

and others, he emphasizes the decisive role that patronage networks centered in elite Ottoman households played in renegades' careers. He also builds on Metin Kunt's foundational work on ethnic/regional *cins* networks among renegades and devshirme recruits, and their central importance for political advancement, even suggesting that at least in the late 16th century, an Italian *cins* network, centered around Cigalazade and several influential Venetian renegades, may have existed.

After examining the ways in which renegades were assimilated into Ottoman society, in the final chapter Graf circles around to resituate them into their transcultural contexts, and shows the ways in which they retained important ties to the places and cultures of their birth, as well as their families and other networks. Here again he uses the Cigala family as his case study, and suggests that their navigation of the various political poles of the early modern Mediterranean may well evidence a transimperial family strategy.

The Sultan's Renegades is a welcome addition to the scholarship on renegades, the Mediterranean, and the Ottoman Empire in the early modern era. Placing renegades in their Ottoman context is an important corrective, and Graf does this convincingly. Much of what he argues draws on previously published works and interpretations, many of which will be familiar to scholars in the field. Indeed, if anything, I came away from reading the book wanting to have a better sense of the Viennese archival material that makes its most sustained appearance in Chapters 3 and 4, but is much more in the background among the secondary literature and published sources that dominate the other chapters. A final note, unrelated to Graf's scholarship and certainly beyond his control, is the distressingly poor print quality of the book. The type is so light that it appears more like a photocopy than a printed work. This is no doubt a byproduct of some cost-cutting measure at the press, which has become a recurring issue with academic books of recent vintage. I will begrudgingly accept reduced publication standards from lesser presses, but not from Cambridge University Press, and not at a ninety-nine dollar retail price.

FEBE ARMANIOS, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015). Pp. 272. \$31.95 paper. ISBN: 9780190247225

REVIEWED BY ANGIE HEO, Divinity School, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.; e-mail: heo@uchicago.edu

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Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt stands out among fewer than a dozen monographs that tackle the communal ethos and social history of Egypt's Copts, remaining the sole comprehensive assessment of the Coptic community in the Ottoman period. A prominent voice in a growing field of scholarship on Copts in early and late modernity, Febe Armanios establishes her rightful place as a leading scholar whose expertise covers the yawning gap between late antiquity and the contemporary period. In this book, Armanios excavates previously untapped sources, piecing together a myriad of primary sources from chronicles and travel narratives to hagiographic martyrologies and sermons. Stylistically, her study strikes an enviable balance between elegance and clarity, offering an indispensable primer for navigating a relatively understudied terrain with pleasure and ease.

In the face of scarce and fragmentary sources, Armanios's resourcefulness and inventive spirit win the day. Her approach appeals to religious traditions, those of Coptic Orthodox

Christianity, in order to craft a social history populated by governors, wealthy patrons, clergy, missionaries, and the masses. In the opening pages, Armanios puts forward that she “look[s] to faith, piety and practice to gauge how Copts interpreted their religion and, in the process, how they defined the boundaries of their community” (p. 10). At every turn, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* urges readers to imagine the popular and everyday aspects of Coptic life, emphasizing historical accounts of communal self-creation infused with an ethnographic sensibility. By capturing the life of religion against the backdrop of the Ottoman Empire, it further demonstrates how cultural resources of memory and persuasion were interwoven with the broader institutional canvas of rule, protection, and order.

On one level, this book offers a straightforward quartet of case studies organized by faintly chronological design. Following its introduction, Chapter 2 centers on the 16th-century neomartyr St. Salib, comparing and contrasting two interpretations of his death: one, a martyrology penned by a Coptic hagiographer which depicts Salib as a hero, and, two, an account by Muslim chronicler Ibn Iyas which depicts him as a criminal. By pairing these textual sources, Armanios throws into relief the methodological challenge of drawing on hagiography for reconstructing perceived pressures of Christian conversion to Islam in the tumultuous wake of Mamluk rule. Chapter 3 retrieves 17th- and 18th-century sources to illustrate the cult of the ancient martyr St. Dimyana, a virgin-saint whose far-reaching popularity among Copts has endured into the present. Here, Armanios argues that transformations in lay authority gave rise to varying, and arguably “heterodox,” imaginaries of female sainthood and gendered virtue. Chapter 4 journeys to early 18th-century rites of pilgrimage from Cairo to Jerusalem, during what Armanios argues to be a period of “modest” cultural resurgence for the Copts. In ways that resonate with the previous chapter on St. Salib, this one also gestures to similarities between Christian and Muslim practices of pilgrimage, and the contests surrounding them. Chapter 5 closes on a more exhortatory note, analyzing three sets of sermons that illumine the late 18th-century clash between Coptic Orthodox and Roman Catholic clerics. By analyzing the terms through which they forged distinctions between “faith” (i.e., Christianity) and “race” (i.e., Coptic origin), Armanios artfully discloses the intertwining origins of reform and nationalism among Copts in 19th- and 20th-century Egypt.

On yet another level, this book provides representative expressions of various social issues that defined the Coptic experience under Ottoman rule. Based on in-depth analyses of select sources, it is a study structured not so much by a systematic narrative, but around a mosaic of themes such as violence, gender, and conversion. The first chapters on martyrdom, for example, deploy literary and cultural tropes of suffering to grasp the peripheral status of Copts in an Islamic empire and the alternative practices of women in the grip of patriarchy. The final chapters on pilgrimage and foreign missionary presence, likewise, are windows into the moral geographies of divinely ordained travel and expansion into unconquered territory. At the center of all the body chapters is a core story of intracomunal authority which features the clergy (patriarch and bishops) and the “archon,” or lay elite, whose financial links to Istanbul’s sultans secured their position as the Copts’ brokers of power. It is ultimately this crucial transformation in communal authority that also ended up setting the stage for heated controversy on the roles that religion and secularism would play in Coptic politics of nationhood a century or so later.

Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt should appeal to multiple scholarly audiences in Middle Eastern history and religious studies. For Ottomanists, Armanios’s study

elaborates on the life of non-Muslim minorities through the lens of religious texts, extending fresh insights in a field in which interpretations of legal and court documents enjoy a large presence. For Middle Eastern studies, it underscores the place of Eastern Christian traditions in a geographic region dominated by studies of Islam and Islamic civilization. And finally, for religious studies, it advances comparative perspectives on the social and historical dimensions of religious practice, as well as institutions of governing minority communities through religious identity.

Beyond a scholarly audience, this monograph, now available in affordable paperback version, merits a broader readership for anyone interested in the life of minority communities in the Arab Muslim world. It assembles a sensitive human portrait of the Coptic community, the largest number of Christians in the Middle East and North Africa. Displacing sensationalist caricatures of Copts as ageless victims of violence, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* attunes us to the cultural complexities of religious life and enriches our historical consciousness of religion and politics in much-needed directions.

ABIGAIL JACOBSON and MOSHE NAOR, *Oriental Neighbors: Middle Eastern Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine*, Schusterman Series in Israel Studies (Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2016). Pp. 269. \$35.00 paper. ISBN: 9781512600063

REVIEWED BY NOAH HAIDUC-DALE, Department of History, Centenary University, Hackettstown, N.J.; e-mail: haiduc-dalen@centenaryuniversity.edu
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The historiography of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict has been parsed and parceled in numerous ways, yet scholars continue to find new avenues of exploration in an effort to fully explain the complexity of the region. Among the more promising developments is the continued dismantling of powerful binaries that exist in the standard narrative, particularly that of Jews and Arabs. Abigail Jacobson and Moshe Naor’s *Oriental Neighbors: Middle Eastern Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine* tackles this trope of the field by focusing attention on Jews of Middle Eastern descent (whom they refer to as Oriental Jews) and their relationship to both non-Jewish Arabs and non-Arab Jews. “Sephardim” was too broad, as it includes Jewish communities from Spain and Italy. The leadership specified that Yehudei Hamizrah or Oriental Jews were a subset of that broader label, and it became the official term used by the Sephardi communities during the Mandate.

Oriental Neighbors explores two important communal interactions. Most prominent is the relationship between “Sephardi and Oriental Jews” on the one hand, and the Ashkenzi-led Zionist leadership on the other. The Zionist leadership was wary of Oriental Jews and their Arab culture, and often discriminated against Jews from Palestine as well as from Arab countries such as Iraq, Yemen, and Egypt who immigrated to Palestine. Much of the book highlights Oriental Jews’ efforts to achieve adequate representation in the mainstream Jewish movement by looking at political and social organizations designed to increase Oriental Jewish visibility. In this way, the authors refuse to accept “Zionist” as one thing, instead proving over and over again that Oriental Jews considered themselves “Eastern” in some sense, but also Zionist. In the early years of the Mandate, at least, holding both identities was a legitimate, if contested, option for some.