

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Libraries and Information in the Arab world : an Annotated Bibliography.

Compiled by Lokman I. Meho and Mona A. Nsouli. Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 1999. Pp. xi, 349. ISBN: 031331098X (alk. paper)

Locating scholarly material on libraries and information in the Arab world can be a daunting and frustrating task. This remarkably well conceived bibliography will greatly ease the search for material written on subjects related to the library and information field in the region. The compilers' proficiency in organizing information is evident from the composition of this work. In addition to the more than one thousand citations comprising the bibliography itself, prefatory and historical background information is included in opening sections, and useful indexes are placed at the conclusion of the bibliography.

Most of the bibliographic entries refer to works published within the last quarter century and are primarily in Arabic, English, and French. The most notable advantage of the work is that a great number of the bibliography's citations are annotated, some in significant detail. If available, annotations provided by the original authors are presented. Perhaps because material the editors could not obtain was left unannotated, the Arabic entries tend to be less often described. Major library and information databases such as ERIC, Library and Information Science Abstracts, Library Literature, and Dissertation Abstracts International were consulted to select the non-Arabic titles. For the Arabic sources, significant library and information science periodicals and periodical indexes were searched, including *Ālam al-Kutub*, *Ālam al-Kitāb*, and *al-Majallah al-ʿArabīyah lil-Maʿlūmāt*. For all titles, the compilers browsed the reference sections of several libraries, primarily in North Carolina, and at the Institute for Palestine Studies, for suitable entries. The citations noted in dissertations and research papers chosen for the bibliography were gleaned for inclusion as well.

The bibliography begins with a preface explaining the contents and arrangement of the entries. A preliminary chapter written by Nsouli, Head Librarian at the Institute for Palestine Studies in Beirut, follows the preface. This succinct introduction provides a brief history of books and libraries in the Arab world, beginning with the arrival of Islam. She notes that accompanying the rise and intellectual vigor of Islam, public and private libraries were established throughout the Islamic world. The era of modern libraries

commenced with the French occupation of Egypt in the early nineteenth century, during which time religious denominational institutions that held libraries were founded.

At the conclusion of the opening chapter, Nsouli addresses the current state of libraries in the region and the challenges facing them. The last two centuries have seen the development of national, academic, special, and public libraries in the Arab world. Nsouli mentions the important contribution of international organizations, Unesco, for example, to these efforts. While the recent implementation of technology in libraries has increased access to information and library services, many challenges continue to face libraries in Arab countries individually and regionally. Lack of national information policies, insufficient funding, shortage of skilled staff, poor facilities, and limited cooperation and coordination do not contribute to a healthy environment for libraries.

The initial chapter of the bibliography itself is entitled “general works.” Subsequent to the “general” subheading section, separate sections in this chapter range alphabetically from “academic libraries” to “transliteration.” The remaining chapters are each devoted to an individual country and the Arabian Gulf region and provide citations also arranged under topical headings. The Arab world for this work is broadly conceived geographically, and references, although few, for libraries and information in Djibouti, Somalia, and Mauritania are included.

Each chapter employs subheadings as required to cover the subject matter of entries relevant to the chapter’s country or region. Overall, the subject matter covered in the bibliography is comprehensive in scope. The editors have made the bibliography accessible by using widely accepted library terminology for their headings. In some cases established, but more stilted subject headings such as “bibliography-methodology” have been replaced with the more familiar “bibliographic control.” Important additions for this bibliography are headings particular to this area, as in “Arabic script and bibliographic records/tools.” Some of the chapters are much more extensive than others. As expected, technologically advantaged countries in the Gulf are the source of substantially more citations related to, for example, “networks and networking,” “computer networks and networking,” “information storage and retrieval,” and “online catalogs.” In contrast, the beleaguered state of libraries in Somalia is revealed in relatively few entries listed.

Topical headings and geographical entities, authors and citation titles form the content of the subject, author, and title indexes that follow the bibliography. As with most bibliographies, it is worthwhile taking a flexible approach in searching for related entries on a particular topic in the indexes. For example, in looking for entries on the “Internet”—a standard Library of Congress subject heading—the more profitable discoveries are in the title index (with four entries), whereas the subject index provides only one on “Internet access and use, school libraries, in,” and another, most likely placed in error under Iraq, on “Internet access and use,” which in fact refers to the Internet in the Persian Gulf.

The bibliography offers an admirably well-organized compilation of resources that reflects the issues and challenges confronting librarianship in the Arab world over the period of time covered by the work. With the relentless, fast-paced development of technology and its integration into all aspects of the library and information arena, the bibliography may soon require a sequel, perhaps online.

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Encyclopædia Iranica. Edited by Ehsan Yarshater. Vol. IX: fascicles 1–3. New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 1998–1999. Each fascicle 112 pp. Includes Bibliography. Price \$32 (each fasc.) paperback. ISBN: 0933273258, 0933273274, and 0933273312.

The *Encyclopædia Iranica* is the most extensive compendium on the past and present culture of the Persian-speaking people and their contribution to human civilization. It is an elaborate reference work on the lands, life, culture, religion, and history of the Iranian people and of those outsiders who left lasting impact on the life and culture of the Iranians. Chronologically, it covers from prehistoric period to our own times and geographically encompasses the regions from Anatolia and Central Asia to India and the Arabian Peninsula. Humanities, social sciences and natural sciences are its main focus areas. So far the *Encyclopædia* contains contributions of about nine hundred scholars from all over the world. It is an ambitious project of the Center for Iranian Studies at Columbia University and is sponsored, *inter alia*, by the National Endowment for Humanities, a federally funded sponsor of academic research projects in the United States.

Of the projected 25–30 volumes, including a Supplement Volume and a comprehensive Index, the first eight have already been published; the ninth is in the process of publication in fascicles, of which 1–3 are under review here.[†] These three fascicles under review cover from “Ethé, Earl Hermann”, a German Orientalist, to part II of “Fārs”, the southern province on the Persian Gulf coast. Each fascicle is 112 pages in length and has illustrations, maps, graphs, etc. Though costly, the production quality of the encyclopædia is exceptionally high.

Like any other encyclopædia, the articles vary in size and depth, and some of them are the product of original research and innovative scholarship. Professor Ehsan Yarshater, the editor, and his colleagues on the editorial board have maintained the high standard of previous volumes in these fascicles and included some lengthy, multi-part articles as well. Among the lengthy articles are “Ethnography” (36 pages), “Excavations” (26 pages), “Fārābī” (21 pages), “Farmān” (14 pages), among others. Some of the articles may seem of marginal importance for the field, but they represent the objective of broad coverage to which Professor Yarshater and his colleagues are committed. The greatest value of these articles is that they represent the state of knowledge of Iranian Studies which otherwise is not accessible to many English-speaking readers.

Statistically, the fascicles under review contain 35 topical entries, 14 geographical entries, and a large number of biographical entries on Iranian and non-Iranian personalities, including 4 on Orientalists, 3 on historians, 11 on historical personalities, 35 on scholars-Sufis-notables, 5 on politicians/administrators. Some of these are multi-part essays and present a comprehensive treatment of the topic. These fascicles are particularly distinguished by a series of 8 entries on various Iranian newspapers and 11 entries on Persian dictionaries—both polyglot and bilingual. In addition to these, there are four well-written and lavishly illustrated articles on classical Iranian texts (Ezra-nāma, Fāl-nāma, Fārsnāma, Farāmarz-nāma), the multi-part entry on the “Faculties of the University of Tehran”, and the three entries on Persian literary genre. Thus one can begin to grasp conveniently in one place the entire Iranian cultural and intellectual condition.

It is impossible to treat in this review each individual article or to describe and evaluate in detail the precise scholarship of individual authors in these fascicles. But any user of this valuable reference tool will appreciate its clarity and comprehensiveness, its precision, and the in-depth analy-

[†] Editor’s note: To date 9 volumes have been completed, and fasc. 1–2 of vol. 10 have appeared.

sis given to certain topics. Entries such as ‘Ethics’, ‘Etiquette’, ‘Eṭṭelā‘āt’, ‘Eunuchs’, ‘Europe, Iranian Attitude to’, ‘Evil’, ‘Fahlaviyat’, ‘Fāl-nāma’, ‘Falsafa’ ‘Fārābī’, ‘Farğana’, ‘Farmān’ are some of the outstanding single studies now available.

Some readers might question the judgement of the editors for including more than sixteen pages of bibliographic citations of recent writings on Iranian “Ethnography”, or three and a-half page bibliographic citations to a four-page text on “Farr(ah)”. These citations are, no doubt, helpful to a researcher in the field, but their length might be considered unsuited for an encyclopædia. The seventeen-page, multi-part article on the “Faculties of the University of Tehran” is another instance where one might call into question editorial judgement.

Fascicle 2 contains an entry on “ ‘Ezz al-Dawlah, ‘Abd-al-Samad Mirza”, half brother of Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shāh and governor of Qazvin, but one wonders why there is no entry or cross-reference to the Buyid Emir ‘Ezz al-Dawlah. Bert Fragner’s otherwise excellent article on ‘Farmān’ lacks a comparison among the Safavid, Ottoman, and Mughal decrees. Such comparison would have greatly benefited readers who want to follow the development of this important administrative instrument in comparative perspective. Muhammad Wali-ul-Haq Ansari’s article on “Farangī Mahal” mentions in passing the development of Dars-e Nezami course but does not elaborate on its impact on the modernization of traditional academic curriculum and or include a reference to the *Islamic Revival in British India* by Barbara Metcalf.

Notwithstanding such minor flaws, these fascicles of volume nine maintain the same tradition of significant contribution towards the advancement of Iranian Studies as previous volumes have done. The organization of entries and the system of cross-references represents the standard method for encyclopædic works. The transliteration system, though a bit odd for non-Persian speakers and scholars, is easy to follow by those familiar with the way Persian is spoken. No library that deals with Asian civilizations in general and Middle Eastern studies in particular should be without this magnificent reference work.

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The Lion and the Beasts of Chase: From the Mathnawí of Mawláná Jalál al-Dín [sic] Muhammad Balkhí Rúmí; Book 1 Translation & Commentary by Reynold A. Nicholson (Ḥikāyat-i nakhchūrān va shūr: daftar-i avval-i mathnavī-yi Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Balkhī Rūmī; hamrah bā tawḏīḥāt-i fārsī, va tafsīr-i inglīsī-yi athar-i Rīnūld A. Nīkulsūn). Edited by Mahdokht B. Homae. Brookline, MA: (privately published) Mahdokht B. Homae, 1999. Pp. 179.

Privately published by Ms. Mahdokht B. Homae, the bulk of this book consists of a reprint of verses 900–1389 of Nicholson’s edition and translation of Rūmī’s *Mathnavī* (London, 1925–1940). The editor has also provided an abridgment of Nicholson’s commentary, and a verse-by-verse commentary in Persian to which is appended a brief bibliography listing the major Persian reference works consulted in the course of preparing the commentary. In addition to preliminary front matter by the editor, the volume also contains an extract from an essay by the late Iranian scholar Jalāl al-Dīn Humāī entitled “Jabr va ikhtiyār az dīdgāh-yi mawlavī” (“Rūmī on Free Will and Predestination”). Humāī’s essay, comprising about 50 pages in the original edition (Tehran, 1978), is here abridged and summarized along with material from his 2 volume work *Mawlavī-nāma: mawlavī chi mīguyad* (Tehran, 1977–78). Although lacking some of the finer points argued in the original version this abridgement nevertheless presents Humāī’s take on the implications of Rūmī’s understanding of free will and predestination for dialectical theology and philosophy, especially within the metaphysical system of the so-called school of Isfahan developed by the protégés and followers of Mullā Ṣadrā.

Comprised of about 500 couplets, the section of the *Mathnavī* contained in this work contains Rūmī’s meditation on the Indian fable of the lion and the hare. Receiving its inspiration from a tale preserved in the Arabic *Kalīla wa-dīmna*, the fable narrates the story of how a hare lures a particularly vicious lion to a deep well where, mistaking his reflection for another lion, the predator meets his doom by irrationally diving in after his phantasmal rival. In his telling, Rūmī exploits the allegorical potential of the characters, showing how in action and attitude the lion mirrors the behavior of the carnal soul (*naḥs-i ammāra*), the beasts of the chase represent those spiritual faculties which are under constant threat of being consumed by the former, whereas the hare becomes the personification of enlightened reason (*aql-i ma’ād*). As an allegory, the story itself provides a narrative framework within which Rūmī expounds upon an array of interrelated concepts such as trust in God (*tawakkul*), predestination, theodicy, divine wisdom and providence, and the power of mystical inspiration. Of the almost five-

hundred verses comprising this section, only about fifty actually deal with the narrative itself, the remainder being devoted to lengthy disquisitions on the aforementioned topics.

Arranged in parallel facing columns, the poem's layout makes for an easy couplet-by-couplet comparison between the Persian text and its English translation; a strategy which students of Classics have found useful for years, and students of Arabic and Persian are just beginning to benefit by from the efforts of, for example, Mazda Publishers and Brigham Young University Press's *Islamic Translation Series*. The edition which Ms. Homaee provides is useful in this respect, but stripped of both Nicholson and Humā'ī's scholarly apparatus, especially in regard to the citation of secondary literature and cross-references, the text falls short as a tool for serious study. In addition to such abridgement, the text contains numerous typographical errors in both its English and Persian portions and the text as a whole suffers from inconsistencies and infelicities of design and page layout. This is, however, distracting at worst and is not a serious detriment because the selection in many ways encapsulates the main features of the *Mathnavī*, especially Rūmī's peculiar style of blending allegory, mystical allusion, didactic disquisition, and seemingly tangential thematic shifts, not to mention some of his telltale prosodic idiosyncrasies.

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The Adventures of Sayf ben Dhi Yazan: an Arab folk epic. Translation and narration by Lena Jayyusi; introduction by Harry Norris. Bloomfield: Indiana University Press, 1996.

This is the kind of book which comes along only too rarely but can be appreciated by all. It is rattling good read, like say Harry Potter, but at the same time is thoroughly first-rate in its scholarship. As Norris points out in his very useful introduction, the Saga of Sayf ibn Dhi Yazan is part of whole genre of Arabic folk literature, called *sīras* or *siyar*. These *siyar* or "folk-epics" were composed largely during the Mameluke period, and reflect the genuine vernacular taste and imagination of that period. Norris sees many connections between the *sīras* and the contemporaneous European romances, like Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, *l'Morte d'Arthur*, and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Certainly, Sayf's saga makes for as good reading as these exalted works.

But why choose the saga of Sayf from the many *sīras* for an English translation. True, this is the first time the story has been rendered into English. What distinguishes the *Sīrat Sayf* from all of the other works in this genre? Norris provides the first of the answers: the saga of Sayf is saturated with the magical to a degree unparalleled by any other of the *siyar*. Further, as Jayyusi herself points out, the central conflicts in Mameluke society, such as between men and women, between Islam and other religions, between black- and white-skinned people, figure prominently in the details of Sayf's story, as they are in no other example of the Arabic "folk-epic." Sayf is the Himyarite king of Yemen. He is shown as Muslim before the coming of Muhammad. He battles the Pagan black kings of Ethiopia; yet his greatest love is a princess of this line. His greatest enemies and his greatest allies are women, and the saga contains some of the most sexually arousing descriptions in Arabic literature of Sayf's encounters, hostile and otherwise, with these women.

As is evident from my last point, one need not know or even care about the historic and literary background of the story to enjoy *Sīrat Sayf ibn Dhī Yazan*. Jayyusi's translation is clear and sometimes inspired. It is always a pleasure to read. Sometimes she intervenes in the story to summarise a passage that has not been translated. The 307 page text included in this book represents selections drawn from the first 500 pages of the 4 volume, nearly 2000 page, complete Arabic edition of the *sīra* published in Cairo. Jayyusi has chosen what she calls "the founding cycle," that part of the tale which shows how Sayf won his throne and his queen, defeated the pagans, and brought Islam to the Nile Valley. The rest of the tale tells of Sayf's life as king and of the adventures of his sons who finally replace him. It makes a complete tale on its own. One is left wanting more, but I am wondering what some of the other *siyar* might be like. Encore, Ms. Jayyusi, encore!

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Omar Khayyam the Mathematician. By R. Rashad and B. Vahabzadeh. New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 2000. Pp. x, 268. Includes bibliographical references and index.

The title of this book, *Omar Khayyam the Mathematician*, is misleading, for it gives the impression that it is essentially a work about Omar Khayyam the man, with emphasis on his activity as a mathematician. A

better title would have been “The mathematics of Omar Khayyam,” for that is essentially what it is—a mathematical treatise.

The Introduction devotes all of three and a half pages to Khayyam’s life, of which, the authors state, “we are remarkably ignorant.” They also mention the intriguing possibility that Omay Khayyam, the mathematician, might not have been the same person as Omar Khayyam, the poet, presenting some interesting evidence, but reaching no definite conclusions. The rest of the book is devoted to Khayyam’s three extant mathematical works, namely: “Treatise on algebra,” “Treatise on the division of the quadrant of a circle,” and “Commentary on the difficulties of certain postulates of Euclid’s work.” Part I of the book, “Geometrical theory of algebraic equations,” covers the first two of the above mentioned works. Part II, “Theory of parallels and theory of proportion,” deals with the third title. Each part has a mathematical commentary, a history of the texts, and ends with the English translations of each work. Rashed and Vahabzadeh claim that their translations are quite literal; nevertheless the English is idiomatic enough to be clear and not cumbersome. The commentaries and translations are accompanied by elegant line drawings, and the translations are adequately annotated. The book includes bibliographical footnotes, and an index of proper names.

This reviewer, not being a mathematician, is unable to judge the overall quality of the contents (i.e., mathematical) of this publication; nevertheless, in all other respects it is a well-conceived and written and useful book. It intended for the specialist, the mathematician or historian of mathematics, and will be a valuable addition to libraries for specialists in those fields.

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Early Medieval Arabic : Studies on al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad. Edited by Karin C. Ryding. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1998. Pp. xvi, 144. ISBN: 0-87840-663-8; \$39.95 (Cloth)

Early Medieval Arabic is a collection of four essays on the work of the famous Arab philologist, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Amr al-Farāhīdī (or al-Furhūdī) al-Azdī (ca. 100/718–160/776 or 175/791). The book opens with an eloquent Foreword by Irfan Shahīd and an informative Introduction by the editor.

In “Another Khalīl: Courtier, Teacher, and Sage” Michael G. Carter offers a composite portrait of al-Khalīl as depicted in the sources, al-Khalīl the lexicographer, metrician, and grammarian but also the pious and ethical figure, and places him in the broader context of mediæval Arab-Islamic scholarship. al-Qiftī’s account of al-Khalīl’s death (in *Inbāh al-Ruwāh*), if it is to be believed, illustrates his idealized character: While enthusiastically teaching a slave-girl arithmetic so that she would not be cheated in the market, he absent-mindedly walked into a column and banged his head with sufficient force to kill him.

Ramzi Baalbaki in “*Kitāb al-ʿayn* and *Jamharat al-lughā*” compares the two works and demonstrates that they are quite independent, contrary to the prevalent position maintained that Ibn Durayd’s is a modification of al-Khalīl’s *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*.

“Al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad and Music” by Eckhard Neubauer represents a unique direction in the study of the work of al-Khalīl (who is better-known for his work to the related area of Arabic poetic metre—*arūḍ*), namely his contribution to Arab music theory. Since nothing by him or attributable to him seems to have survived, Neubauer resorts to reconstruction and employs the sources, including reference to Ibn al-Nadīm’s *al-Fihrist* and the works of al-Khalīl’s predecessor, Yūnis al-Kātib (d. ca. 147/765) and his successor, Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī (d. 235/850). See also more recently references in Rafael Talmon’s *Arabic Grammar in its Formative Age: Kitāb al-ʿAyn and its Attribution to Ḥalīl b. Aḥmad*. Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics; v. 25. Leiden: Brill, 1997, pp. 51, 119f.

“Aspects of the Genitive: Taxonomy in *al-Jumal fī al-naḥw*” by the collection’s editor, Karin C. Ryding, offers an examination of a grammatical work attributed to al-Khalīl (Ryding argues plausibly in favor of attribution to al-Khalīl, but Sezgin *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, v. 9, p. 47, 162 (1984), maintains that the attribution is erroneous and that Ibn Shuqayr, d. 317/929, is the author (as Yāqūt, *Udabā*); see also Talmon, pp. 38ff.), with a translation of and commentary on one part (on the genitive ending) of the whole work with the aim of encouraging further research on the work.

These essays are stimulating and offer new material on the role and work of al-Khalīl, one of the most famous of the classical Arab philologists. An unfortunate blemish on the book—and this is a relatively minor gripe—is the book’s composition. Today publishers increasingly accept or require camera-ready copy, and authors and editors are not particularly competent typesetters or layout technicians and use wordprocessing programs

ill-equipped to produce good-looking books. The result is books like this one, where, for example, italic fonts equipped with diacritics do not exactly match their unadorned neighbors, where the distinction between romanized *ʿayn* and *ʿalif* is inconsistent and represented by single-quotes, and the placement of macrons over italic letters is off the mark. These shortcomings of course do not detract from the content of the essays, but they make reading them slightly annoying.

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Ceramics of the Islamic World in the Tareq Rajab Museum. By Géza Fehérvári. London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2000. Pp. 399. Bibliography. Index. \$95.00.

Among the depredations visited upon Kuwait during the 1990 Iraqi invasion of that country, the pillaging of many Kuwaiti cultural centers, including the destruction of the Kuwaiti National Museum and its contents, received considerably less media coverage than the torching of the oil fields. UN-sponsored negotiations for the return of Kuwaiti cultural artifacts pilfered by the Iraqis are continuing ten years after the fact—with some recent success.

One institution which escaped being plundered was the Tareq Rajab Museum, a cultural institution which owes its existence to the singular efforts of its founder, Tareq Sayid Rajab. Rajab was the first director of the Kuwaiti Department of Antiquities and Museums, and his collection is a testament to his life-long interest in Islamic art and cultures. The Museum was established in 1980 and now contains extensive, painstakingly assembled collections of ceramics and Arabic calligraphy. Due to the timely action of Jehan Rajab, Rajab's Brazilian-born English wife, during the invasion, the 20,000 artifacts held by the museum were concealed from the Iraqis and thus spared.¹

Ceramics of the Islamic World in the Tareq Rajab Museum is an elegantly realized album of the museum's extensive collection of Islamic pottery from the Middle Eastern, North African, and Central Asian regions. The ceramics collection includes representative examples of the potter's art from most historical Islamic periods and styles. The text was written by Géza

¹ For a more detailed account of this episode, see Mafoot Simon, "Rajab's museum is all 'home-made,'" *The Straits Times* (Singapore) (January 5, 1998) Life section, p. 7.1.

Fehérvári, Emeritus Professor of Islamic Art at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and noted author of numerous monographs and articles on pottery, calligraphy, and other art forms. Professor Fehérvári is particularly well-suited to write on this collection since, for the past three years, he has served as the Tareq Rajab Museum's curator. He has also written two other monographs and at least two articles on the museum and its holdings.

The present book contains sixteen chapters, covering Islamic ceramic production roughly in chronological order, but also devoting some chapters to particular types or styles of pottery and still others to specific geographical regions. Thus, for example, while the first three chapters cover the pre-Islamic to Fatimid periods, chapter four focuses on Iranian *sgraffiato* ware and chapter fifteen deals with Moroccan ceramics. The work is generously illustrated with color plates, many of them full-page. Each chapter opens with a section placing the particular category in social and historical context and each piece brought under discussion is accorded an appropriate measure of textual treatment. The volume is supplemented by notes, a key to the illustrations, a bibliography and an index. A useful archaeological site map is also included.

Ceramics of the Islamic World constitutes an impressive visual record of the Islamic pottery held by the Tareq Rajab Museum. The scope of the book is limited to the ceramic production of the so-called Central Islamic lands and thus excludes India and Southeast Asia. While there is little that could be considered groundbreaking in the textual material, there is much value in the work's attention to placing the various pieces in archaeological-historical context and to providing references for examples of a given style or form held in other collections and institutions. Fehérvári notes both similarities and differences when comparing such examples. His classifications and nomenclature, for the most part, accord with those commonly accepted by the scholarly communities of archaeology and art history, with some few exceptions when the author offers an alternative interpretation or proposes a different taxonomy.

While the volume is handsomely designed and characterized by generally splendid photography, its text is technically flawed. For the serious reader, this diminishes its overall desirability as an addition to any library in which high quality is a selection criterion. A close reading of the text revealed numerous typographical and proof-reading errors. The present reviewer cataloged some four pages of mistakes, and that list is not complete.

In addition to relatively minor grammatical errors such as disagreement between subject and verb (e.g. “The second type of vessel consist . . .”, p. 219), numerous run-on sentences, mis-spellings (e.g., “axamples” for examples, p. 289), inconsistencies in transliteration (e.g., “seljuq white” (caption to pl. 216); “saljuq white” (caption to pl. 217), p. 167), awkward phrasing and poor syntax are common. Many of these errors are obviously due to an uncritical reliance on word processing and spell checking software, but no such excuse can be made for others. On page 208, for example, there is a reference to “Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharqi.” Is one to read the last word as “Sharqi” or “Gharbi?” Only a specialist could make the proper determination. In a second instance, on page 307, in the chapter devoted to Ottoman pottery, reference is made to the “Sublime Court” when the phrase should certainly be “Sublime Porte.”

The photography, as noted above, is quite good overall. The lighting and backgrounds show off the more spectacular pieces splendidly. In the review copy, the deep blue used as the background for the first full-page plate had transferred to the facing page, but such occurrences most probably must be expected when such strong colors are used. The color values of the plates, on occasion, are not well rendered, however. In some instances, when the text describes a piece as having a green glaze or decoration, the photo shows something closer to black. On the whole, the visual impression is, nonetheless, favorable and does justice to the pottery examples featured. The binding of the review copy seemed to be serviceable enough, although the super (the cloth attached to the back of the gatherings) was visible between some gatherings, indicating that it was not firmly attached.

As a resource for the history of ceramic production in the central Islamic lands and as a record of a remarkable collection of pottery, *Ceramics of the Islamic World* is no doubt useful, but primarily for its photographs and its bibliography. Given the obvious importance of the Tareq Rajab Museum’s holdings in this area, one could have hoped for a more carefully produced volume in terms of the textual element. The price demanded for a work of this size and scope certainly warrants much closer attention to all aspects of its production.

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Religion in Iran: From Zoroaster to Baha'ullah. By Alessandro Bausani. Trans. J. M. Marchesi. New York: Bibliotheca Persica Press, 2000. Pp. xxiv + 455. ISBN 0-933273-26-6 (Cloth) \$38.00.

The present volume is a welcome translation of the late Alessandro Bausani's Italian classic *Persia Religiosa da Zaratustra a Bahâ'u'llâh* (Milan, 1959), standard reading for any student of Iranian religious history. Ably translated by J. M. Marchesi, *Religion in Iran* represents something of a second edition of the work inasmuch as additional bibliographical notes have been appended to each chapter in order to reflect advances in scholarship since Bausani was writing in the late 1950's. This task is aptly handled by Jamsheed Choksy and Juan Cole and when coupled with a new introduction and biography by Bianca Scarcia-Amoretti, a bibliography of Bausani's monographs, and a reprint of a review by Dick Davis of two memorial volumes recently published in Bausani's honor, the volume indeed represents an excellent introduction to the breadth and depth of Bausani's work.

Bausani's aim in writing *Religion in Iran* was twofold. Firstly, he wanted to promote the "circulation of the fundamental aspects of Persian religious thinking among educated Westerners" (p. 1), and secondly to correct the critical myopia informing certain interpretations of Persia's religious legacy, namely a vision predicated on a reformulated Aryan/Semitic theory whereby in an Iranian cultural-linguistic context the acculturation of 'foreign' religious systems takes place through the rearticulation of the foreign system in an indigenously Persian metaphysical idiom. Such a vision, promoted most visibly by Henry Corbin, is well evinced in interpretations of the phenomenon of 'Iranian Islam'. Some of Bausani's comments on this approach have been compressed in the present translation (cf. Milan, 1959, p. 12), but nonetheless it is clear to what he is reacting. It is not so much the structure of such a vision that Bausani challenges, but rather the terms in which it is framed; for indeed Bausani's close reading of Persia's religious corpora elucidates what appear to be substantive continuities. Such continuities, however, are not so much ideological or dogmatic as they are tropological, dynamic and fluid.

The continuity in Persian religious history which Bausani exposes is an amorphous and supple one, characterized by an inherent heterogeneity and syncretism emerging from a historical process of contact and penetration, whereby significant moments in Persia's religious history merge and diverge, disassociate and then recombine. Such layering is dynamic and according to Bausani is well evinced, for example, in tendencies among emergent Iranian religious movements toward "re-archaization" (e.g., the cyclical reemer-

gence of angelized Platonism based on the ancient Zoroastrian model) and a shared symbology, visibly reconstituted by Firdawsī in the eleventh century and henceforth embedded in the Perso-Islamic literary tradition. As Bausani shows, it is the constant renewal and reapplication, in diverse historical settings, of certain leitmotifs and modes of expression which characterize so much of Iran's rich religious history; a history informed not by a consistent reassertation of something essentially and ultimately 'Iranian' but rather a historically determined (and determinative) process of cultural exchange, a religious give-and-take as it were.

The sheer historical sweep of *Religion in Iran* can at first be intimidating, but Bausani's vision emerges early on and following the broader currents of thought, traced over a period stretching from the seventh century BCE to the 20th century of our era, is facilitated through an assiduous selection of primary texts in translation. Bausani's approach in this regard is as pleasurable as it is illuminating, where for example Mazdak is introduced by Firdawsī, Ismailism by Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Ishrāqī* philosophy by Suhrawardī, Persian religious aesthetics by Ḥāfīz, and Twelver Shi'ism through the text of a *ta'ziya* play from 1952 just to cite a few. Divided into three major portions the book opens with an inquiry into the formation of Zoroastrianism, the articulation of Mazdaism in mediæval times, and the rise of Manichaeism and Mazdakism. In the second portion, Bausani proceeds to discuss Iranian Islam, Iranian religious uprisings, early Shi'ism, Ismailism, Philosophy, and Sufism. The final portion concerns the Safavids and Twelver Shi'ism, and the rise of the Babi-Baha'i faith. Throughout each chapter, Bausani constantly reaffirms the profound historicity of the ideas, texts, and personalities he discusses and in doing so presents the reader with a lucid vision of an undeniably dense and nuanced subject.

The index, although displaying some lacunas, is more comprehensive than that of the Italian edition, and the text as a whole is relatively free from typographical errors. The editors choose to retain Bausani's simplified transliteration scheme, and although reproducing the 52 black-and-white illustrations of the original choose to reduce their size, sometimes with a regrettable loss of detail. Marchesi's translation is nicely done, and while containing a few grammatical infelicities and rough edges here and there is on the whole smooth and precise. *Religion in Iran* is a welcome translation of an important text and one which should be well received.

ERIK S. OHLANDER

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Arab-Islamic Philosophy: A Contemporary Critique. By Mohammed ‘Abed al-Jabri; Trans. Aziz Abbassi. Middle East Monograph Series; No. 12. Austin, TX: The Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1999. Pp. xxi + 130. ISBN 0-292-70480-1 (Paper) \$12.95.

The present volume presents for the first time in English the thought of a major Moroccan intellectual, Arab nationalist, social critic, and philosopher Mohammed ‘Abed al-Jabri (Muḥammad ‘Ābid al-Jābirī). Based on the partial French translation *Introduction à la critique de la raison arabe* (Paris, 1994), this volume consists of essays drawn mainly from al-Jabri’s *Naḥnu wa-’l-turāth: qirā’āt mu’āṣira fī turāthihā ’l-falsafī* (Beirut, 1980). Published in anticipation of the forthcoming French translation of his 3 volume magnum opus *Naqd al-‘aql al-arabī* (Beirut, 1984–1990), the essays presented here examine the epistemological and ideological content of the classical Arab-Islamic philosophic enterprise and its relationship to contemporary Arab thought, sketching the fundamentals of al-Jabri’s thinking on the subject.

As rightly pointed out in Walid Hamarneh’s preface, the very fact that “little is known of him in North America may seem rather strange, as his writings and ideas have been at the center of academic debates in the Arab world since the mid 1970s” (p. vii). Professor of Philosophy at Muhammad V University in Rabat since 1966, al-Jabri has been an important voice in a series of interconnected and highly vigorous debates among Arab intellectuals, social critics, and political activists on the place and contemporary relevance of the Arab-Islamic intellectual tradition in the modern Arab world, the construction and continued reinterpretation of the ‘nationalist project’ vis-à-vis Islamist critiques, the meaningfulness of Arab culture in an increasingly globalized world, and the deconstruction—or perhaps as al-Jabri would put it, ‘reconstruction’—of the Arab-Islamic mind as a culturally independent and self-sustaining intellectual and cultural force in the modern Arab world.

Seeking to break out of what he calls “an understanding of tradition confined within tradition” (p. 2), al-Jabri’s essays situate the Arab aspiration towards modernity within a programmatic attempt to develop a modern method and vision of tradition rooted in the principles of rationality and democracy. For al-Jabri, it is only through the appropriation of a truly rational and critical approach to tradition that the Arab mind can be liberated from the cultural hegemony of ‘medieval irrationality’, and thus regain, or resuscitate, the greatness of its philosophical tradition. Begin-

ning by critiquing the shortcomings of fundamentalist (*uṣūlī*), liberal, and Marxist readings of tradition, al-Jabri proceeds to offer what he terms a “scientific critique” (p. 16) of Arab Reason. Here, he outlines the manner in which the development of analogical reasoning in the classical Arab-Islamic intellectual enterprise led to a devastating absence of objectivity and historical perspective. In al-Jabri’s mind, however, this does not preclude the contemporary relevance of tradition; in fact he proposes quite the opposite, positing that when read within the full light of its cultural, political, social, and civilizational contexts, the Arab-Islamic philosophical tradition offers timely ‘intellectual capital’ which can be ‘reinvested’ to address today’s problems. Accordingly, al-Jabri proposes an alternative methodology which he feels allows for an objective (re)reading of the Arab-Islamic philosophic output; one which takes tradition out of its mediæval hermeneutic circle and replants it squarely within the modern critic’s field of view, allowing not only for the reclamation of its legacy but, perhaps more importantly, its utilization in the construction of a new “city of reason and justice” (p. 129).

In the bulk of this book, al-Jabri puts his method to the test, showing how a contextualized reading of the Arab-Islamic philosophic tradition leads inevitably to one fact, namely: that from the start, Arab-Islamic philosophy was a militant ideological discourse committed to, and manipulated by, various state-supported ideological offensives. He maintains that it is exactly such ideological content which can be put to use today. Al-Jabri finds a worthy model in the figure of Averroes, whose systematic outlook and axiomatic method mark his philosophical discourse as immediate and relevant to his modernist project, saying that the search for a “workable method to assume our relationship to tradition” (p. 120) can only come through a critical reclamation of the Averroist heritage and an acceptance of the fact that the “survival of our philosophical tradition . . . can only be Averroist” (p. 124). What this inevitably leads to, in al-Jabri’s mind, is constructing a reasonable and self-sustaining answer to the problematics of how contemporary Arab thought can regain and reinvest the rationalist and ‘liberal’ gains from its own tradition (p. 129).

The present translation is well wrought, although in parts suffers from wholly inexcusable typographical mistakes (especially in the endnotes) and certain renderings which—even to an English reader of French—betray the underlying French text from which this translation was prepared. Such shortcomings aside, the publication of these important essays in English

is to be warmly welcomed, and should be included as part of any holdings in Islamic philosophy, contemporary Arab thought, or modern Middle Eastern politics.

ERIK S. OHLANDER

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Deconstructing Images of "The Turkish Woman". Edited by Zehra F. Arat. New York : Palgrave, 1999. Pp. x+342. ISBN: 0-312-17544-2 (hardcover) ISBN: 0-312-23506-2 (paperback) \$18.95. Illustrations, notes, references.

With the development of the field of Middle Eastern women's studies, much attention has been given to national subgroups, and with it the construction of stereotypes. This collection of essays aims at examining the validity of one specific stereotype—the Turkish woman—and the reasons behind its development: "... this collection focuses on the representation of women. The purpose is not only to reveal the multiplicity of images used in constructing 'the Turkish woman,' but also to identify the agents of construction, to distinguish the ideological goals that they intend, or unintentionally serve, and to show how seemingly contradictory and competing projects build upon and reinforce each other. This study also attempts to position women in these processes of construction—how women perceive, enter into, and react to the prevalent discourse of their time." (p. 3) "[The term] 'deconstruction' is used as an opposite of construction, to refer to the process of breaking down the singular to reveal not only the diversity of the 'subject' population but also the variety of images that have been used to describe it. By 'deconstructing' how Turkish women have been represented, [the contributors] expose the ideological and cultural constructions of 'the Turkish woman' by the dominant political forces, external critics, and domestic opposition groups that have also presented these constructions as natural and real. The presentations and images are at times so powerful that women agree to and participate in their construction; believing that it is for their own good, they often aspire to the presented 'ideal.'" (p. 5) The collection is arranged chronologically in three parts: the late Ottoman era; the early years of the Republic; and the era of political mobilization and diversity. Altogether, it includes an introduction and fourteen chapters. Most of the contributors are Turkish women, educated and holding academic positions in Turkey or the U.S. in the fields of history, sociology, and political science.

The part on the late Ottoman period includes four contributions. Palmira Brummett shows how the image of women in the Ottoman satirical press of 1908–1911 represents both positive and subversive terms. Aynur Demirdirek examines the development of the women's movement in this period, while İrvin Cemil Schick examines the sexual personæ attributed to Turkish women in Western literature. K. Pelin Başcı examines a different image in American missionary texts. The next part, which deals with the early republican years, includes three articles: K. E. Fleming analyzes the representation of women in the writings of Ziya Gökalp, Ayşe Durakbaşa discusses the female identity developed during the Kemalist period, and Zehra F. Arat studies female education during this period. The last part is the largest, containing seven articles. It opens with studies on socioeconomic issues: restrictions on female labor (by İşik Urla Zeytinoğlu), images of village women (by Emine Onaran İnciroğlu), and profile of women top managers (by Hayat Kabasakal). This is followed by an analysis of cultural-social issues: Islamist women (by Aynur İlyasoğlu), women in the Turkish short story (by Carel Bertram), and the women's magazine *Kadınca* (by Arzu Öztürkmen). The collection ends with a study of a women's shelter foundation (by Yeşim Arat).

Based on archival and literary sources as well as field studies, this collection examines from several points of view the intricate image of the Turkish woman. The articles are concise and well documented, showing the changes and continuities which the Turkish women—and their image—underwent over the twentieth century. This collection will be of interest to those studying not only Turkish women but also Turkey, developing countries, and women studies in general.

RACHEL SIMON

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Women in the Medieval Islamic World: Power, Patronage, and Piety.

Edited by Gavin R. G. Hambly. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Pp. 566. The new Middle Ages; v. 6. ISBN: 0-312-21057-4 (cloth) ISBN: 0-312-22451-6 (paper) \$24.95. Illustrations, notes, bibliography.

Women in the Medieval Islamic World is a collection essays which examines the role and status of women in mediæval Islam, a topic often neglected in the traditional study of Islam. The collection covers a wide geographical, chronological, cultural, social, and economic range, embracing both the eastern and western Islamic worlds, including India and the Sudan. Chrono-

logically it reaches from Sassanid to Mameluke, Ottoman, and Safavid periods. It treats both monarchs and common people. Additionally, several studies deal with authors and their portrayal of women in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literatures and art. The collection includes an introduction by the editor and twenty-three chapters by well-established and beginning scholars, mostly from the U.S. and western Europe. These diverse papers are richly varied and well documented. They bring to light less well-known peoples and groups from various regions, classes, occupations, and time periods. This collection is a welcome contribution to the study of women and mediæval Islam.

RACHEL SIMON

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Women in Islam: an Anthology from the Qurʾān and Ḥadīths. Translated & edited by Nicholas Awde. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. Pp. 224. ISBN: 0-312-21523-1 \$55.00. Notes, references, index.

Nicholas Awde, a specialist on Islam outside of the Middle East, has selected and assembled for this anthology references to women from the Qurʾān and al-Bukhārī's collection of Ḥadīths. The anthology is arranged in 20 chapters and covers such subjects as marriage, divorce, widowhood, sex, modesty, family, social conduct, travel, heaven and hell, religion, justice, property, status and right, etc. There are also three appendixes: further selections from the Qurʾān; women in the Qurʾān; and glossary of names.

While the selections in themselves are significant and interesting, the internal order within each chapter and the structure of the anthology as a whole (which does not follow the subjects enumerated above) are not clearly set forth. The purpose of the first appendix is unclear as well. Moreover, the second and third appendixes might better have been combined into one. There are also numerous repetitions.

The anthology will be helpful for beginning students in the field of women in Islam and the study of Islam in general. Those students at a more advanced stage of research can use the anthology as a selective reference tool and as a guide to the treatment of women in the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth. They can also refer to it to acquaint themselves with original terminology and to help place the citations in context.

RACHEL SIMON

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Intimate Selving in Arab Families: Gender, Self, and Identity. Ed. Suad Joseph. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1999. Pp. 318. Bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth/\$29.95 paper.

Suad Joseph's latest edited volume consists of a collection of essays about familial relationships and the development of the self in Arab society. Joseph herself contributes a long introduction to the volume, section introductions, and three chapters to the work. Other contributions come from Arab women scholars of varied backgrounds, including anthropologists, political scientists, literary scholars, and writers.

In her introduction to the volume, which consists primarily of a review of current psychological literature on the emergence of the self, Joseph argues that neither western theories of the individuated self nor pathologizing descriptions of selfhood that have thus far been advanced for Arab societies is accurate. She then advances a model to describe selfhood in Arab families, which highlights connectivity which she defines as "psychodynamic processes by which one person comes to see himself or herself as part of another." (p. 121)

In Part I of the collection, entitled "Intimate Selving as a Practice of Biography and Autobiography in Arab Families," we find four personal accounts of women's experiences in Arab families. Each focuses on different relationships within the family. Jean Said Makdasi offers a personal biography of her grandmother, mother, and herself and highlights the continuities and changes in women's roles across three generations in her family. Joseph's contribution to this section is composed largely of excerpts from a journal in which she records a visit to Lebanon to help sort out family affairs after the death of her father and serves as a direct demonstration of the connectivity she theorizes in the introduction. In "The Poet Who Helped Shape My Childhood," Maysoon Melek describes the intimate relationships that grew out of her extended family, especially the special bond she felt with her famous poet-aunt, Nazik al-Mala'ikah. Scheherazade's piece on her sister Isabelle exudes a degree of unresolved sibling rivalry which illustrates a darker side of the familial connectivity these writers describe.

It is, perhaps, natural that the first section, comprised of English language writings of Arab women, should emphasize the nature of selfhood and connectivity amongst the urban well-to-do and the well-educated. This bias is balanced in the second part, "Ethnographic and Historical Excavations of the Self," in which three of the four essays included explore middle

and lower-middle class Lebanese families. As its title suggests, this section takes a less personal look at family relations and the emergence of the self in Arab families. Suad Joseph exploring brother-sister relationships among Arab families in a modest suburb of Beirut demonstrates the important role of love in tempering the imbalance of power between sisters and brothers to create a connectivity which siblings are eager to perpetuate. Najla Hamadeh describes the relationships between co-wives in polygamous families, contrasting the failure of urban co-wives to develop positive relationships with the connectivity that characterizes co-wives in polygamous bedouin families. A second essay by Suad Joseph explores an especially close mother-son relationship, demonstrating that such relationships can thrive even in societies where patriarchal connectivity is the norm. In the final chapter of this section, Mervat Hatem revisits the biography of ‘Aisha Taymur, arguing that Taymur’s unorthodox education and literary achievements in the 19th century was possible largely as a result of a cross-generational connectivity which included not only her father’s encouragement, but her mother’s consent and complicity and her daughter’s sacrifice of her own education and health.

Whereas the first two sections of the book are focused primarily, although by no means exclusively, on the selving of Arab women, the final section of the book, entitled “Literary Imaginings of Intimate Selving,” treats masculinity. In the first chapter of this section Soraya Altorki examines development of male characters in Najib Mahfuz’s famous trilogy, while Magda Al-Nowaihi does the same for the central characters in semi-autobiographical novels by the Egyptian writers ‘Abd al-Hakim Qasim and Mahmud Diyab. Both essays explore the difficult decisions faced by central male characters of these novels regarding individuation within a patriarchal family structure.

Altogether, the essays present a nuanced and sensitive view of Arab family life and the development of selfhood in Arab families. The volume also serves as a useful challenge to western-centric notions of the psychological development of the healthy individual. However, the essays cannot all be read in the same way. The autobiographical pieces, especially Sheherazade’s bitter description of her sister, are most useful if read as primary texts against which the reader is invited to apply Joseph’s theory of connectivity, rather than as analyses of the subjects they treat.

Although the index, notes, and bibliography are complete and easy to use, the professionalism of the work is somewhat marred by numerous typographical errors and the lack of consistency in the romanization of Arabic

words. The work is recommended for academic libraries with collections in psychology, anthropology, gender studies, or Middle Eastern studies.

NADIA YAQUB

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Eunuchs, Caliphs, and Sultans: A Study in Power Relationships. By David Ayalon. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1999. Pp. xi, 376. ISBN: 965-493-017-X \$38.00. Notes, references, index. Distributed in the U.S. by Ideal Book Store, New York

David Ayalon (1914–1998) was a leading authority in Islamic military slavery and the Mameluke sultanate. He combined a deep and wide-ranging knowledge of the field with the diligence to examine and analyze thoroughly any obscure manuscripts and publications related to his fields of study. Thus, although his published monographs are relatively few in number, they contain a wealth of carefully examined material presented in unambiguous terms. These characteristics of his work are manifested once again in the current study of the eunuch phenomenon in Islamic society. This is not a history of the eunuchs in the Muslim world, but a topical study that examines the power accumulated by eunuchs, not only military but also social and economical power. A major theme of the book is the triangle of power: harem, eunuchs, and Mamelukes, with the eunuchs as the connecting link between the harem and the Mamelukes. The book is divided into three parts with thirteen chapters, a conclusion, and an addendum followed by twelve appendices, bibliography, and index. As in other studies by Ayalon, this one includes numerous extensive citations in Arabic with translations followed by analysis and conclusions. As can be seen in the appendices, and especially in the first one, Ayalon found at times that “[a]n ‘overkill’ and even a ‘super-overkill’ becomes a must” [p. 7] to prove a point he regarded as a major one (in this case, the terminology used for eunuchs).

The book’s first part is “General Considerations” and includes four chapters, dealing with the basic characteristics of eunuchs in Islam; eunuchs and Mamelukes; the lack of opposition to the introduction of eunuchs; and the establishment of the eunuch institution in Islam. The various terms used to refer to eunuchs are discussed here as is their role in educating young Mamelukes and the consequent influence eunuchs exercised on Mamelukes and rulers. The second part examines the Abbasid caliphate in its heyday and is divided into five chapters which focus on the reign of Harun al-Rashid. Among the subjects treated here is the role of the eunuchs in

the caliphal relay post and the attitude of eunuchs toward the Byzantine empire as it played a role in the development of eunuchs as an institution. The last part deals with the later period in four chapters and examines the eunuchs under the Fatimids, the Seljuks, the Zengids, the Ayyubids, and the Mamelukes. In addition to their roles as educators of court and Mameluke children and as functionaries in the harem, some eunuchs were used for the pleasure of rulers who could order the castration of children as punishment to their fathers whom they regarded as opponents to be extinguished. In an addendum, Ayalon cites an inscription from the Ribat of al-Susa, Tunisia, which includes the earliest contemporary evidence known to him for the use of *khādim* in the sense of eunuch, in the context of the role of a eunuch in its establishment in 821.

The appendices contain a wealth of information on various subjects, many of which might constitute an independent study. The first appendix (pp. 207–284) is on the synonymy of *Khādim* and *Khāṣī*, in which Ayalon cites numerous passages to demonstrate that both these terms refer to eunuchs. The other appendices are shorter, and discuss, among other issues, names of eunuchs, their families, prices, castration, sex, romance, marriage, and occupations. The book includes an extensive bibliography (pp. 353–362) which cites also numerous articles by Ayalon. An especially helpful feature of the index is its identification of eunuchs mentioned there.

Eunuchs, Caliphs, and Sultans is a significant study of the role of eunuchs in the Muslim world. It proves once again Ayalon's extensive knowledge and diligence. It contains numerous citations and encompasses a wide chronological and geographic range. Ayalon does not hesitate to deal with some of the more gruesome aspects related to eunuchs, such as castration. Although he indicates several issues which deserve further study, this posthumously published book is a comprehensive treatise not only on the institution of eunuchs, but also on the role of women and the military in early and mediæval Muslim society.

RACHEL SIMON

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

History and Documentation of Human Rights in Iran. By Shirin Ebady. Persian Studies Series, no. 18. New York: Biblioteca Persica Press, 2000. Pp. 122 \$28.00. Hardcover.

History and Documentation of Human Rights in Iran provides a concise but thorough overview of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights established by the United Nations in 1948 and the current human rights situation in Iran since the revolution of 1979. The author clearly achieves her purpose of explaining the current status of different types of human rights in Iran and their application under Muslim law and their relationship to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The format of this text is methodical and direct. The table of contents provides easy access for ready reference to the issues discussed. The author clearly states in the preface that the purpose of this work is not to be a complete treatise on human rights in Iran, but rather to be a basic work in which other scholars in various fields can continue to build. The ultimate goal of Ebady's book is an end to human rights violations in Iran as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: a noble but idealistic intention.

The author of this work, Shirin Ebady, is an attorney at law and a former judge in Iran. After the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979, Ebady and all female judges were removed from their respective positions. Since her removal from the bench, Ebady has worked as a human rights advocate in Iran with a focus on the rights of women and children.

This book accomplishes its stated purpose, if not its idealistic goal and provides an unambiguous discussion of various human rights issues in Iran. Its only fault is the lack of a bibliography to related works, although works cited are appropriately footnoted throughout the book. This work provides easy access for librarians who need to locate informative discussions of human rights in Iran.

Any academic or special library whose collection emphasizes human rights, the Middle East, Iran (Persia), or women's studies should have this text in their collection.

PETER L. KRAUS

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Takeover in Tehran: The Inside Story of the 1979 US Embassy Capture.
By Massoumeh Ebtekar as told to Fred A. Reed. Vancouver, Canada:
Talonbooks, 2000.

In 1979 a group of Iranian students, determined to “take a stand against past and future humiliation by the U.S.,” occupied the American Embassy in Tehran, took the resident diplomats and intelligence personnel hostage, and sparked an international incident. *Takeover in Tehran* is the story of one of the participants in the takeover, Massoumeh Ebtekar, who was an active participant in the takeover almost from its beginning. She was rapidly to become known to Western television viewers as “Mary”, or “Miriam,” a name common to both Islam and Christianity.

Mary became the “person who had to bridge the language gap [between the students and the Western media] in circumstances fraught with misunderstanding.” Political discourse on Iran, particularly in the United States, is characterized by misunderstanding and confusion, as was evident during the takeover, when, Massoumeh Ebtekar points out, the inability of U.S. foreign policy to respond effectively to the Iranian people’s desire to be treated with dignity was painfully obvious. To make matters worse, then as now, the media coverage of Iran and the takeover proved at best lamentable. If Mary did not succeed in countering the tide of media stereotyping in her attempt to reach the American public then, Massoumeh Ebtekar now attempts to start a dialogue among equals.

The book begins with a foreword by Fred Reed and a preface by Seyyed Muhammad Khoeiniha, the Shi’ite clergyman who served as the students’ spiritual leader during the takeover. The main story consists of ten short chapters and an epilogue which elaborates on the link between the Islamic revolution and the current reform movement.

As-told-to author Fred Reed is a Montreal-based journalist and translator. He has won the Canadian Governor General award for translation and is the author of three books: *Persian Postcards* (1994), *Salonica Terminus* (1996), and *Anatolia Junction* (1999). All are published by Canadian publisher Talonbooks. Reed writes from the conviction that there is a multiplicity of views and approaches to actual events. He seeks to bring forth the view of the “other”, to expose hidden and suppressed views and ideas. *Takeover in Tehran* continues of this endeavor.

This is an account of an eyewitness to, and a participant in, history and of one who is eager to narrate her story and give it identification and recognition. Although she would disagree with Edward W. Said’s views on secular humanism, her narrative resembles Said’s call to give voice from

within in order to assert the authenticity of a nonwestern story. Hers is an account that places the Iranian story within the broader account of the Embassy takeover. The irony of her endeavor should be obvious to all.

Takeover in Tehran is invaluable in shedding light on the reasons for the takeover, planning for the takeover and meeting the hostages' needs, behind the scene activity and decision making inside the "Den of Spies," including the discovery of the "barrels of shredded documents" and the effort to reconstruct them. The book also examines the mediation attempts, the aborted rescue mission, the Bani Sadr affair, and the hostages' resourcefulness. The book succeeds in vividly illustrating the student's motivation, fears, insecurity, frustration, naiveté, youthful sincerity, doubt, and idealism. The candid and direct narrative style allows readers even with limited knowledge of Islam or Iranian social, historical, and political conditions before, during, or after the overthrow of the Shah to follow the ordeal with anticipation.

While both the U.S. and Iranian governments struggle over how to re-establish diplomatic relations, this book reminds us of the human factor which brings people together and how people can reach out to each other despite their governments. The sub-chapter entitled "A Mother's Courage" illustrates that human encounter, where a mother defies her government's travel restrictions, reaches out to the students, hears their story, and visits her hostage son. Massoumeh Ebtekar attributes this journey to "a mother's love and a woman's determination to accomplish the impossible."

After 444 days, the hostages were released. The students returned to a besieged society consumed in a vicious war with neighbor Iraq. Meanwhile, Massoumeh Ebtekar pursued a doctorate in immunology and became publisher of an Islamic women's journal, *Farzaneh*. Currently, she is the Republic's Vice President and Head of the Department of the Environment and very much now the reform stalwart as two decades ago. If, as the author wishes, the book corrects the biased media's perception of the takeover, of Iranians, Iran, and Islam and contributes to the engagement of "two diverse and different cultures in a constructive dialogue" as the author hopes, then Massoumeh Ebtekar's effort will have been a complete success.

In conclusion, the book does not reveal the fine details of underlying political, social, and cultural conditions in Iran. It is a personal and interpretive account, and the author does not claim that the book is anything else. She does, however, provide an excellent overview of both the ideals of the Islamic revolution and the conditions that led to the overthrow of the Shah. It includes a chronology of events leading to the takeover, dating

back to 1891, and appendices consisting of two recovered confidential U.S. Embassy letters and a letter from Khomeini to Pope John Paul II. The book would have benefited from an index and chapter subdivisions in the table of contents. Despite these minor shortcomings, *Takeover in Tehran* is a valuable addition to the discourse of understanding and mutual respect.

FADI H. DAGHER

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The Hidden Hand: Middle East Fears of Conspiracy. By Daniel Pipes. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998.

The Hidden Hand is a detailed exposition of twentieth-century Middle Eastern political thought as it is driven by conspiracy theory. The book consists of four major parts: The first part focuses on how conspiracy theories are inspired by events, such as the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967, the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the leaders associated with these—Gamal Abdel Nasser, Shah Reza Pahlevi, the Ayatollah Khomeini, and Saddam Hussein. In the second part, Pipes defines who, in the eyes of the theorists, the conspirators are and what they stand for. According to the author, Imperialism and Zionism are perfect examples of conspiracy theory thinking, especially when they are viewed as the causes of nearly all misfortunes in the Middle East.

The third part of the book presents a discussion of the conspiracy theorist and how the mind of conspiracy theorist operates, classifies the types of such theorists, and maintains that they permeate all levels of Arab and Iranian society, from the common man to the ruler. In the fourth part, Pipes suggests some real conspiracies, including covert activities undertaken by Great Britain and Israel in the region. He argues that such phenomena can produce this type of political thought. He concludes his book with the question of whether—and the hope that perhaps—this type of thinking will eventually wither.

The book is written in a clear and readable style. The copious footnotes do not interfere with the flow of the text. The author cites extensively excerpts from newspaper articles, television and radio broadcasts, and some interviews, in addition to monographic sources. The book does not use a consistent romanization scheme in representing Arabic and Persian words.

The Hidden Hand is an essential addition to a library's Middle East collection because of its special focus on conspiracy theory as it influences the political thinking of an important region in the world.

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Bridging the Gap: A Future Security Architecture for the Middle East. By Shai Feldman and Abdullah Toukan. Lanham, Md. : Rowman & Littlefield, 1997. Pp. XVII, 126. Index. ISBN 0-8476-8551-9. Available on the Internet at: <<http://www.ccpdc.org/pubs/brgap/bkfr.htm>>

Bridging the Gap consists of four chapters and an appendix, which includes two documents from the multilateral peace talks and a glossary with definitions of key terms used in the text. The first chapter, written jointly by both authors, presents the background for the elaborations worked out in the subsequent chapters. The authors define several milestones in Israeli-Arab negotiations, such as the 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel which for the first time defined international boundaries between Israel and one of its Arab neighbors. They then review several bilateral and multilateral Israeli-Arab agreements set up after the 1991 Madrid conference and chronicle the progress in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations from the Israel/PLO Declaration of Principles (1993) to the final status negotiations in 1996. They analyze the multilateral Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) talks which were held under the auspices of the U.S., Japan, Canada, and Russia. The authors also highlight the importance of confidence- and security-building measures which were aimed at increasing transparency and ultimately reducing the ability to use force for the purpose of political intimidation.

The second and third chapters outline the Israeli and Arab approaches to a security framework. They are written by Shai Feldman, a longtime researcher at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies in Tel Aviv, and Abdullah Toukan, science advisor to King Hussein of Jordan and head of the Jordanian Middle East Peace Negotiations Delegations to the ACRS Working Group, respectively. According to Feldman, Israel's security policy takes three premises, (1) the view that the hostility of the Arab states threatens the very existence of the state, (2) the fact that no international organization or country can guarantee Israel's existence, and (3) that in all aspects of national power, Arab states enjoy a quantitative advantage (size of population and armed forces, territory, strategic depth, natural resources).

Feldman discusses Israel's determination to achieve qualitative superiority in all military and civilian areas to counter the perceived quantitative Arab advantages and to implement a strategy of "cumulative deterrence" (p. 12). The author surveys changes in Israel's security environment brought about in the 1990s by the end of the Cold War, the Gulf War, and the beginning of the peace negotiations. He notes that Israel's refusal to join regional nuclear non-proliferation treaties is based on the fear that a wave of Islamic fundamentalist violence might trigger old patterns of hostility in the region and encourage countries like Syria to launch another war, possibly involving the use of nuclear and chemical weapons.

Toukan discusses Arab security concerns and illustrates that they are based on a view of Israel as an expansionist force which has attempted to keep the region in turmoil and instability in order to continue to dominate the region and to force the Arab states to expend their resources for military means rather than for economic reform and development. In the eyes of the Arab countries, Toukan contends, Israel has held the Palestinians hostage since the 1967 war despite UN resolution 242, which requires that it withdraw immediately from all occupied territories. Israel's claim to secure borders was seen as an excuse to occupy territory and to avoid having to recognize the sovereignty of neighboring states. According to Toukan, other perceptions of threat result from Israel's nuclear capability and from the continued U.S. strategic cooperation. The author notes a change in Arab security concerns after the events in the global and regional arena in the early 90's. He argues that the Oslo agreements alleviated some of the distrust since they laid the groundwork for an independent Palestinian state. He points out, however, that the Arab states insist on both bilateral and multilateral arms control talks in order to transform effectively political advances into long-lasting stable relationships. In addition, countries on the periphery of the region with political ties to Arab states (e.g., Iran) should be brought into the process.

The last chapter is also co-written by both authors. They summarize the persisting differences in perception of the two sides, especially in the realm of conventional military power and nuclear arms control, but also on the political level. They contend that while Arabs fear that political change in Israel could lead to a refusal to continue with the Israeli-Palestinian final-status negotiations, Israel has little faith in the political reliability of even those countries which have participated in the peace process. To bridge these gaps, the authors suggest that Middle Eastern states adopt security strategies which cannot be perceived as threatening by their neighbors and do not provoke actions which throw regional security even more off balance.

Moreover, they urge that the ACRS process address structural arms control issues in order to prepare for the control of nuclear weapons, not just among the present participants in the talks, but also among the states which have remained outside the process (e.g., Lebanon, Syria, and Iran). The authors furthermore propose that the region's states establish a Middle East Cooperative Framework under their own management to gradually replace the ACRS process. Finally, the authors recommend the United States' continued involvement in the region as a facilitator and guarantor of economic and social development.

Bridging the Gap offers an insightful and well-written overview of the security perceptions of Middle East states and effectively outlines the persisting dilemmas and opposing perspectives. The glossary provides helpful definitions of international arms control terminology and succinctly outlines major arms control treaties and agreements. The well-constructed index makes the text easily accessible and provides invaluable help with the countless acronyms. As of the writing of this review, Israeli-Palestinian relations have reached yet another deadly impasse, where bloody confrontation has been substituted for dialog. Although the current conflict diminishes any hope for a peaceful resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the near future, a clear understanding of the differing positions outlined in Toukan and Feldman's book remains essential to any understanding of the Middle East and its future.

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