

religion and early polity under Muhammed and his direct successors; the Abbasid revolution, which created the Baghdad caliphate; the Gregorian revolution which reconstituted the Papacy as an autonomous, bureaucratic and centralized authority that contended with rulers of European states and called forth the Crusades to reconquer the Holy Lands; and Genghis Khan's creation of a pan-Eurasian Mongol Empire.

Whether or not one agrees that all these events are "revolutions," one can certainly agree that they were major historical turning points in how political and religious authority were constituted and exercised. Assembling them all in one narrative creates a volume of great sweep and numerous insights. Arjomand shows how each of these events altered local institutions, but also affected subsequent events and patterns of authority in adjacent and sometimes distant regions.

Particularly striking is how often Persian/Iranian history is shown to be crucial to wider currents of world history. Persian power recast the politics of the Middle East from Pharaonic Egypt to Alexander's Hellenistic empire; its Oriental influences increasingly shaped the nature of Imperial government in Rome; Persians were crucial to the founding and core culture of the Abbasid Caliphate; and Persia became the core western conquest of the Mongols.

This is a book of rare scope, and is exceptional in the degree to which its soaring ambition is fully supported by the depth of knowledge and creative insights of the author. Any reader will come away having learned new things, and having their imagination stretched and prior understanding of world history challenged. Arjomand has added a wonderful contribution to the small number of scholarly works that truly address world history, and his Perso-centric, as opposed to Euro-centric approach, is a startling and refreshing recasting of the three millennia from the Akkadian to the Mongolian Empires.

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## **The Apple of His Eye: Converts from Islam in the Reign of Louis IX. William Chester Jordan, Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. Pp. 190. \$35.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780691190112**

Jessalynn Bird, Department of Humanistic Studies, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN  
([jbird@saintmarys.edu](mailto:jbird@saintmarys.edu))

Over twenty-five years ago, I encountered the crusader bishop and missionary Jacques de Vitry's account of the sack of Ayyubid Damietta. Writing to Pope Honorius III, Paris-trained crusade preachers, and Cistercians and beguines in Flanders-Brabant, Jacques described the human and material treasures he salvaged from the detritus of a once-great city. In addition to silks, precious vessels, and coin, there were Muslim prisoners reserved to be exchanged for Christian captives or sold as slaves to Christian owners, with the exception of some children, who with great labor and expense Jacques managed to commandeer. However, after baptism, more than five hundred, so he believed, crossed over to the Lord. Described in terms of the virginal martyrs of Apocalypse 14:4, it appears they perished. Other surviving youths were sent to some of Jacques' friends so that they could be raised and "imbued with sacred letters" for "the worship of God." A poignant postscript addressed to John of Nivelles mentions that his letter was accompanied by two boys snatched from the burning of Babylon (Apoc. 18:9–10) with silk cloths and other letters to be shown to the Cistercian abbot of Villers and mutual acquaintances (Huygens, 6.128, 133). Those young individuals, uprooted from their culture and religion, haunted me, but I was never able to trace their ultimate fate. William Chester Jordan, on the other hand, has been able to map out the fate of relocated individuals such as these, only a generation after Jacques de Vitry.

In his timely book, Jordan has been able to reconstruct the impetus behind Louis IX's missionary dreams and attempted acclimation of Muslim converts to French Christian culture. Only a master scholar could responsibly and believably speculate from the fragmentary and often-biased surviving evidence, but the panoramic portrait Jordan paints is a gripping one bound to appeal to audiences inhabiting a

21st-century world characterized by smoldering conflict, confessional divisions, mass migration, and concerns about assimilation and the retention of cultural and individual identity. Drawing on his earlier work, Jordan notes that Louis IX's reforming and conversionary campaigns, aimed at Christian sinners including usurers and prostitutes as well as heretics, Jews, and Muslims could have "a very hard edge to them" (pp. 3–4). Louis IX's offer of financial support to penitent prostitutes and converts from Judaism and sponsorship of new forms of religious life such as the beguines and mendicant orders should be counterbalanced, in the reader's mind, by disturbing and contemporaneous royal policies such as burnings of the Talmud, inquests against heretics, crusades against Muslims, segregatory and exclusionary measures, and eschatological convictions that the end of the world was nigh (pp. 1–20).

Jordan deftly summarizes the way in which these concerns intersected with Louis IX's crusading preparations and 13th-century dreams of world conversion evidenced by contemporary literature, events in the Iberian peninsula, and missions to Mongol rulers. In contrast to medieval romances' fantasies of converting Muslim princesses through marriage, Louis IX appears to have primarily targeted those who could influence their families: male or widowed heads of households. Evidence from those privy to networks of information sharing, including canon lawyers, the Benedictine Matthew Paris, the Dominicans Stephen of Bourbon, Humbert of Romans and Vincent of Beauvais, the royal confessor William of Saint-Pathus, and Louis IX's fellow crusader and biographer Jean of Joinville, indicates that Louis IX had conversion on his mind before Damietta. Louis's own confessor, Geoffrey of Beaulieu, later testified that like Jacques, Louis purchased Saracen and pagan slaves, had them and those who converted of their own accord baptized, instructed in the faith, and moreover, brought them back to France with him, providing for them and their families throughout the converts' lifetimes (pp. 42–43). Jordan reasonably hypothesizes that there were probably three main waves of converts in Acre. The first were elite military officers and soldiers who pledged to fight on the crusaders' side under Arabic-speaking Christian commanders, although some of these may have simply been mercenaries. Others, probably mostly civilians of lower status with fewer resources wishing to flee a war zone, sailed for France with surviving military forces (p. 47). Louis learned from backsliders who took royal money and ran. The final wave of converts underwent instruction and baptism in Acre before being escorted to France, probably by agents in the pay of Geoffrey of Sergines, Louis' trusted commander in the port city of Acre (pp. 52–55).

Louis' conversion program was no mere hagiographical tissue of fabricated sanctity, despite the fact that most of the surviving evidence stems from those with a vested interest in promoting the king's image. In a twist of propitious fate, hard evidence, some in the form of excerpts copied in the early modern period, survives from royal fiscal accounts of payments made to converts from Judaism and Islam living in France, in the form of lifetime pensions to adult male and widowed heads of households (p. 79). Unlike Jewish converts, who spoke French and were familiar with at least some of their Christian neighbors' customs, the new converts from Outremer were initially in a "vulnerable state of ignorance" (p. 65). It was believed that neither the solution of communal living utilized in England for Jewish converts and in France for beguines and penitents, nor Frederick II's model of a Muslim Luceran island in a sea of Christians would assist the integration of new converts. And so at royal command perhaps as many as 1500 individuals were dispersed throughout northern France (in the vicinity of Bourges, Laon, Noyon, Orléans, Amiens, Tours, Paris and perhaps other towns), with the goal of preventing religious recidivism and encouraging acculturation to and intermarriage with the local Christian populace (pp. 100–105).

Prévôts secured leases for housing, warm clothing was distributed to those unaccustomed to northern winters, although the adoption of a cuisine based on animal products often derived from previously forbidden or unfamiliar food items must have been difficult. The problem too, of oversight and jurisdiction over the newcomers soon reared its head. Although royal functionaries such as the distinctively named "Cape" distributed pensions and ombudsman-like figures such as "Master Denis" looked after the welfare of converts in the vicinity of Orléans, integration appears to have been occasionally problematic (p. 84). The convert community near Orléans endured (pp. 132–34), but it was not smooth sailing. The mayors of Senlis and other towns petitioned Parlement and received confirmation of their right to exercise justice over baptized converts who committed crimes (pp. 88–90). However, many transplants appear to have found niches in farming, trade, hospitality, and perhaps the silk industry in Paris. Some found prestigious employ in royal service and administration, such as Dreux of Paris, an elite model convert who acted as a royal liaison for other converts in the royal realm (p. 96).

Noting Jacques of Vitry's account, Jordan wonders if Louis perhaps encountered some of Jacques' young recruits and was inspired to send individuals for training at Paris and other religious centers as future bilingual evangelists. Certainly contemporary letters survive seeking both royal and crowdsourced funding of stipends for young students of Mediterranean origin studying Arabic in Paris in preparation for missionary work (p. 123). It is perhaps fitting that in preparation for his final crusade, which was imbued with hopes for the conversion of the rulers and populace of Ifriqiya, Louis IX appears to have made a tour of convert settlements in the royal realm; Geoffrey of Beaulieu claimed that even on his deathbed the king was still contemplating the logistics of conversion (pp. 105–8, 144). These missionary dreams should perhaps be contextualized by Michael Lower's recent book on the Tunis Crusade of 1270, which highlights the ways in which all sides utilized multiple strategies involving mercenaries, holy war, conversion, diplomacy, and commerce. These approaches were not completely divorced from policies in the Iberian Peninsula and Louis IX's shrewd usage of legal and economic carrots and sticks to seek the reform and conversion of multiple groups in his own lands. A magisterial display of detective work, scholarly inference, and topicality, this slim book offers valuable lessons from the past regarding attempts, both positive and negative, to integrate and acclimate groups with divergent languages, cultures, and religions. It could and should be read by the educated general reader as well as students and scholars of Mediterranean and medieval history.

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**Iranian Masculinities: Gender and Sexuality in Late Qajar and Early Pahlavi Iran. Sivan Balslev, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. 328. \$99.99 cloth. ISBN: 9781108470636**

Robert J. Bell, Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, and History, New York University, NY ([rjb487@nyu.edu](mailto:rjb487@nyu.edu))

Gazing out from the cover of *Iranian Masculinities* sit two Iranian soldiers clad in typical 1930s military dress, marked by the ubiquitous kepi-style headpiece introduced by decree of Reza Shah in 1927. Although these men embodied a Western-inspired and explicitly modernist sartorial mode, what strikes the contemporary viewer is the affectionate staging of the photograph, as one languidly rests his arm upon the other's shoulder in a poignant display of male intimacy. The ambiguity of their masculine performance immediately draws the reader into the central theme of Sivan Balslev's debut monograph, namely, the acculturation of Western concepts and practices into a new form of "hegemonic masculinity" in the late-Qajar and early Pahlavi eras of modern Iranian history.

Despite the titular "masculinities" of this monograph, Balslev's analysis is primarily devoted to the articulation and performance of a singular, albeit multifaceted, form of masculinity particular to a new (sociological) class of Iranian elites, with each chapter offering a discrete window onto how these elites discursively linked notions of progress and modernity with Western-inspired sartorial practices and affects over the course of the late-19th and early 20th centuries. In tracing the rise of this self-conscious coterie of intellectuals, urban notables, and bureaucrats to political prominence, Balslev reveals how patriarchal and class hierarchies striated the new forms of manhood they sought to make hegemonic. In this choice of subject, *Iranian Masculinities* inverts a marked disciplinary tendency in gender and sexuality studies towards situating marginalized, subjected, or otherwise counterhegemonic identities as the primary loci of analysis. Indeed, from Afsaneh Najmabadi's foundational discussion of the beardless young boys (*amrads*) who functioned as objects of male love and desire in pre-Qajar Iranian society, to Wendy DeSouza's most recent monograph on the subsumed queer Iranian practices, the disciplinary focus on counternormative and "pre-modern" Iranian gender identities has included little space for "Iranian men *qua* men," leading Balslev to argue that "men's pursuits and practices such as shaving and dressing, working out and posing in front of the camera can and should occupy a more central place than usually allotted them in historical studies" (p. 22).