

better evidence than that which Mirsepassi provides. Related to the problem of lucidity, is the matter of substance. Some of the accounts in this book, including those from a few non-supporters, challenge Mirsepassi's assertions. Shari'ati, for example, argues that despite the existence of some "Fardidian literature or terms" in the Islamic Republic regime, the fundamentalist trend in Iran is not Fardidian. Exaggerating Fardid's role also means ignoring the voices of other antimodern intellectuals, many of whom preceded Fardid, in forging the worldview that affected Iran's historical trajectory (see Afshin Matin-Asgari's, *Both Eastern and Western: An Intellectual History of Iranian Modernity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018). Mirsepassi also claims a direct connection between Fardid's philosophy and the social developments in revolutionary Iran, a connection that remains unsupported. As if anticipating this claim, some of the voices from within *Iran's Troubled Modernity* warn against it. To his credit, Mirsepassi allows multiple viewpoints, some diametrically opposed to his, to be aired.

Whether we learn significantly more about Fardid himself, beyond what we got from *Transnationalism in Iranian Political Thought*, is not obvious. But, as the narrators in this book reflect on Fardid, they provide the reader with glimpses into their own characters, thoughts, and their places in Iran's intellectual history. Their vastly divergent judgments of Fardid's thoughts, if not his personality, testify to how divided the philosophical and political landscape of this post-revolution country is.

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The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World. Cyrus Schayegh, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017). Pp. 496. \$51.50 cloth. ISBN: 9780674088337

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In *The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World*, Cyrus Schayegh has written an ambitious and sweeping history of the Middle East in the modern era, which he defines loosely as Greater Syria between about 1850 and 1950. The book concerns itself with what Schayegh calls "a history of transpatialization," or "socio-spatialization," by which he means a linked history of regions, towns, classes, social groups, sects, religions, and nascent national movements (p. 2). The book aims to offer a non-nationalist history of Greater Syria between the final Ottoman decades and the hardening of post-colonial borders and nations. The historiographical concept of *The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World* is original and stimulating and, with a few minor lapses, succeeds in offering a new and praiseworthy interpretation of an epoch of great change.

Schayegh proceeds through five chapters, each preceded by a vivid biographical or narrative vignette highlighting important individuals or pivotal events in the history of the region. He begins by tracing links between the cities, towns, villages, families, and social movements that made up Greater Syria around 1900. Subverting the tendency among historians to treat topics, ideas, and narratives separately, Schayegh includes the nascent Zionist movement in the story of the region, but he pays rather less attention to the still-dominant structures of the Ottoman State during the same period.

Chapter 2, "Crucible of War," outlines the civilian experience of the Great War on Greater Syria, drawing on the experiences of exemplary individuals, like Khalil Sakakini. Schayegh successfully brings the traumatic and unsettled period to life, and maintains his focus on the waxing and waning of the fortunes of the region's great cities, hinterlands, and their citizens. He also discusses the marginal, and uncertain position of the Zionist community in Palestine, as it maneuvered, like other Ottoman communities, between hope and fear, cooperation and opposition. Some joined the Ottoman army, while some forged communications with the British forces slowly moving north from Sinai.

Chapter 3 concerns the dawning of the post-war colonial, or mandate age, and the strands of nationalist thought and emotion that emerged. Schayegh traces the hardening of mandate (nation state) boundaries and borders and the claims British and, especially, French authorities made to justify their interventions and occupations. A transnational Arab identity emerged alongside national identities centering on the new states. It was also, always, the case that strong strains of urban and regional identities remained. Diasporas and, in the case of the Zionist Yishuv, international movements played their roles too. The mandate governments improved roads, which in turn expanded trade and contacts from region to region. The chapter ends with a close examination of the specifics of the theme of transpatialization in Haifa, Aleppo, and Damascus.

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss labor migration, emerging identities, and culture, beginning with seasonal and labor migration of rural people to the port cities of Palestine. The chapters outline cultural and intellectual developments in the major and secondary cities in a valuable and suggestive way, showing vividly both the changes and the links between people and places. Schayegh focuses on the migration of labor from the plain of Hawran in the Syrian mandate, to the port of Haifa in the Palestine mandate, drawn by labor shortages and an economy buoyed by emigration of Jewish Europeans, whose resources helped to isolate parts of the Palestine economy from the effects of the Great Depression. The distance was short and labor migration from Hawran surely predated the imposition of the mandate borders. One could point to similar patterns of migration between rural areas and booming coastal cities in Beirut, Tripoli, and Alexandretta—all surely worthy of investigation, but with less contentious demographics.

These chapters are full of fascinating vignettes and details about life in the region during the 1930s. Schayegh describes the construction of Haifa's deep-water port, the nearby Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) pipeline terminus, and the human, political, and infrastructural arrangements they required. He discusses the growing road network, and companies such as the Nairn Car Company that emerged to use the network and serve the far-flung cities of the region. He details in sadly familiar terms the human consequences of compulsory identification cards, visas, and documents, and the walls, fences, and gates that accompanied the new regimes and their innovations.

Chapter 5 details the Second World War and the end of an interwar colonial cosmopolitanism. He follows the contours of an era that brought together Jewish merchants in Haifa with business partners in Beirut, farmers in Syria, and bankers in Cairo. The end of colonial rule and the 1947–48 Palestine war brought a gradual end to this world, which Schayegh describes with poignancy and a bit of wistful nostalgia. The chapter explores the events of the World War, and makes the claim that the war was not especially disruptive in the region as it was in Europe or relative to the experience during the Great War. Schayegh asserts the patterns that had ordered life in the preceding decades prevailed at least for a time. Here as in preceding chapters, the book is at its strongest in describing trade, traders, and their bonds, and a little less evocative in describing local politics and conditions for people who were not among the new merchants and traders. The chapter, and much of the book itself, is a nostalgic look back at the interwar period when Muslims, Jews, and Christians of Greater Syria could live together, trade, socialize, and interact on all levels.

The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World is a tour-de-force of originality and an ambitious new look at a familiar period. It will take its place among the distinguished and original works of the modern history of Bilad al-Sham. The book pushes the emerging field of transnational history into new and fruitful avenues and is sure to inspire and guide new research and writing. Some may quibble with a few details. Readers might wish for a bit more care in the accurate naming of towns and villages, most of which are rendered in the inconsistent fashion of the colonial archives. Some readers might wonder if the sanguine view of the colonial period the book generally posits would be recognizable to those who lived through it, for it seems possible that depending on sources and perspective, there was more violence and misery, more revolts, colonial wars, economic deprivation, hunger, prison, and bitterness during the interwar period than portrayed here. And yet, as an evocative and longing gaze at a lost world of linked cities and human contacts, the book succeeds splendidly and with great nuance.