

Wuthrich concludes that the AKP would not be able to retain its comfortable parliamentary majority in the 2015 elections unless it were to resort to extensive electoral fraud (253).

The book concludes with Wuthrich's overall assessment of the dynamics of the Turkish elections. In this context, Wuthrich argues that economic and material concerns dominate voter choices, and the fact that the parties have relied heavily on populist policy promises confirms that the parties are also informed about this prioritization (258, 259). The role of cultural elements and religion, as well as election campaigns, have secondary importance, with the former limited to the domains of identification, and the latter as shaping the party-to-party interaction (260). The author also claims that given the high level of volatility, the vote of new, young voters and the urban poor that has been the deciding factor in election outcomes (264). He also correctly captures the tendency among Turkish parties, regardless of their ideological leanings, to project an image of national inclusiveness, which he dubbed as the nation party value (80), and which resulted in their transformation into catch-all parties over the last two decades.

The book in its comprehensive analysis of the Turkish elections contributes both with its methodology and the findings. The author's observations on the place of religion within electoral competition and his criticisms of the extant use of cleavages to explain voter behavior are worth noting. However, his dynamic approach also provides too much fluidity to the analysis and compromises its parsimony. ✂

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DAVID YAGHOUBIAN. *Ethnicity, Identity, and the Development of Nationalism in Iran.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014. 420 pages. Cloth US\$49.95. ISBN 978-0-8156-3359-4.

David Yaghoubian's book *Ethnicity, Identity, and the Development of Nationalism in Iran* explores the complex processes of the Armenian Iranian (or Iranian Armenian) ethnic minority developing a national identity and fidelity to the state in modern Iran. The author's sophisticated analysis of five social histories reveals a cogent and lucid picture of what it meant to grow up Armenian Iranian and ethnic in Iranian society while realizing their national identity as Iranian. Yaghoubian skillfully analyzes and presents the

complexity and multidimensionality of ethnic identity within the context of national identity, nationalism, international affairs, social institutions (e.g. education, workforce), and development processes in Iran. Why is nationalism of interest to the author? He answers the question: “nationalism has the ability to create and destroy as it divides and brings together vast popular masses and physical spaces, and that is what interests us in this study” (xxiv).

Yaghoubian presents and answers multifaceted research questions. The *macro* level question focuses on nation and nationalism; how is nationalism *generated, shaped, and sustained* in a historically diverse nation such as Iran. And what is the role of *agency* (the role of the actors in a social environment) in the process of nation building, generating and sustaining nationalism, and contributing to the modernization and development process (2). The *micro* level analysis investigates the degree to which ethnoreligious groups in a diverse Iranian society identify themselves. Iran is an important case because it is the most ethnically and religiously diverse nation in the Middle East and North Africa. Yaghoubian asks: among the ethnic and religious minorities in Iran is their identity more focused toward their religious and ethnic minority status and identity (e.g. Armenian, Jewish, Assyrian, Kurd, Azeri), or is it focused on the dominant and majority status of being Iranian. In other words, which of the identities are more dominant, “being Iranian” or “being ethnic.” And, among these five individuals, how have their experiences in their everyday social interactions contributed to the *compound identity* formation in relation to the larger context. Yaghoubian makes an important connection between the *top-down* and *bottom-up* approaches of nations creating a sense of nationalism. The “top down studies of nations and nationalism must be complemented with studies from the bottom up that take ordinary people’s concerns into account” (16). Yaghoubian’s study of “how the ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ interact and negotiate as coparticipants in the creation of nationalism” is another focus of his thesis (xxvi).

Yaghoubian uses an oral historical and social biographical methodology where a substantial body of primary and secondary data (e.g. photographs, letters, newspaper clippings, personal memorabilia, oral interviews, collecting memories and stories of individuals) have been collected and analyzed for his study. Social biography, first introduced and developed by Edward (Terry) Burke III, contextualizes individual’s lives through the “interpretation of the broader events, processes, and structures the individual encountered and through which he or she navigated” (40). Further it provides details to many questions and challenges posed by the theories of nationalism (44).

His rich theoretical discussions in chapter 1 give way to five chapters of the social biographical analysis and observation of his cases. His analysis focuses on religious practices, language, education, work force, social networks, civil society organizations, technology, family, and family dynamics and how they *intersect* with nationalism, national identity, ethnic identity, and compound identity.

He begins the biographies following a decorated army officer Iskandar-Khan Setkhanian (1865-1953). Setkhanian, an Armenian Iranian descendent and resident of Iranian Azerbaijan, rose to the level of Brigade General (*amir tuman*) of the Cossack Brigade during the 1905–11 constitutional revolution. His multinational allegiances, his community and family ties, his military career, and his personal ties with the last four Shah's of Qajar dynasty are vividly described. The first Shah of Pahlavi dynasty, Reza Khan, was initially his Cossack subordinate and later Reza Khan rose through the Cossack Brigade to establish the Pahlavi dynasty in 1921. These series of events within the context of the political landscape of the time is artfully described throughout this chapter and the following chapters.

Next, we meet Hagob Hagobian (1908–1992) originally from Uremia who fled the violence in eastern Anatolia and Azerbaijan (89) when his parents were murdered. He was raised in an orphanage in Tabriz and eventually moved to Tehran as an apprentice long-distance truck driver for the growing transportation guild. Driving through the rough terrain in many long-distance travels, he learned about the diverse Iranian citizenry. He and his fellow drivers contributed to the development of Iran's infrastructure and transportation industry still in its infancy.

Sevak Saginian (1922–2003) a parliamentary representative and community organizer came from generations of a well-educated military family with strong political leadership. Saginian was raised in Tehran and eventually took a prominent role in the Armenian scouting organization of *Ararat*. Through *Ararat*, Armenians developed their sense of identity as Armenian while affirming their loyalty to Iranian nationalism as Iranians. Yaghoubian portrays the symbolism of these acts by explaining *Ararat's* commitment to national parades (e.g. the fourth of Aban—Mohammad Reza Shah's birthday—was an important national holiday). Through a complex series of events, we see Saginian's devotion to the Shah and how he advocated for Armenian churches and schools and the legal rights of Armenians within the government. He continued his family's political and military legacy through his compound ethnic and national identity.

Lucik Moradiane (b. 1930) grew up in Tabriz, and benefiting from the growing national education system, she became fluent in Persian (necessary

to excel in the public school system and for entrance to universities), excelled in mathematics, majored in engineering and after graduation took a series of positions. She had a long record of employment during the 1940s through the 1970s in Iran's public and private petrochemical development industry. Her case demonstrates the role public education played integrating her into Iranian society and its workforce. She witnessed and contributed to the rapid development and modernization in Iran and her social biography illustrates the complex ties between ethnicity, identity, nationality and gender. She was exposed to ethnically and religiously diverse classrooms, friends, and colleagues and that contributed to her awareness that she is also an Iranian and not just Armenian (180).

Nejde Hagobian (b. 1934), the son of the Hagob Hagobian, was a scout leader and organizer of *Ararat*. Nejde, similarly to Moradian benefited from the public education system which gave him a sense of belonging and inclusiveness, and empowered him to consider himself an Iranian as well as an Armenian. Through *Ararat*, he was able to celebrate his Iranian Armenian identity while participating in the process of the development of Iranian nationalism. The author explains the experiences of Nejde as a young and curious boy; his exposure to street vendors, non-Armenian friends, and school mates gave him an awareness of other ethnicities and Persian majorities. In turn, it helped him to develop a sense of pride in his Armenian and Iranian identity.

Yaghoubian's book is empirically and theoretically sophisticated and the chapters are rich in detail and analysis. One might argue the shortcoming of Yaghoubian's arguments are his broad generalizations about the entirety of other Armenian Iranians and other ethnic groups in Iran and the rest of the Middle East. His justifications are scattered throughout his book, explained by theory and analysis of his data, but might not prove to be convincing to some scholars and readers. Nonetheless, his book is a major contribution to the history of modern Iran among a handful of disciplines and bodies of scholarship. He gives a *voice* and *presence* to Armenian Iranians and by extension to other ethnic groups (in Iran and among other nations of the Middle East) in the historical analysis of nationalism and development. His analysis highlights the multiple levels of national alliance and the compound identity that contributes to the construction, shape, and sustainability of nationalism and national identity. ✎

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