pedahzur's claims. So read the book, keep it on your shelf, and look forward to Pedahzur's future works on the subject.

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LEBANON

Pax Syriaana: Elite Politics in Postwar Lebanon, by Rola el-Husseini. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2012. 319 pages. \$45.

Reviewed by Dr. Marie-Joëlle Zahar

Postwar Lebanese politics have often been described as an era of systematic Syrian control. In this timely study, Rola el-Husseini details one of the key mechanisms of Syrian influence in Lebanese politics: elite recruitment. Based on extensive fieldwork and interviews, this qualitative study maps the spectrum of postwar Leba-

nese elites. Meticulously tracing the paths through which elites attain and retain power, *Pax Syriana* thus underscores one of the most significant continuities in Lebanese politics. In a country characterized by weak political parties, the author documents the entrenchment of old notable elites while identifying new players on the Lebanese political scene: warlords, religious players, and businessmen. Whether old or new, most (but not all) Lebanese political elites seem bent on establishing sectarian political dynasties. As was the case before the war, clientelism is an important tool in the toolbox of Lebanon's political class; however, financial means are also increasingly important. With the state and state institutions being the repository of financial means during the country's reconstruction, this reviewer would nuance el-Husseini's statement that the state in Lebanon is weak, and side instead with those, like Reinoud Leenders, who argue that it is stronger than may seem at first sight.

The study's rich details and clear exposition provide a very accessible introduction for anyone interested in the contemporary politics of Lebanon. Not only does el-Husseini provide a succinct, but substantially comprehensive political history of postwar Lebanon, she also develops a typology of Lebanese elites. El-Husseini thus draws a distinction between state elites who "are at the zenith (or slightly past the zenith of their careers, and ...tend to occupy important positions in state institutions" (p. xx); strategic elites, "individuals who emerged onto the political scene because of special circumstances or unusual talents" (p. xx) and who frequently operate from the shadows; and emerging elites "composed of young, aspiring politicians who are ready to accede to positions of political responsibility when the occasion presents itself" (p. xxi). The author provides an analytical lens into the convergence of pro- and anti-Syrian elites by using the useful concepts of elite settlements (the equivalent of political pacts) and elite fractionalization. Thus she documents the manner in which Syria succeeded in weakening and, ultimately, bringing most of its opponents into the fold.

But the book's strength may also be its weakness. By favoring a detailed description of elite recruitment and circulation, el-Husseini has left aside a broader consideration of the environment in which elites operate and which affects their margin of maneuver. Indeed, in her well-founded critique of Arend Lijphart's analysis of Lebanon's First Republic, the author emphasized that the arrangement required two conditions to work smoothly: that the interests of external powers be "better served by a cohesive Lebanese nation" and that "the cooperative position of the elites would be supported at the grassroots level" (p. 6). If the interaction of external powers is somehow addressed in the book, particularly in relation to the convergence of interests (or lack thereof) between Syria on the one hand and (at different times) Saudi Arabia, France, and the United States on the other, there is very little in *Pax Syriana* about the impact of the grassroots on elite politics. Yet, el-Husseini's own observations would suggest the need to pay more attention to this factor. In her chapter on emerging elites, the author identifies seven new types of elites, four of which emerge because of their connection to a (more or less broad) popular constituency: the civil society activist, the local representative, the Hizbullahi, and the nationalist militant. Further, in her penultimate chapter, the author observes that elites tend to agree on bilateral relations Syria but continue to disagree on their visions of Lebanon. Both of these observations suggest that elites cannot totally disregard their clients and that the various Lebanese communities continue to play a role in the calculations of the members of Lebanon's political class.

This does not, however, detract from the fact that *Pax Syriana* is a well-researched and carefully crafted book which will be of interest not only to students of Lebanese politics but also to students of elite politics. The book's clear exposition makes it accessible to undergraduates and seasoned researchers alike.

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SAUDI ARABIA

Legal and Political Reforms in Sa‘udi Arabia, by Joseph A. Kéchichian. London: Routledge, 2013. 368 pages. \$160.

Reviewed by J.E. Peterson

It is often facetiously assumed that while the economy of Saudi Arabia has undergone enormous transformation and perhaps even that its society is being transformed, its politics remain static and fossilized. It is perhaps more accurate to say that political change is a continuing process in the Kingdom — a process where change seems to move at a glacial pace and is thus not easy to discern. Joe Kéchichian is a well-known scholar of the Gulf with a long list of books to his name. This is not by any means the first of his works to focus on Saudi Arabia, as he has previously published volumes on succession in Saudi Arabia and a biography of King Faysal. His research for this book included a dozen visits to Saudi Arabia between 2007 and 2011, where he interviewed 48 personalities, of whom 32 wished to remain anonymous, and many of whom were jurists.

Kéchichian’s focus is on how the administration of politics in Saudi Arabia has changed on the last two decades or so. His central conclusion is that changes have been the result of various pressures on the Saudi royal family and the crown prince, now king, ‘Abdullah, as much or more as independent initiatives or “gifts” of the family and ‘Abdullah. This approach demonstrates a more nuanced view of politics within the Kingdom and how it has changed than the more commonly expressed views that either the regime seeks to buy off dissent or that ‘Abdullah is a kind of “closet liberal democrat.”

In this regard, Kéchichian examines the pressures for change, as well as the process and the outcome. One prism employed is that of variant views of groups of ‘ulama and the regime’s reaction. Another is the emergence after the Kuwait War of the practice of submitting petitions to King Fahd and later King ‘Abdullah, accompanied by his response of creating a “National Dialogue”

to address the issues raised — as well as international dialogues to discuss Western reaction to Islamist extremism and its impact on relations. Another response was increasing the scope of formal political participation through the creation of the Consultative Assembly (*Majlis al-Shura*) and the tentative institution of partially elected municipal councils. Perhaps most importantly, the foundations for change were laid in the nature of the Basic Law of 1992, a concrete step for institutionalization of political power and participation. Another key development in institutionalization was the 2006 creation of the *Hay‘at al-Bay‘a*, or Allegiance Commission, which codified the procedure for future succession to the kingship — a process as yet unsolved but perhaps ameliorated by this institution.

It is a rare book on contemporary Saudi Arabia that does not discuss the country’s relationship with the United States. The threads of the bilateral relationship are frequently discussed in the media and have been studied at greater length and depth in a number of books, but Kéchichian covers the essential points authoritatively and provides worthwhile insights.

As the author notes, the slow pace of change was not the fault necessarily of the government or the Al Sa‘ud royal family but derived in large part from resistance by its conservative society. He gives high marks, with some reservations, to ‘Abdullah’s approach: “[T]he reformist measures introduced since 2005 constituted a unique revolutionary process in the kingdom, which reflected the monarch’s ‘will to power,’ and which echoed his own shortcomings in so many areas, including sensitive questions that dealt with succession, religious issues, economic matters, and political concerns. Shortcomings notwithstanding, the monarch tackled all of these topics with gusto. In fact, many of his thoughtful initiatives fulfilled progressive adjustments, rather than the full introduction of Jeffersonian democracy . . .” (p. 213).

The most original and valuable contribution of this book is perhaps its discourse on legal reform and changes to the judiciary. Kéchichian points out a principal goal of the king “was not only to habituate the clergy

to adapt to changing circumstances, but to also welcome the very idea of uniformity in the law, something that was rejected by staunchly individualistic clerics whose privilege to interpret at will would be significantly altered. That was the logical consequence of ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abd al-‘Aziz’s legal reforms, and that was what truly bothered entrenched clerics who rejected such compromises, preferring to live in their well-oiled cocoons” (p. 218).

All of the selected topics are discussed very comprehensively. In addition, the lengthy appendices provide documentation — valuable for reference — for many of the developments in these arenas. That makes it, in some ways, a difficult book to review as much of the author’s presentation is well known to those who watch developments in the kingdom while, on the other hand, the level of detail is . . . well, emphatically detailed. This often gives the impression that the book is at least as much descriptive as analytical. The author makes considerable use of the term “will to power” but never defines it beyond a parenthetically inserted phrase, “the determination to prevail against all odds” (p. 157).

The generally admirable transliteration does contain a small mystery. The author has chosen to add an “h” to the end of words with the feminine marker, *ta’ marbuta*. But somehow every Arabic word ending in “a” receives the “h,” even if the “a” refers to an *alif* (Abhah, Hasah), *alif maqsura* (shurah, fatwah), or even *hamza* (‘ulamah, fuqahah). In addition, chapter three states that the first municipal elections were held in 2005. In fact, the first municipal elections (albeit with a greatly restricted electorate) were held in 1954 and repeated in 1960, although the experiment lapsed after that.

While *Legal and Political Reforms in Saudi Arabia* covers many incidents and trends that have been thoroughly reported elsewhere, the level of detail and authoritative discussion make this book valuable as a reference and a point of departure for evaluation of the kingdom’s past two decades and likely developments in years to come.

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Politics and Society in Saudi Arabia: The Crucial Years of Development, 1960–1982, by Sarah Yizraeli. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. xxi + 336 pages. \$50.

Reviewed by Sebastian Maisel

Sarah Yizraeli returns to the field of scholarship on Saudi Arabia with her latest publication. Many might remember her first book, *The Remaking of Saudi Arabia: The Struggle between King Sa‘ud and Crown Prince Faysal, 1953–1962* (Syracuse, 1998), in which she laid the groundwork for her analysis of the power struggle between Sa‘ud and Faysal. Her latest study uses similar arguments as the basis for her description of Saudi society during the oil boom years. Thanks to her sound historical research and writing skills, she is able to identify the main stages of development as well as the main actors and stakeholders in the development process.

However, her intentions with the new book go beyond simply describing the transition of the kingdom into the new age. She seeks to repair the distorted image of Saudi Arabia in the public opinion caused by biased media coverage. This is a very honorable goal; however, her image of Saudi Arabia is that of a society with radical roots that produced bin Ladin’s group (p. xi). Thus, aside from her historical narrative, the author also tries to find the link between the two: a changing society in the 1960s and 1970s and a terror organization in the 1990s and early 2000s. Perhaps this will lead her to a possible third volume of her chronicle of Saudi development, but, as the preface for the book under review, it is stretched too far.

Yizraeli’s conclusion that “the roots of radicalization... lie in that period midway through the twentieth century” cannot be supported. Reaching this conclusion is a surprising by-product of the book, which otherwise explains in great detail the intricacies of consensus building and decision-making among the Saudi elite. Yizraeli further concludes that the radicalization of Saudi society must be traced back to the two-track development policies of the Al Sa‘ud and the other segments of the ruling

elite. On the one hand, the country readily cooperated with the West (US, Aramco) in business and other economic matters, while on the other, the social and religious sphere was left mostly untouched from the reform process. Faysal's credo, "Modernization without Secularization," summarized the domestic agenda and relationship with stakeholders in the political, economic and social leadership of the country.

Steve Coll (*The Bin Ladens: An Arabian Family in the American Century*, Penguin, 2008) likewise saw a connection between young Usama's identity and Faysal's agenda; however, I suggest a different interpretation. What should be noted is that Faysal and his camp skillfully played the ancient Saudi political game of give-and-take, of forging alliances, making compromises and coopting possible adversaries. When this creates the by-products of stability and prosperity, I am hesitant to call it a blueprint for future radicalization.

But, Yizraeli makes other, more authoritative assertions from her field of expertise: she frequently refers to tribal elements and values in all segments of society and the idea that tribalism as a mindset can influence the decision-making. She also stresses the importance of reconsidering Aramco's role in the development process, not as "motor of change" but a mere contributor and strategic facilitator. That the US played a more quiet and economic than political role during this era, however, is not a new realization, but one that deserves greater public attention. It was described earlier by David E. Long (*The United States and Saudi Arabia: Ambivalent Allies*, Westview, 1985).

Finally, a word on the sources: Yizraeli, as an Israeli scholar, is barred from conducting research inside the Kingdom. Perhaps it was because of this limitation that she relied on only a handful of Saudi Arabian sources including the often-cited, but conspicuous Anwar 'Abdullah book. Primary sources about Saudi Arabia, particularly from that time period, are rare and hard to locate. However, the King Abdul Aziz Foundation for Research and Archives or the Institute of Public Administration, both of which are in Riyadh, have large collections of documents that shed light on the Saudi side of

the story. Ultimately, the goal was to challenge Western stereotypes of Saudi Arabia. But can we do this successfully when relying predominately on Western sources? Shouldn't we rather look for ways incorporate the Saudi view, or at least the view of the few scholars, historians, anthropologists who managed to worked in the kingdom and not disqualify them as biased? In sum, Yizraeli offers an intricate, insightful depiction of Saudi society during a crucial time period and wrote a great source book apart from the grand conclusions.

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SYRIA

Damascus Diary: An Inside Account of Hafez al-Asad's Peace Diplomacy, 1990–2000, by Bouthaina Shaaban. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012. 245 pages. \$55.

Reviewed by Eyal Zisser

The personal story of Bouthaina Shaaban is, to a great extent, the story of Syria under Ba'th rule during the second half of the 20th century. Shaaban was born in 1953 to an 'Alawi family from the village of al-Mas'udiyya in the District of Homs. She joined the Ba'th Party at the age of 16, obtained her PhD. in English literature from the University of Warwick, and attained the position of Professor of English Literature at Damascus University. In 1990, she reached the trusted position of translator for Hafiz al-Asad and his son and heir, Bashar al-Asad. Under Asad, she served from 2003–2008, as Minister of Expatriates.

Shaaban's own rise reflects the social transformation that took place in Syria following the Ba'th revolution in 1963. In particular, it reflects the rise of members from the minority communities and from the rural Sunni population — who made up the broad social coalition led by 'Alawi army officers, and later by the Asad family, that has ruled

Syria in recent decades. It is no wonder, then, that Shaaban's book starts with her first meeting with Hafiz al-Asad, which resulted in her receiving a scholarship that enabled her to study at Damascus University and acquire the education that paved her way in the coming years (pp. 1–4).

Shaaban's appointment in 2008 as political and media adviser to the presidential palace, along with the fact that Syria lapsed into a bloody civil war in March 2011, provided her with free time, which she used to write *Damascus Diary*. However, she chose not to address in her book the timely issue of Bashar al-Asad's conduct during the current crisis. Rather, she chose to describe Syria's peace negotiations with Israel.

Much was written in Israel and in the United States about the Israeli-Syrian peace talks. The absence of a Syrian version lends special importance to Shaaban's book, in which she seeks to present a full and comprehensive account of the Syrian side in the peace talks, based on the personal experiences of someone who sat in on a significant portion of Asad's meetings with American officials, and who was granted access to the official Syrian protocols kept in the Syrian archives.

Shaaban's book arouses great expectations. One would hope that answers would be provided to many fascinating and hitherto unanswered questions regarding the conduct of the Syrian side in the peace negotiations.

Unfortunately, Shaaban's contribution to answering such questions is marginal; and in general, she tries to ignore them. She adds only a few details to what has already appeared in the published literature on this topic. Still, Shaaban's book does provide two major insights. One is that Hafiz al-Asad's Syria did not conduct negotiations with Israel, but with the United States. This was because peace with Israel was meant to be merely a path to Washington. The other insight is that there was in Syria a disregard or lack of understanding of what was happening on the other side of the hill — on the Israeli side. The Syrians were either not interested in, or did not understand the dynamics, the motives, and the considerations of the side that was an enemy in war, but had now become a partner in negotiations.

The book is full of errors: dates are given inaccurately, facts are presented incorrectly, and there are puzzling omissions of anything that fails to support the narrative Shaaban wants to promote. For example, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin gave the so-called "deposit" in the summer of 1993, on the eve of the Oslo Agreement. However, in describing it, Shaaban places it at the beginning of 1994 (pp. 98–107).

The main contribution of Bouthaina Shaaban's *Damascus Diary* is the protocols it cites showing how the Americans and Syrians spoke with each other. The book adds a Syrian coloration to the familiar story and serves as a reminder of a disappearing world. It is a reminder of a sealed and frozen regime, devoid of understanding of the modern world, and, it appears, also devoid of any real understanding of its own people. At the same time, it was a regime that enabled a simple country girl to go from her village to the corridors of power, and it was a regime that was willing to negotiate with Israel to attain an historic peace agreement between the two states.

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YEMEN

Regionalism and Rebellion in Yemen: A Troubled National Union, by Stephen W. Day. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 336 pages. \$29.99.

Reviewed by Thanos Petouris

In *Regionalism and Rebellion in Yemen*, Dr. Stephen Day builds on almost two decades of research and active engagement with political developments in the country to produce a well-written account of socio-political transformation after the unification of the former Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1990. As the title denotes, the book seeks to explain Yemeni politics by highlighting

the roles of different Yemeni elites based on their regional and tribal affiliations. The author divides the country into seven distinct regions, in order to show the degree of regional representation in national politics and explaining the reasons for local discontent.

However, Day's proposed regional division of Yemen is rather problematic, because it places different areas on a par with each other, glossing over historical particularities, and more importantly sub-regional inequalities. For instance, the capital Sana'a and the former president's tribal strongholds of Sanhan are grouped together under "highlands" with the far north Zaydi areas, which have arguably suffered more than any other under Salih's regime. Therefore, when the author speaks of highland rule over the country and tribal elites, the notion of who actually belongs to the patronage network of the regime becomes distorted. Moreover, such an approach can lead to unnecessarily deterministic conclusions, insofar as individual and collective interests are being fixed to specific regions. Actually, what has become apparent in the context of the recent youth uprising, is that local identities, and indeed regional boundaries in Yemen, are in constant flux and are being renegotiated in response to developments at the national and regional levels. The fact that the Yemeni population adheres to a number of different tribal, regional, and subnational identities which overlap and complement each other can be a useful tool for the understanding of certain political and social phenomena, but it cannot be used as a lens through which to scrutinize the complex picture of Yemeni affairs.

The main strength of the book lies in its exhaustive reconstruction of Yemeni politics after the 1994 civil war, which coincides with the author's fieldwork. Day draws his materials from a large number of interviews with politicians, state officials, civil society activists, and intellectuals from almost every part of the country. His narrative paints the picture of an emerging civil society which struggles under the authoritarian stranglehold of the Salih regime, and its divisive policies. Equally useful are the analyses of his data on electoral results, cabinet members, and government officials

by region. They offer a rare glimpse into the ways in which President Salih was able to establish his control over the country, which eventually also led to his own downfall.

However, in the author's interviews lies an avoidable pitfall. He appears to be repeating uncritically the anti-tribal rhetoric of his mostly urban middle class informants, which has dominated the Yemeni political discourse in both North and South since the 1960s revolutions. He consistently ascribes political corruption, underdevelopment, and indeed, criminal activity to a backward tribal culture (p. 150). Had he consulted the seminal works by Weir on tribal law and politics in highland Yemen, and by vom Bruck on the Zaydi elite families, he would have been able to draw a line between the rich tribal traditions of Yemen and their misappropriation by the regime.⁵ The Yemeni regime is no more "tribal" in its policies of exclusion, nepotism, and corruption than any of the other Arab autocracies.

Unfortunately, the book is beset by a number of factual errors and omissions. For the record, the name of the Qu'ayti sultan is Ghalib bin 'Awad (not Fadhl bin Ghanm; p. 175). The languages of al-Mahra and the island of Socotra are distinct from each other (p. 44). Also, Haydar al-'Attas served as president of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) from 1986 until unity, with 'Ali Salim al-Bayd only assuming the role of secretary-general of the Yemeni Socialist Party.⁶

The book concludes with the first comprehensive description of the events leading up to the youth uprising of 2011, and the removal of president Salih after 34 years in power. Overall, *Regionalism and Rebellion in Yemen* offers a vivid narrative

5. Shelagh Weir, *A Tribal Order: Politics and Law in the Mountains of Yemen* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007); and Gabriele vom Bruck, *Islam, Memory, and Morality in Yemen: Ruling Families in Transition* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

6. Noel Brehony, *Yemen Divided: The Story of a Failed State in South Arabia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), p. 156.

of the past two decades of the politics of the country, the strains the “shotgun” unity agreement placed on both the political system and society, and the challenges that lay ahead in the post-Salih era.

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MODERN HISTORY AND POLITICS

Asymmetry of Interest: Turkish-Iranian Relations since 1979, by Eliot Hentov. Saarbrücken: Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012. 296 pages. \$103 paper.

Reviewed by Michael B. Bishku

Eliot Hentov adopts an “interdisciplinary approach, relying on the general methods of historical source evaluation and borrowing analytical concepts from international relations and foreign policy theory” (p. 9). He also utilizes a balance of comparable Turkish and Iranian sources. Hentov attributes the “asymmetry” reference to the fact that until the November 2002 elections when the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in Turkey, Tehran did not view Ankara as a “primary actor” in the Middle East or the wider Islamic world, despite the fact that Turkey was “acutely cognizant of Iranian actions” (p. 4). During the first couple of decades of the Islamic Republic, this was due in large part to Turkey’s rigid Western orientation. Naturally, the determinants of this relationship, in addition to the historical legacy of the Ottoman and Persian Empires (especially of concern to the shahs) and bilateral political and economic exchanges between Turkey and Iran, are regional and international issues that affect both countries.

Unlike a number of works on the contemporary politics of the Middle East, Hentov — following an introductory chapter titled “An Indefinable Relationship” — provides thorough historical background on Turkish-Iranian relations with an emphasis on the 20th century up until the Iran-Iraq

War (1980–88), when Turkey and Iran felt compelled to cooperate closely. Had it not been for that conflict, Hentov points out, relations between the two countries would have deteriorated significantly, for the Islamic Republic had viewed Turkey’s 1980 military coup as beneficial to the United States. While Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Reza Shah emphasized mutual cooperation and following their respective tenures, the Cold War brought the two countries together in the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) organization, the Kurdish issue was irritant in that relationship; Turkey regarded Kurdish separatism as its greatest national security threat, while Iran was sometimes passive or negligent, and at other times supportive (at least within Iraq) of Kurdish activities. Hentov does not delve into Mohammad Reza Pahlavi’s jealousy of the attention given to Turkey by the West (especially by the United States) prior to the mid-1970s, when oil prices were on the rise and Turkey was plagued with economic problems and political violence as well as isolated by American and European sanctions over its invasion of Cyprus. However, he does mention a common Iranian joke: “if it were not for Turkey, Iran would be connected to Europe” (p. 39).

Turkey’s neutrality during the Iran-Iraq War ensured Turkey’s supply of oil and external connections for both Iran and Iraq. Hentov asserts that Turkey acted as a conduit for the shipment of Israeli goods and arms to Iran, but that the Iranians were perturbed by Turkish economic “opportunism” (pp. 78–79). Nevertheless, Iran agreed to revive the RCD as the Economic Cooperation Organization though that group was fairly passive until the 1990s, when the end of the Cold War allowed for its expansion into Central Asia. At that time, Hentov contends, the “dimensions” of the Turkish-Iranian rivalry in that latter region were “exaggerated” (p. 142). Indeed, Russia’s reassertion of dominance in Central Asia placed Turkey and Iran in secondary roles. The 1990s did, however, bring tension between the two Middle Eastern countries over Iran’s (and Syria’s) support of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and Turk-

ish Islamist groups. At the same time, the Turkish military developed close cooperation with Israel. Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan tried but failed during his brief tenure (1996–97) to improve relations with Iran. Indeed, Iran's interference in Turkish affairs served as partial justification for his removal from office under military pressure. A couple of years later, the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, which signaled for a time the defeat of the Kurdish insurgency, allowed Turkey to deal with its economic problems, resulting in a politically unpopular International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity program. The November 2002 parliamentary elections that brought the Islamist AKP to power and that government's subsequent popular decision not to support the US in the Iraq War, along with the pragmatic Iranian presidency of Mohammad Khatami smoothed over relations. The AKP adopted Professor (and later Foreign Minister) Ahmet Davutoğlu's program of transforming Turkey into a global power with good neighborly relations, a repudiation of the Kemalist "siege mentality" (p. 212). While continuing to seek European Union membership, Turkey became a more active participant in political and economic relations in the Middle East and beyond. This included acting as a mediator in disputes between Iran and the West, especially over Iran's use of nuclear power, and between Syria and Israel. By doing so, a "parity of interest" developed between Turkish and Iranian leaders despite political differences that have existed during the presidency of Mahmud Ahmadinejad. Hentov points out that in 2010, Iran (as well as Greece, Iraq, and Russia) were removed as "national security threats" from Turkey's *Red Book*. However, he does not mention that Israel was added following the raid on the *Mavi Marmara* in May 2010.

Turkish-Iranian bilateral relations have taken on a greater importance for the respective countries' leadership than at any time in the past, due to the domestic and foreign policies of the AKP government and the changed international and regional environment. Hentov's intention is to emphasize those points. Perhaps the title of the book should have included a question mark,

and thus alerted the reader to the contrast between the AKP and previous Turkish governments, where there was for the most part an "asymmetry of interest."

In summary, Hentov provides a wealth of information on Turkish-Iranian relations. He integrates discussion of domestic policies with the political and economic imperatives of foreign policy in demonstrating the manifestations of those respective countries' worldviews as they apply to bilateral relations. This book is an easily readable account and analysis that is useful to both scholars and the general public.

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Tell This in My Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan and the Ottoman Empire, by Eve Troutt Powell. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012. 264 pages. \$40.

Reviewed by Terence Walz

In the 19th century, hundreds of thousands of trans-Saharan Africans were forced to migrate to Egypt after being uprooted from their homelands, families and cohorts and subjected to stark enslaved existences at the end of difficult desert treks. In the Sudan, a similar dislocation took place: in the middle of the 19th century, slaves constituted 60% of Khartoum's population. A much smaller number of white slaves were also uprooted from the Caucasus. An account of the lives of these populations has always posed problems for historians, because until recently, the sources have been few and slave narratives are scarce. Eve Troutt Powell, a Middle East historian who has written about Sudan and Egypt history, uses existing narratives and "fragments of autobiography" from both ex-slaves and slave-owners not to write a history of slavery but to paint an effective and affecting portrait of the slave experience in the Nile Valley and parts of the Ottoman east.

Powell rightly begins by reminding us that tens of thousands of Sudanese are today

refugees in Egypt and subject to the legacy of those earlier trans-Saharan migrants. The words for “black” (*sudani*) and slave (*‘abid*) are interchangeable in the colloquial mindset, despite or perhaps because of centuries of rule by more privileged white slaves (mamluks). Discrimination is an ever-present and ongoing problem.

Powell starts her investigation with the great topographical work of ‘Ali Mubarak, the *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya*, whose description of Egyptian towns and villages is replete with stories of slaves (white and black) that also provides an overview of 19th century Egyptian slavery. Cairene streets are full of monuments built by elite white mamluks; black slaves hover in the distance, occasionally obstreperous and usually unnamed. The exception is an Abyssinian slave Mubarak saw in his village as a child, who achieved a high administrative position and respect despite his color. Mubarak learned that he too could achieve such rank if he were educated in the new schools that Muhammad ‘Ali had established. For the voices of black slaves, however, historians must turn to sources other than this important work.

One source is the Sudanese educator Babikr Bedri’s memoir *Tarikh Hayati* (The Story of My Life), which highlights the essential role that slaves played in ordinary people’s lives in the northern Sudan, even when their pasts and sometimes their names are not revealed. This engagingly frank memoir records Bedri’s personal history from the Mahdist revolution to the early decades of Anglo-Egyptian rule. As Powell shows, Bedri clearly valued the contributions that slaves made to his life, yet he never thought to improve their status or help them achieve a better future, though he helped many young people, including girls, get an education. Once again, slaves do not have a voice, though they are everywhere present.

A voice can be found in the figure of Salem C. Wilson who was born a Dinka, enslaved, and eventually wrote his autobiography — three times. *I Was a Slave* was his final version, written in England where he settled. Collectively, they illustrate the difficulty of slaves writing about slave life in a foreign culture, where they are required to respond to foreign audiences with very

different values. Powell’s analysis of his efforts is expert, offering valuable insights into how slaves interpret foreigners and how foreigners understand or misunderstand them. Powell uses several other “fragments of autobiography” to illustrate the point that narratives, where they do exist, are subject to the filters and prejudices of the translator, the interviewer, or the intended reader. Often they do not help and, on occasion, they can even degrade the person telling the story.

Powell then examines slaves in the households of two aristocratic women — Huda Sha‘rawi, the early champion of women’s rights in Egypt; and Halide Edip Adıvar, a member of the new nationalist and feminist order in Turkey. Both were born to wealthy men and lived with numerous household slaves, whom they saw at close range and with whom they shared significant times. In Sha‘rawi’s case, it was a eunuch who had the most influence on her, often in ways she did not appreciate. Sa‘id Agha, like many eunuchs, was traditionalist; Sha‘rawi wanted an education, and Sa‘id and Sha‘rawi’s mother refused it; as they did not see how an education would help a young woman in that time. As Powell points out, the households were well-run, and it was the slaves who were responsible for that. Bashir Agha, whom Powell doesn’t mention, was the chief eunuch; and therefore in charge of its management. Sa‘id Agha was assigned to look after the children — Huda and her brother ‘Umar. These ex-slaves displayed formidable personalities and the children were often in awe of them — as was the case of Ester Fanus (Esther Fahmi Wisa), who grew up under the guidance of the domineering ex-slave Bahr al-Nil. Still, in few of these examples (the Turkish Halide providing a strong exception) were the life stories of slaves in the family known; Sha‘rawi seems not to have asked.

On the other hand, the several biographies treated in the fourth chapter deal with ex-slaves who had been adopted by missionaries who wished their stories to be known. A great deal of material is available from the archives of the Comboni missionaries who began working with slave and ex-slave adepts in the mid nineteenth century

in the Sudan and Egypt. Their lives, though heavily infused with Christian attitudes and language, survive because the missionaries needed to demonstrate their work to donors in far-off Europe. The interaction between Caterina Zenab, Bakhita Kwashe, Mary Josephine Zeinab, Daniele Sorur and the Catholic fathers is touching in their devotion of Christian dogma, which Powell sees as their way of reconstituting their lost families. Many of these ex-slaves proved exceptionally adept in the work assigned to them, especially under the guidance of the charismatic (St.) Daniel Comboni (d. 1881). Powell helps to reveal their own understanding of the extraordinary circumstances of their lives, and how they navigated the very different cultures in which they came to live. What is particularly good is how she interweaves their published writings to paint portraits of their lives in Africa

A study of Josephine Bakhita, now a Catholic saint, fittingly concludes Powell's study of slave life in Egypt and the Sudan, in that her name is given to a number of centers in Cairo that help the Sudanese refugee population in Egypt. Her story has brutal beginnings and took many turns — including a horrible scarification at the hands of a Turkish master in the Sudan that she never forgot — before she arrived in Italy, was freed and became a nun in the Canossian order. Eventually, she was venerated for the good works she had performed; and the Catholic Church made her a universal figure, no doubt in large part because of her special appeal to Africans. Her life as a slave has meaning to many black Africans in Egypt, in Africa, and elsewhere in the Middle East where, times of difficulty are soothed by the example of her ultimate freedom and self-fulfillment.

Most slaves in the Middle East were females who served as household drudges. Males most frequently went into the army or worked in shops. A few rose to spectacular heights as concubines, servants and officers within the ruling and military establishments. In all these cases, it is difficult to find the slave voice, although new Egyptian archival sources are now available and are being utilized. Powell performs an excellent service with this book by carefully examin-

ing the narratives she has chosen and showing us the choices her subjects made, the lives they were forced to lead, and the ways in which they came to accept their fate.

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PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION, AND SCIENCE

The Impossible State: Islam, Politics, and Modernity's Moral Predicament, by Wael B. Hallaq. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013. 256 pages. \$37.50.

Reviewed by Mark D. Welton

Readers familiar with Professor Wael Hallaq's earlier books and articles will not be surprised by the title of this most recent work. As Hallaq has long argued, the shari'a was a sophisticated and complex moral-legal project that served the Muslim communities exceptionally well for much of their history, but which collapsed under the weight of European colonialism and all its consequences, including the creation of modern states in the Muslim world. The foundations of the shari'a, especially the independent jurists who developed the doctrines of God's will as expressed in the sources of the law and articulated them for rulers and peoples alike, were swept away in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This destruction was total, and the resurrection of the classical shari'a is an impossible task.

In this short book, the author takes this historically-based argument and advances it in order to explain why, theoretically and philosophically as well as in practice, the existence and function of the modern state — a creation of the West — is inherently incompatible with the shari'a. The largest portion of the text is devoted to a postmodern critique of the modern state, and the pages are replete

with short quotations from philosophers, sociologists, and other thinkers to support this analysis. The modern state is an amoral entity based on positivism that exists solely for its own perpetuation. In order to survive, it demands the complete adherence of its citizens, and concepts such as the rule of law and separation of powers are subordinate to, and ineffective constraints on, the political, cultural, economic, and legal instruments of the state's "will to power." There is no idea or goal greater than the survival of the state; the Is and the Ought are irreconcilable, and the latter has no relevance to the functioning of the state.

The shari'a admits of no such separation between the Is and the Ought. It is a comprehensive approach to individual and communal life in which the moral imperative is always present and indeed dominates the legal, political, cultural and social aspects of society. Resting primarily on the five pillars of religion (*shahada*, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and almsgiving), the shari'a focuses on shaping and developing the individual as a moral being. What binds the law together with political rule is the overarching concept of God's sovereignty. This means that paradigmatic Islamic governance exists not as an end in itself, but as a means to develop fully the divinely mandated moral content of the community and the individual subject. The idea of Islamic governance, "nurturing the community qua Community and serving its interests as a morally constituted entity" (pp. 139–40), is therefore fundamentally at odds with the concept of the modern state.

Professor Hallaq's arguments are well-constructed and thought-provoking, and the depth of his knowledge of both Western and Islamic political and legal thought is evident throughout. The postmodern critique of the modern state is compelling, though readers unfamiliar with the works of such philosophers as Alasdair MacIntyre may find that the discussion requires careful and repeated scrutiny, with frequent reliance on the many endnotes. Despite its short length, this is not a book to be absorbed in one quick reading.

In 1988, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini declared that the interests of the Islamic state would whenever neces-

sary supersede the application of the shari'a (e.g., prayer, pilgrimage, and fasting). This remarkable statement was taken by many to mean the demise of the experiment of Islamic governance in Iran. Readers of this book would not find such a development at all surprising. It is an important contribution to understanding the role and potential of the shari'a in the modern world.

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Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion: Two Thousand Years of Christian Missions in the Middle East, by Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. 296 pages. \$35.

Reviewed by Heather J. Sharkey

Compared to their counterparts in sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, Christian missionaries in the modern Middle East affected relatively few formal conversions. Nevertheless, in the past 15 years, scholars have begun to appreciate how missionaries in the Middle East exerted far-reaching cultural, political, and economic influences on the region, through schools, hospitals, and other institutions. Scholars have also begun to appreciate how missionaries variously strengthened, mediated, and deflected forms of European and American imperialism, while forging long-distance connections between the Middle East and their home countries.

In *Conflict, Conquest, and Conversion*, Eleanor H. Tejirian and Reeva Spector Simon recount the history of Christian missions in the Middle East in light of this burgeoning scholarship. Noting that most works on missionaries have focused on particular countries, missions, or periods, Tejirian and Simon aim to survey "the entire landscape of Western missionaries — Roman Catholic as well as Protestant, European as well as American, their impact on the region, and the effect of their activity on other aspects of Western involvement in the Middle East" (p. ix). They do so in a dense and fast-paced chronicle of missionary history.

The authors begin their survey with the career of Jesus and his disciples, and end around 1920. They cover the history of early Christianity, the Crusades, the Protestant Reformation, and Catholic Counter-Reformation, before surveying the activities of both Catholic and Protestant missionaries in the 19th and early 20th centuries. American Protestant missionaries feature as the most dynamic characters in their narrative — the most pedagogically innovative, the most diverse, and also, in many ways, the quirkiest.

The vast temporal scope of this book makes it possible for the authors to trace continuities and recurring themes in this history of Christian missions. For example, to illustrate the persisting importance of the Crusades for European Christian imaginations, the authors describe Kaiser Wilhelm's visit to Jerusalem in 1898. The goal of this visit was to bolster Ottoman-German relations, though it probably did more to fulfill the Kaiser's Orientalist fantasies. "Dressed in a white costume evocative of the Teutonic knights and with a golden eagle atop his helmet," they write, "Wilhelm rode into Jerusalem through a breach in the walls that had been prepared especially for his entourage" (p. 117).

The authors assume that readers will approach this book with a firm grasp of Christian, European and American, and Middle Eastern history. For this reason, they do not explain certain concepts or issues that will be familiar mostly to expert readers — for example, the terms for debate in early theological controversies over the nature of Christ (which were so important in determining sectarian schisms), or the changing fortunes of Jesuits vis-à-vis the Roman Catholic church. This means that the book is not intended for newcomers to mission history. Nevertheless, scholars with a special interest in the history of missions are likely to welcome this book as a reference that is useful and concise.

If anyone questions the importance of the history of Christian missions to the modern Middle East, then a quick look at this densely detailed book will dispel doubts. The authors succeed in showing how Christian missions have inextricably connected the religious, cultural, and political history of this region over the past two millennia. At

the same time, they distill current scholarship on the subject, making the book valuable to those who work at the intersection of Christian studies and diplomatic history.

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Toward an Islamic Enlightenment: The Gülen Movement, by M. Hakan Yavuz. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013. 300 pages. \$35.

Reviewed by Michael M. Gunter

This is a richly nuanced, balanced analysis of the influential Gülen movement, a "transnational religious network of schools, finance and community services" (p. 248) that "might be termed the first quasi-Protestant version of Islam" (p. 10). Spawned from the philosophy of Said Nursî (1873–1960), an enlightened Kurdish Sufi mystic, Fethullah Gülen's (b. 1941) "key and controversial assumption is that individuals must be pious in order to be good citizens... that scientific curiosity is compatible with Islamic concerns ...[and] that one can be a democrat and in favor of civil society out of religious convictions" (p. 8). Thus, "the significance of the Gülen movement is that it has not only vernacularized the ideas of Enlightenment, but . . . also turned them into a religio-social movement" (p. 6). "Gülen has forged a cohesive ...social movement stressing individual character formation and community building, with the goal of catalyzing an Islamic renaissance compatible with the needs of the modern world" (p. 15).

Following its contextually stimulating introduction, Professor Yavuz's study consists of three parts: Man, Movement, and Meaning. The shorter first part examines Gülen's life story and key concepts such as Islam, morality, the good life and community, modernity, democracy, pluralism, and nationalism within Islam.

The second part delves into the structure and activities of the *cemaat* (community) or *hizmet* (collection of altruistic service organizations) of the Gülen movement. Most impressively, the movement has developed a print and electronic media that includes the two largest newspapers in Turkey (*Zaman* and *Today's Zaman*), six TV channels, two radio stations, a worldwide news agency, several publishing houses, a number of periodical magazines and journals on such subjects as culture and science, scientific and spiritual thought, literature, environmental issues, and religious sciences. The *hizmet* also runs hundreds of schools and colleges, private hospitals and health clinics, an insurance company, and a non-interest-bearing Islamic bank, among many other charitable services. This powerful “multifaceted phenomenon” (p. 91) makes it in effect “a religious group, political action pact . . . [and] civil society organization” (p. 90).

Part Two also focuses on the Gülen movement’s process of cultivating a “golden generation . . . to be constituted from those who are educated in sciences and religion, and who have reconciled the tensions of living in modern secular societies without compromising their faith in religion” (p. 98). To accomplish this goal, “Gülen has assigned a special mission to teachers and defined their teaching activity as akin to a religious mission” (Ibid.). Concentrated in Turkey, Central Asia, and parts of the Middle East — with some even in the United States — these Gülen schools and colleges have by many accounts maintained high academic standards, but “fallen short of encouraging critical thinking and being truly open to alternative lifestyles and modes of being” (p. 116).

The final chapter in Part Two comes close to equating Max Weber’s spirit of capitalism with the Gülen movement’s stress on developing a successful and dynamic capitalist ethos: “There is an emergence of elective affinity between the spirit of capitalism and the ascetic morality of the Gülen movement, as Weber argued in the case of Europe . . . the foundation blocks for the construction of Calvinist Islam” (p. 123). Turkey’s new position as the 16th largest economy in the world and its emerging class of Anatolian bourgeoisie may be “viewed as evidence of God’s

blessing upon those who devoted their labor and wealth to please god” (p. 122). After all, “the Prophet Muhammad was a successful merchant who engaged in the competitive and free market in Mecca and Medina” (p. 118).

Part Three argues that it is “theoretically useful to bring into the debate Jürgen Habermas’s recent writings on the political role of religion in the public sphere, to better understand how Gülen seeks to bridge secular and religious arguments” (p. 135). More concretely, from 1998–2010, the 22 Abant meetings “have become pathbreaking public forums for debate and discussion among diverse and contending segments of society that had rarely entered into dialogue before . . . to discuss challenges and issues facing Turkey and the larger Muslim world” (p. 144). Another chapter in this Part surveys the Gülen movement’s cautious relations with the Turkish military and civilian government.

Regarding Turkey’s longstanding Kurdish problem, “the goal of the Gülen movement is to dilute and contain radical and exclusivist manifestations of both ethnic Kurdish and Turkish nationalism through shared ties to Islamic faith and culture” (p. 235), while viewing “the cycle of terrorism and harsh state oppression as major impediments” (Ibid.). Such an approach, however, ignores the primary position of Kurdish nationalism many ethnic Kurds in Turkey now feel. Critics of the movement further maintain that it does not recognize the role of women in the public sphere or promote critical thinking and individual self-construction, lacks financial and political transparency, and ultimately seeks to control the state. Societal critics include secular leftists, Kurds, Alevis, and Islamists.

Since a short review can only suggest this tome’s wealth of insights, it is up to the reader to delve further into it to fully appreciate its many scholarly contributions. This said, Professor Yavuz would have thickened his analysis positively by further analyzing the Gülen movement’s relations with the long-ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as well as with women. With its roots in political Islam, it would seem that Erdoğan and his AKP would be natural rivals with Gülen and his followers. Yavuz’s

analysis has even less on women, who, of course, will become increasingly important for any modernizing Islamic movement.

This important study finishes with a conclusion, notes, bibliography, and index. The overall result is a well-written, first-rate analysis that will lead one to empathize with its subject, appreciate its strengths, and even tolerate its very few weaknesses.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Prepared with assistance from Alexandra BetGeorge and Courtney Jolene.

AFGHANISTAN

Working Toward Peace and Prosperity in Afghanistan, ed. by Wolfgang Danspeckgruber. Liechtenstein Colloquium Report, Volume 5. 272 pages. \$32.50. The goal of this work is to transform Afghanistan into “a state of tranquility” by providing policy recommendations and exploration of the systemic issues that continue to plague development initiatives. The authors discuss the roles of Afghan women and tribes, as well as the successes and challenges faced by the country’s budding civil society. (CJ)

Above the Din of War: Afghans Speak About Their Lives, Their Country, and Their Future — And Why America Should Listen, by Peter Eichstaedt. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2013. 304 pages. \$26.95. Journalist Peter Eichstaedt furnishes readers with a glimpse of the daily realities of ordinary Afghans in his latest work, based on interviews gathered in 2010 across Afghanistan. As the war in Afghanistan begins to wind down ahead of the planned 2014 US troop withdrawal, this book challenges the normative discourse perpetuated by Western media and attempts to give voice to a population that continues to remain elusive to many Americans, including tribal members, women who have overcome adversity, emerging politicians, religious and community leaders, and various other actors. The author focuses on the complexity of the state and its inhabitants, as well as on the various domestic and external challenges they face. (CJ)

ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

The Lingering Conflict: Israel, the Arabs, and the Middle East 1948–2012, by Itamar Rabinovich. Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2013. 312 pages. \$24.95. As Israel’s ambassador to the United States from 1993–1996 and chief negotiator with Syria from 1992–1995, Itamar Rabinovich is in a position to explore the tenuous and complex relationship and interconnectedness between Israel and the region, especially its Arab neighbors. The current ramifications and ongoing developments surrounding the Arab Spring have created new challenges and opportunities for a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, but it is still important to reflect on the historiography of the conflict, diplomatic overtures, and past failures and successes. In a comprehensive breakdown of different political periods since the opening of the Madrid Conference in 1991, he analyzes the underlying complexities, personalities, and geo-strategic realities that led to the current trends in the conflict. Through in-depth analyses of Israeli prime ministers, conferences, and overtures, the book concludes with a summary of the current challenges, regional ramifications of the Arab Spring and introduction of new regimes, and potential means of moving a resolution forward. (CJ)

EGYPT

Egypt’s Tahrir Revolution, by Dan Tshirgi, Walid Kazziha, and Sean F. McMahon. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2013. 278 pages. \$61.75. American University of Cairo professors Tshirgi, Kazziha, and McMahon provide in this volume an in-depth analysis of the antecedents, process, and implications of former President Hosni Mubarak’s overthrow. The chapters are grouped into four thematic categories: the causes of and themes present in the revolution; the revolution’s broader historical context; the implications of the revolution for the evolution of political science theory; and suggestions to address key concerns in the ongoing revolutionary process. The editors conclude that Egypt’s January 2011 revolution requires changes in the field of political science to include youth as a new unit of analysis and to account for the dynamics of technology in organizing populations. (ABG)

IRAN

German Foreign Policy Towards Iran Before World War II: Political Relations, Economic Influence, and the National Bank of Persia, by Rashid Khatib-Shahidi. New York: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 2013. 223 pages. \$46.60. Doctor Khatib-Shahidi of Oxford University analyzes recently released documents of German government agencies