

the state. Instead, Yadav asserts that once these organizations become deeply entrenched within government apparatuses, they can instead strengthen state institutions. To anchor her thesis, Yadav focuses on *Islah* in Yemen and Hezbollah in Lebanon—both legally recognized political organizations. By examining the work of these two organizations (e.g., Hezbollah's welfare assistance to Lebanese citizens during its civil war), she builds a case that there are indeed Islamist groups that aspire to both work and cooperate within the existing structures of the state. In addition to demonstrating how these groups strengthen Muslim states, *Islamists and the State* also challenges the conventional Western views of Islamist parties by evaluating their involvement based on local contexts rather than on multinational interests and perspectives. Yadav's discussion demonstrates that despite being largely considered as primary actors in opposition politics, Islamist groups can be a vital element in political and governmental stability. ✂

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KABIR TAMBAR. *The Reckoning of Pluralism: Political Belonging and the Demands of History in Turkey.* Stanford University Press, 2014. vii + 218 pages, contents, acknowledgements, notes, bibliography, index. Paper US\$24.95 ISBN 978-0-8047-9093-2.

Author Kabir Tamar challenges the pluralist government that controls Turkey, and reckons that to aid minorities and foster their inclusion in Turkish society, Turkey must face its history and the violence that created the state in its modern form. In the acknowledgements, Tamar states that the majority of research conducted in the book was based on ethnographical analysis of the Turkish state. The author does not specifically state how the research was conducted, but it appears to be a historical and scholarly analysis based on the research and claims of other scholars. *The Reckoning* focuses on the Alevi minority group in Turkey and how pluralism and nation-state recognition have affected their community throughout the years of Turkey's existence, versus their status within the Ottoman Empire. Tamar claims that increased Alevi religiosity and religious practices reflect the pluralist actions by the government and their lack of recognition as a minority in Turkey. Tamar concludes that Turkey currently fosters a democratic practice that excludes national-citizenship of minorities like the Alevi based only on the grounds of consenting inclusion and that the only

way to change that exclusion model is to face their history of violence and creation. ✧

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HOLGER ALBRECHT. *Raging against the Machine: Political Opposition under Authoritarianism in Egypt.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2013. xxvi + 224 pages, glossary, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$39.95 ISBN 978-0-8156-3320-4.

In *Raging against the Machine*, Albrecht examines the existence of political opposition groups under the authoritarian rule of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt. He examines the effects the opposition groups have on the regime and visa versa. How did these opposition groups survive for thirty years under the oppressive regime of Mubarak? And to what extent, if any, were they successful in advancing political reform within the regime? Albrecht attempts to answer these questions by first examining the structure and strategies of the political opposition groups. Albrecht describes their personnel, their funding and resources, and their political ideology in an effort to understand the make-up of these groups. He discusses the role human rights groups and NGOs played in opposition groups' campaigns. He analyzes groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, and the tactics taken to disrupt the authoritarian rule of Mubarak. Albrecht also details the range of strategies that Mubarak's regime routinely employed to contain opposition groups, including surveillance and military and police harassment. Albrecht argues that efforts made by the opposition groups to thwart Mubarak's regime only fueled the regime's fire by solidifying the authority Mubarak maintained. He concludes by discussing the transition Egypt has experienced, as efforts have been made for democratic systems. But he identifies an issue in a hybrid system of democratic reform rooted in authoritarianism. He finalizes his statement of uncertainty stating the future for Egypt is simply that: uncertainty. ✧

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JASON MOKHTARIAN. *Rabbis, Sorcerers, Kings, and Priests: The Culture of the Talmud in Ancient Iran.* Oakland: University of California Press, 2015. 296 pages,