

down and withdraws inside the heart. Consequently when ignorant laymen and physicians see the patient in this condition they suppose that he is certainly dead, whereupon they bury him.

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GEORG LEUBE:

*Kinda in der frühislamischen Geschichte. Eine prosopographische Studie auf der Basis der frühen und klassischen arabisch–islamischen Geschichtsschreibung.*

(Mitteilungen zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der islamischen Welt.)  
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In his study *Kinda in der frühislamischen Geschichte. Eine prosopographische Studie auf der Basis der frühen und klassischen arabisch–islamischen Geschichtsschreibung*, Georg Leube shows that there is indeed a way to make sense of the great complexities of early Islamic history and historiography: a close analysis of the prosopographic material contained in the sources. The great value of prosopography, defined as the study of individuals insofar as they belong to groups, had already been highlighted by Patricia Crone (most notably in her *Slaves on Horses*, Cambridge, 1980) and Fred Donner, and has most recently gained considerable ground in the study of early Islam (Lecker 2006, Asad 2011, Bernheimer 2013, Robinson 2014). As any student of the history of early Islam will know, the Arabic literary sources contain a great deal of prosopographic data, that is, information on a person's tribal and family affiliations, as well as affiliations of place. This information is thought to be relatively reliable because it presumably lies outside the religious and political debates that shaped the historiographical tradition. Leube has now shown how it is formed and reformed in the historiographic process of early Islam.

Leube's main concern is methodological. He argues that the Arabic source material, which in its extant form dates to the third and fourth century hijri, must be understood as one entity (*Gesamtkosmos*). To untangle the dynamics of factual and salvation history, clear selection criteria must be applied to the vast corpus of material – too often arguments on the veracity, reliability and interpretation of early Islam are based on a selective reading of the sources. His selection criterion is the Arab tribe (*qabila*) of Kinda, or more precisely all prosopography relating to the Kinda in the first three generations of Islam. This covers roughly the seventh century, ending with the famous uprising of the Kindite Ibn al-Ash'ath against the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Malik in c. 80–83 hijri/699–702 CE.

Leube analyses his material from three main angles: narrativity, centrality, and tribality (*Narrativität*, *Zentralität*, and *Tribalität*). The section on narrativity, perhaps the central part of the book, highlights the dynamics of the formative process through a close discussion of fixed and un-fixed material. Building on the work of Noth, Donner and others, Leube emphasizes the use of motives (*Motifkerne*) and *topoi* to embellish the narration; often these recurring themes are not relevant to

the plot (*handlungsrelevant*), but reflections of contextual debates and the ongoing controversies of the world of early Islam, and the Kindas' place in within it.

The section on centrality examines questions of the centrality of the state. Among the most enigmatic aspects of early Islamic history and historiography is indeed the sense that within just a few years, the new Arab–Muslim rulers of the Middle East were in charge of a centralized, highly efficient state that was able to control all messaging, from the religious to the political. The very early stability of the Quranic text is perhaps the most impressive example of these efforts. Leube re-examines the state's centralizing notions both in terms of involvement in the conquest (to what extent were the conquests a centralized effort; what were the dynamics of legitimacy and the central authority; was there a global-Islamic [*sic*] motivation and mobilization?) and in the narrative. Clearly, the two aspects are intertwined, and thus the findings are complicated – indeed, among Leube's great achievements is his stress on nuance.

The third section, on tribality, examines questions on the fixedness and function of a Kinda affiliation (or attribution) for individuals and groups. Here the findings are more prone to producing clear answers (for instance, the Kinda attribution is relatively fixed, and varies within a comprehensible context of South Arabian tribal affiliation); this again speaks to the reliability of the selection criteria. The section also includes an excursus on settlement patterns of the Kinda in early Kufa, which shows the value of including material evidence in discussions of early Islamic history.

Leube's prosopographic study of the Kinda in early Islam is full of interesting details and sophisticated observations on the workings of historiographic processes. Most valuable are his insights into the narrative process – the tensions and resolutions between factual and salvation history. He shows that this process can indeed be tentatively unravelled through a detailed and comprehensive analysis of material. As Leube himself repeatedly states, the main problem of his study is the limited perspective of the data set – a number of findings, such as the limitations or involvement of a central Islamic state, must be further tested against a wider data set. Indeed, it would be immensely useful to the field if Leube's approach could be expanded. To convince a wider audience of the potential and importance of his work, there are number of articles in English in the publication pipeline, to appear in the near future. With the present book, Leube has not only presented an engaging study of the Kinda in early Islam, but also produced a blueprint for a new approach to understanding early Islamic historiography, which is to be recommended to all interested in the study of early Islam.

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GEORGE DIMITRI SAWA:

*Musical and Socio-Cultural Anecdotes from Kitāb al-Aghānī al-Kabīr. Annotated Translations and Commentaries.*

(Islamic History and Civilisation.) xv, 465 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2019. €149. ISBN 978 90 04 38365 4.

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This is a companion volume to Sawa's *An Arabic Musical and Socio-Cultural Glossary of Kitāb al-Aghānī* (Brill, 2015). Abandoning the dictionary format of the *Glossary*, Sawa here presents the musicological and related material of the