

Republic.” These measures incited a massive exodus of mostly educated urbanites. The communities in diaspora have kept their cultural identity alive with a strong emotive attachment to Iranian art, language and history. As cited by Foltz in the beginning of the book, the same factors of Persian language, celebration of *Nowruz*, and communal gatherings continues to connect Iranian expatriates. Whether among the diaspora communities or internal to the state during times of weak Iranian central rule, it was the everyday cultural practices that has kept the notion of “Iranianness” alive.

The book has a few minor shortcomings. It does not speak to the impact of debates concerning Orientalism on Iranian historiography. And Foltz spills little ink on the democratic aspirations of Iranians or on Iran’s economic situation in the neoliberal era. Moreover, Foltz does not pay in-depth attention to how the Samanids and the Ghaznavids contributed to keeping the Persian culture alive, thus, the period after the disintegration of the Timurids until the rise of the Safavids is not explained well. Yet as the book’s writing is direct and clear, students and general readers alike will find it useful. *Iran in World History*’s biggest contribution is its simplicity of style in presenting an up-to-date history of Iran and its people to novice readers. ✂

DOI:[10.1017/rms.2018.39](https://doi.org/10.1017/rms.2018.39)

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IBRAHIM FRAIHAT, *Unfinished Revolutions: Yemen, Libya and Tunisia After the Arab Spring* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016). Pp. 303. \$40.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780300215632.

Ibrahim Fraihat’s *Unfinished Revolutions: Yemen, Libya and Tunisia After the Arab Spring* primarily engages with and contributes to conflict resolution studies. It is less concerned with explaining how the “Arab Spring” transpired or with presenting academic case studies on the three countries designated in the title. Instead, it focuses on unresolved conflicts in the region after the “Arab Spring” and presents these dynamics for a general audience. For readers of the *Review of Middle East Studies* this approach entails certain weaknesses, but it also offers some untold stories and fresh information.

Fraihat’s argument is prescriptive: “for Arab societies to successfully transition from the upheaval of the Arab Spring to sustainable peace and stability, they must engage in inclusive and comprehensive national

reconciliation” (2). The most substantive chapters compare different approaches to reconciliation: national dialogue, truth seeking, reparations, justice for former regimes, and institutional reform. This is worthy of attention from anyone analyzing or anticipating post-regime-change politics, in part because it breaks down the amorphous notion of transitions into distinct component parts. At the same time, *Unfinished Revolutions* offers policy prescriptions rather than political science. Written in the omniscient imperative voice (as signaled by frequent deployment of the word “certainly” to mark unsubstantiated statements and repetition of the verb-forms “must,” “should,” and “need to”), and with some passages repeated in more than one chapter, it reads more like a consultant’s report than an academic inquiry that would frame debates on regime-change, consider alternative hypotheses, and cite prior scholarship.

The material comes almost exclusively from interviews conducted over a four-year period. Unfortunately, Fraihat neglects the secondary, much less the primary, literature on the three countries. Since I am most familiar with the socio-political and geographical history of Yemen, I notice lacuna there; as a teacher of the comparative politics of the Arab world with a nodding familiarity with the Tunisian and Libyan uprisings, I might have learned more than I did. Deeper reading of Yemen’s history on the part of the author, would have prevented the statement that the National Dialogue, which began in March 2013, was “the first of its kind”(80) and instead acknowledge it as an echo of a home-grown precedent twenty years earlier; helped avoid portraying the Houthis as the only heavily armed group in the country, as though disarming them alone would demilitarize the situation (66); yielded more nuanced, less naïve consideration of a hastily railroaded federalism proposal; and deterred lopsided statements such as Yemen’s civil war “spilled over to Saudi Arabia” (224).

That said, the fieldwork-based heart of the book exploring transitional justice and national reconciliation, notably the five chapters in Part II, is a contribution to Middle East scholars’ well-warranted current fascination with the comparative study of post-uprising dénouements. Of the two countries that engaged in national dialogues, Tunisia’s conversation, led by civil-society actors, was more fruitful than Yemen’s donor-operated experiment. Truth-seeking after three decades of stable venial dictatorships posed particular challenges in all three cases, as direct quotes from interviewees demonstrate, beginning with questions about timeframes and challenges to national pride and identity. Perhaps because of that lack of consensus on how to proceed, none of the three countries grappled successfully with either moral or material reparations to victims.

Accountability and lustration, defined as policies and processes to regulate or prevent anyone associated with the former regime from participating in the successor political system, (141) is deeply politicized: the process went too far in Libya's purge and not far enough in Yemen, where the deposed president was granted generous amnesty, with disastrous consequences leading to civil war in both cases; as in other fields, Tunisia is the preferable, if still imperfect, model of vetting candidates for new positions. Likewise, Tunisia's efforts at deep reform via new elections and constitutional revisions showed promise but also revealed the difficulties of far-reaching, sustainable reform.

The final section of *Unfinished Revolutions* makes the case for inclusion of civil society, women, and tribes in negotiations over transitional justice. This is a perfectly reasonable point and policy recommendation, and a caution about the risk of regime holdovers and the old elite merely changing hats. The point, however, remains a bit thin. The UN-style bureaucratic operationalization of civil society as civil society *organizations*, rendered by the acronym CSOs, does not necessarily encompass the full range of independent civic activism that animated the Tunisian and Yemeni uprisings. Women should surely play leadership roles, but they are not a bloc; indeed, the women mentioned in the chapter are mostly CSO officers, part of civil society not distinct from it. The inclusion of a ten-page chapter on tribes in Yemen and Libya could seem surprising to Fraihat's readers in the transitional justice community, who might not imagine customary law and tribal conflict resolution mechanisms providing useful, indigenous models. Yet, he rather oversimplifies the role of tribes: in Yemen, they are misleadingly depicted as an alternative to a weak state and as opposed to the Houthi/ Salih rebels, as if prominent tribal leaders have not been core members of the Salih regime; in Libya, by contrast, attention to inter-tribal disputes portrays tribes as fractious and quarrelsome.

For students or scholars of the comparative politics of the Middle East, *Unfinished Revolutions* offers an antidote to overblown expectations of transitions to democracy, on the one hand, or recourse to the familiar laments about authoritarianism and armed conflict on the other. Fraihat distinguishes the core elements of transitional justice—truth-seeking, reparations, and accountability—from other processes. His work clearly indicates that reconciliation entails disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants; return or durable resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons; and fundamental institutional reform including in the justice system. The processes of post-conflict reconstruction involve forming political parties and holding elections, improving the educational sector, and rebuilding infrastructure. Finally, a complete rehabilitation would

entail reviving agriculture and industry, upgrading health care services, and raising overall standards of living. These insights from the literature on conflict resolution and transitional justice could be applied by future researchers to other cases including Iraq, Syria, and possibly Palestine. ✕

DOI:[10.1017/rms.2018.40](https://doi.org/10.1017/rms.2018.40)

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BRYAN R. GIBSON, *Sold Out? US Foreign Policy, Iraq, the Kurds, and the Cold War* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015). Pp. 281. \$100.00 cloth. ISBN: 9781137487117.

While it was hoped that the official end of the American occupation in 2011 would bring stability to Iraq, this has sadly not been the case. Now that the Islamic State's defeat seems imminent, many Iraqi Kurds believe that independence should be their reward for participating in the fight. The US, however, has been largely unsupportive of their cause: countering Iranian influence seems to override other concerns for Washington. Bryan R. Gibson shows that larger regional concerns have long trumped local dynamics in America's Iraq policy: "Between Iraq's revolution in 1958 and the end of the Kurdish War in 1975, the driving force behind US policy toward Iraq was America's Cold War strategy" (199). *Sold Out?*, which includes a methodical analysis of primary sources, is a worthwhile read for anyone interested in American-Iraqi relations, the Kurdish question, and how US foreign policy overlooks the nuances of Iraq by fitting it into a larger, often inappropriate schema.

Gibson's argument moves chronologically through successive changes in the American-Iraqi dyad, building evidence that Cold War logic remained constant throughout these turnovers in leadership. At the start of the time period, the Eisenhower administration analyzed the new regime of 'Abd al-Karim Qasim's regime, with particular worry about the extent of the Iraqi Communist Party's influence. The prioritization of thwarting communism and Soviet influence, which Gibson argues was not always well suited to understanding nuances of actual Iraqi politics, was in line, however, with a regional policy that aimed at "the expansion of US influence at the Soviet Union's expense" (8). While the Americans defaulted to a "wait and see" attitude in Iraq, Qasim's increasing reliance on communist mobilization motivated two of the three active American interventions in this time period: Eisenhower's discussion of possibly deposing Qasim with advice from