


The consequences of the mission's early efforts are considered in the next two chapters. New concepts concerning death and mourning and the American critique of East Syrian funeral practices are illustrated in Chapter 5, which links mission revivals of the 1840s and 1850s with the emergence of national identity. The sixth chapter analyzes the ways in which journals and letters written by the mission's native assistants illustrate how they had assimilated the message of reform and propagated it via preaching tours outside Urmia. The relationship between the growth of Western missionary activity and of the Syrian Evangelical Church during the late nineteenth century, culminating in the publication of the nationalist *Star* in 1906 is examined in Chapter 7. The eighth and final chapter analyzes how European and American scholarship informed early twentieth century nationalist debates regarding Aramaic language and history that ultimately enabled the self-designation and communal renaming as "Assyrian." An epilogue contextualizes the life and poetry of early Assyrian nationalist David George Malik within the dramatic events of the 1910s and 1920s, and describes developments within the mission community and the renamed "Assyrian Church of the East" in the wake of World War I.

Scholarly work on the subject of modern Assyrian national identity has been extremely limited to date. As such, Becker's monograph is strongly recommended for graduate students and scholars interested in the historical development of Assyrianism. *Revival and Awakening* is equally important as a source on American missionary activity in the Middle East, and will be of interest to Middle Eastern studies specialists and Americanists alike, as well as specialists in mission studies, nationalism studies, postcolonial studies, and Syriac studies.

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SARA PURSLEY, *Familiar Futures: Time, Selfhood, and Sovereignty in Iraq*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019). Pp. 304. \$30.00, paperback. ISBN 9781503607488.

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A compelling study of the trajectories of development, human and territorial, Sara Pursley's *Familiar Futures* approaches the history of Iraq through the unravelling of conflicting temporalities to explore the articulations of selfhood and the production of subjectivity after World War I. Pursley examines the conceptualization of time and its immediate and residual impact on the

experiences of subjects and their articulation of anticipated futures. These articulations differed as the temporalities that singled them converged, fissured, and reproduced in a perpetually familiar future. Iraq's plural futures are familiar because they were produced within colonial temporalities that positioned Iraqis as having been liberated from an oppressed past, were living in a developing present, and must strive towards a 'developed' future. Pursley gives us a kaleidoscopic narrative to explore the configuration of time in relation to the articulation of sex differences, subjectivity, and the on-going pursuit of modernity. In seven chapters and an epilogue, *Familiar Futures* explores and contextualizes the genealogy of the development of sexual difference to explore modernization in relation to Iraq's political history.

Beginning with the British occupation Pursley positions colonial-linearity as one of the first temporal reference points of a 'familiar future' for mandated Iraq. This familiarity is beneficial to British and Iraqi officials as both groups traced and measured the development of Iraq based on a reconceptualised past and present that was defined along bio-psychological discourse of human maturation, i.e. 'developing' and 'developed'. To the British, Iraq was in a state of arrested-development: a concept noted in the limitation and even thwarting of education projects, but also in the mobilization of violence to address the 'primitive' subject. To Iraqi statesmen; however, Iraq required state-mandated social reforms to galvanize development and aid in the on-going quest towards a 'developed' future. While their conceptualization differed, British colonialists and Iraqi officials mobilized the 'development' trope for ultimately the same purpose: to design specific Iraqi subjects. As such, these temporalities rendered its subjects as perpetually 'trapped in the future' (12).

In operation "control without occupation," the first of 130 air bombing raids that occurred between 1921 to 1932, the British used Iraq as a target practice to demonstrated the latest technological modes of warfare and subjugation. To justify the disturbing destruction and the 'bulk number' of civilian casualties cause by the air bombing raids, Pursley notes that the British attributed the killing of women and children 'not to the difficulty of discerning targets... but rather to the underdevelopment of sexual difference in Iraqi society' (44). Therefore, the use of airplanes to carpet bomb Iraqi towns, further distinguished the British from the nameless, and even sexless, scorched Iraqi bodies who were obliterated in their own limited present by the forces of the future.

To Iraqi statesmen, the linearity of colonial time offered a beneficial structure for a revolutionary future. The opportunity to produce healthy, and suitable citizens capable of obtaining sovereignty was also conceptualized along the development trope Pursley offers. Sex differentiation, Pursley points out, was a frequent tactic mobilized for the production of ideal subjects. American segregationists modelled their present as a possible future for Iraq's education reform. By the 1930s, a team of US educationists advocated for the "gendering of the Iraqi school experience," which yielded varying results. When a 'generation of educated Iraqi women who were *resistant* to marriage, domesticity, and motherhood,' mobilized against gendered curricula, the Ministry of Education responded by expanding 'home economics requirements at the secondary and higher education levels' (104). However, some Iraqi

statesmen opposed the American segregationist model with its sex- and geographical- based segregation by linking such projects to colonialism. Nonetheless, these models were viewed as beneficial by opposing camps who considered education reform as an opportunity for the production of ideal Iraqi women. Iraq's educational development emerged from a colonial-linearity that aimed to yield specific subjects: its opposition evidently indicates that Iraqi women 'believed they could better serve the nation's interest by overthrowing the existing political order than by learning how to efficiently manage a household' (105).

The state of scholarship on Iraq is such that very few studies have consulted the country's rich archives or conducted research within its borders. Of course, Pursley anticipated this otherwise minor critique by noting that the 'very limited state of scholarship on Iraq means that many available sources remain unexamined and many of those that have been examined remain open to alternate readings' (28). *Familiar Future* will interest scholars engaged with economic development projects, gender studies, postcolonial studies, national imaginaries, and the manufacturing of subjectivity. In a Koselleckian tradition, Pursley not only offers us a tantalizing critique of modernization and modernity, but also challenges us to rethink the boundaries between history, historiography and theory: an opportunity to reflect on the positioning of the history of Iraq within interdisciplinary theories.

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ROSIE BSHEER. *Archive Wars: The Politics of History in Saudi Arabia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020. Pp. 416. \$30.00, paperback. ISBN 9781503612570.

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The relationship between paper trails, urbanism and state power is a historiographical thread that runs through the scholarship on archives for several decades, from Angel Rama's influential *The Lettered City* to Matthew Hull's study of bureaucracy and urban development in Islamabad (*Government of Paper*, University of California Press, 2012).¹ Rosie Bsheer's ambitious *Archive Wars: The Politics of History in Saudi Arabia* revisits this relationship from a different angle by examining the politics of cultural heritage, historical

¹ Angel Rama's *The Lettered City* (Duke University Press, 1996) was originally published in Spanish in 1984.