status hierarchies also have status motivations. Second, which groups most drive status motivations, given that most individuals are typically members of multiple groups? A white male who is, say, 25 years old holds simultaneously a number of status identities, which engage in various cleavages: male versus female, younger versus older, white versus nonwhite, married versus unmarried, and so on. Finally, status motivations, the oft-examined intergroup relations, and intragroup norms and their influences are of value to humans because they are essential to our capacity as a social and political species. The evidence of that dynamic is well established. Thus, especially worthy of integration into this project is the question of what conditions induce status motivations of all sorts to be set aside, as shown, for example, in Kristen Monroe's (1996) *The Heart of Altruism: Perceptions of a Common Humanity*. In this regard, the deepest contribution that McClendon offers us is the shift from a misdirected singular attention on self-interest to a broader understanding of the human condition. Sometimes people do act as relatively autonomous actors, but each also has and executes the capacity to act as part of a collective.

Religious Statecraft: The Politics of Islam in Iran. By Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018. 392p. $60.00 cloth, $29.99 paper.
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We are once again witnessing heightened tensions between Iran and the United States and the United Kingdom, which may lead to a new conflict. In this environment, just as it is important to understand the complexity of domestic factors influencing administrations in the United States and the United Kingdom, it is also essential to better understand the Islamic Republic of Iran. This involves appreciating the individuals, structures, and ideas, in all their complexity, of the Islamic Republic's government. To this end, Mohammad Tabaar provides a worthy contribution. He highlights how the Islamic Republic elites have reconstructed and continue to reconstruct the idea of the Islamic Republic to respond to both internal competing factions and external dynamics. Overall, the book highlights how the very foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran—*Velayat-e Faqih* (Guardianship of the Jurist)—has been debated, re-created, and fought over by its elites from its inception to the present.

Although other scholarship has highlighted the renegotiation of the Islamic Republic by focusing on different aspects of it as a political order and the fact that it is not a monolith either in terms of ideology or strategy, Tabaar's contribution is the detailed depiction of elite strategic negotiations that highlights their agency. Crucially, this is based on Persian-language primary sources, including memoirs and academic and media debates in Iran and, in some chapters, recently declassified Carter Library archives. By focusing on factional politics, Tabaar's approach provides a better understanding of the complexity of the Islamic Republic, as a political system, both historically and contemporaneously. This is particularly important because of the tendency in some circles, despite the considerable scholarship to the contrary across the humanities and social sciences, to view Islam or Iran or both as static, monolithic, and simply as a "threat." By extension, the people associated with Islam or Iran or both are seen not only as *not* having agency but also as *incapable* of having it.

Following two introductory chapters, the book proceeds with a discussion of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's rise in relation to the clerical establishment and their contrasting views of Islamism; Khomeini's ideology in relation to external dynamics of exile, US relations, and domestic factions; institutionalizing velayat-e faqih; the hostage crisis in relation to domestic competition between Islamists, Marxists, and nationalists to "win" the revolution; the Iran-Iraq War in relation to competing factions; implementation of Absolute Velayat-e Faqih in relation to traditional clergy; debate over velayat-e faqih and Reformism; factional politics as played out in the media and the Green Movement; reconstruction of velayat-e faqih as integral to Shi'ism; and elite competition over nuclear politics.

Tabaar's aim is to "demonstrate that Iranian politics revolve around instrumentally constructed religious doctrines and narratives" that are "embedded in daily politics" and "shift as the positions of their carriers change within the political system" (p. 3). "Actors develop and deploy religious narratives to meet their factional and regime-level interests, depending on their locus in the system and their subsequent threat perceptions" (p. 17). This approach to religion in politics, Tabaar argues, challenges approaches that see religion either as an "accidental product" or as a "mover" of politics. Tabaar also aims to challenge essentialist approaches that view religion and political theology as static. In this endeavor, he is successful. The book clearly highlights how Iran's leaders use Islam in such a way that defies the either/or and static approaches. In so doing, Tabaar also shows how factional and elite competition does not take place in isolation from external factors. Considering the main body of literature (the role of religion in politics) to which Tabaar is responding, his contribution is clear. The book demonstrates in considerable detail how Islam is renegotiated and reconstructed in response not only to domestic competition but also to regional and international dynamics.

For instance, chapter 3 highlights the importance of the Islamist-nationalist alliance and demonstrates how during the initial period of the revolution Khomeini and the Islamists were not hostile toward the United States.

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Chapter 5 shows how the hostage crisis was indicative of competition with the Left over the revolution and the desire to co-opt the Left's "anti-Americanism" and to establish Khomeini's Islamism as the rightful ideology of the state. In chapter 10, Tabaar shows how velayat-e faqih was reconstructed in response to both domestic (opposition to or questioning of velayat-e faqih or both and the Green Movement) and regional challenges (the "civil Islam" of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and Turkey's AKP). Rather than velayat-e faqih being "Khomeini's revolutionary invention," Tabaar shows how it was reframed as the "most common denominator in orthodox Shi'a clerical establishment" (p. 257).

Despite its valuable contribution, the book does not come without shortcomings. In positioning his contribution, Tabaar argues the "central claim of this book is that there is no such thing as 'political Islam.' However, there is a *politics* of Islam." This assertion is problematic. Throughout the book the term "Islamist" is used to differentiate those who favor Islam as a political framework from those who do not. Because no explicit definitions are provided, it can only be assumed that political Islam, like Islamism, is the use of Islam as a political framework for a political project. It is not clear why the emphasis on the politics of Islam means that "political Islam" has to be rejected. Can it not be both?

The portion of the argument dealing with international relations is problematic and is based on a limited body of literature. Although some of the critiques of realist international relations (IR), such as the failure to recognize the role of ideology, are certainly valid, he is making assumptions about a whole discipline without detailed engagement with it (pp. 26–27). Thus, there is little engagement with the IR debates on Iran, despite the author's claim to do so. Traditional IR, nevertheless, would benefit from taking on board Tabaar's analysis for three reasons. First, it highlights the importance of historical context. Second, it shows how both domestic and international politics influence and are influenced by elite dynamics. Third, it demonstrates in detail the agency of Islamic Republic elites.

Finally, the role of women is not addressed in the book. Their omission is particularly striking in chapter 9, which addresses the Green Movement and legal and media debates. Even though the upper echelons of the Islamic Republic elite are dominated by men, a discussion of legal reforms should not exclude the significant role played by women. Furthermore, although the elite/non-elite boundaries became blurred in the Green Movement, there too women across the political spectrum were fundamental to the relationship between religion, media, and politics.

Nevertheless, Tabaar makes an important and timely contribution. He shows how both domestic politics and foreign policy are not just shaped by grand narratives, such as Islam, but also by personal relationships, competing factions, and context on a day-to-day basis. Consequently, this book will be of interest to scholars and students of Iran. It ought to be on the reading list of any policy maker who wants to better understand the Islamic Republic's foreign policy.

When Political Transitions Work: Reconciliation as Interdependence. By Fanie du Toit. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 312p. $74.00 cloth.

Performances of Injustice: The Politics of Truth, Justice and Reconciliation in Kenya. By Gabrielle Lynch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 352p. $99.99 cloth, $29.99 paper.

Truth Without Reconciliation: A Human Rights History of Ghana. By Abena Ampofoa Asare. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018. 256p. $79.95 cloth.
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How should societies with decades of human rights violations deal with past injustices? This is a politically controversial question. Across the world truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) have become prominent components of transitional justice mechanisms, which aim to move societies toward democratically meaningful political transitions. When designed in the right manner, TRCs foster social cohesion, bridge the gap between perpetrators and victims, and create a more just and fair society. When designed in the wrong manner, however, they foster resentment, perpetuate structural inequalities, and undermine civil and social trust. How can TRCs achieve the former outcome? What are suitable benchmarks to measure their output? What can and should citizens reasonably expect from commissions seeking to bridge the gap between a violent past and a hopeful future?

Fanie du Toit, Gabrielle Lynch, and Abena Ampofoa Asare take these questions as points of departure and review the politics behind, the unfolding of, and the effects of TRCs from different disciplinary angles. Fanie du Toit is the former director of the South African Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. He currently works as chief technical adviser for the United Nations Development Program in Iraq. Gabrielle Lynch is professor of comparative politics at the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom. Abena Asare is professor of Modern African Affairs and History at SUNY Stony Brook. Their three books all have noteworthy strengths, are written in accessible language, and contribute to the ongoing debate about reconciliation commissions with considerable depth and breadth. The three authors carefully avoid sweeping generalizations about the desirability and the effects of TRCs. It is evident from their writing that all three are deeply committed to the countries they study.

Fanie du Toit's book reexamines the South African reconciliation process at a moment in time when many,

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