

surging field of scholarship that places Chinese history within the scope of German entanglements with the world. The advantage of this interdisciplinary approach is obvious. For instance, although some topics such as the presence of German missionaries in nineteenth-century China and the Jewish in wartime Shanghai tend to be areas of established scholarly attention, there remain many unexplored avenues that can add fresh perspectives, as the story of the German doctor and the Yellow Peril discourse reveal. Moreover, by situating several German intellectuals and their Chinese counterparts within the same context, many chapters in the volume collectively demonstrate how far-reaching German and Chinese philosophies and thoughts could be and how profound such mutual influences were. Another point to praise is the extensive German documents and archival findings consulted for the individual studies, which greatly broadens what is now known about the content and context of Sino-German interactions.

Adding much new information to our existing understanding, the use of German sources shall be warmly applauded. However, critical readers may expect to be exposed to more Chinese sources. As another recent publication on Sino-German relations has exemplified, many collections of Chinese historical materials were published by institutions in PRC and Taiwan since the 1990s and such improved access to Chinese archives has made possible new archive-driven understandings of German's relationship with China.<sup>1</sup> Placing sources from both sides in conversation would allow us to view history through both German and Chinese eyes and thus generate multifaceted and multi-archival stories. Furthermore, all but one essays focus on encounters and interactions between German and Chinese that occurred in China. It would be interesting to see additional studies dedicated to exchanges and influences in Germany as well. Fortunately, some very promising works have appeared recently.<sup>2</sup>

These minor cavils aside, *Germany and China* is a very valuable volume that takes us a step further toward a more interactive, and less bounded, history of Sino-German relations and their profound mutual influence from the eighteenth century onward. Many chapters stand to become useful references for German-Chinese and German-Asian scholars and will surely inspire future studies. Certainly, it will also appeal to readers generally interested in German-Asian studies and global and transnational history.

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## Middle East

Keith David Watenbaugh. *Being Modern in the Middle East: Revolution, Nationalism, Colonialism and the Arab Middle Class*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012. 352 pp. ISBN: 9780691155111. \$31.95.

*Being Modern in the Middle East: Revolution, Nationalism, Colonialism and the Arab Middle Class* by Keith David Watenbaugh is a monograph that tackles the relationship between the

<sup>1</sup> Mechthild Leutner, et al. eds., *Preußen, Deutschland und China: Entwicklungslinien und Akteure, 1842-1911* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Erich Güttinger, *Die Geschichte der Chinesen in Deutschland: Ein Überblick über die ersten 100 Jahre ab 1822* (Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 2004); Bernd Eberstein, *Hamburg—Kanton 1731: Der Beginn des Hamburger Chinahandels* (Gossenberg: Ostasien Verlag, 2008).

urban middle-class, press and nationalist movement in Syria between the revolution of 1908 and the onset of WW II. He explores modernity and how elites understood its meaning, purpose, and function in a transforming Syria. While his study focused on Aleppo's urban middle-class nationalist movement, this text draws larger conclusions about the formation of a Syrian nation during the genesis of that movement. He argues that the urban middle-class was already materially engaged with the process of modernity as it pertained to the importation of western goods and material. After 1908, a lack of censorship became a way to transmit ideas through print media to literate audiences. His manuscript posits that there were the strong connections between nationalist aspirations expressed in print which resulted in a realized nationalist movement that eventually resulted in a Syrian nation.

The book is divided into three chronological sections, but also includes two introductory chapters. Chapter one, "the Introduction" offers the methodological framework and theoretical position of the text. The second chapter, "An Eastern Mediterranean City on the Eve of Revolution", discusses the city of Aleppo within its geographic context as part of a larger network of Eastern Mediterranean cities and claims that like other Eastern Mediterranean cities such as Trieste and Alexandria, Aleppo is uncomfortably placed within a politically bounded nation-state that was not appropriate, particularly during the interwar period. The two-chapter introduction provides both a thorough discussion of the theoretical backdrop and strong foundation for the three preceding sections of the text. The structural organization of the text lends itself to an easy relationship between argument, evidence, and analysis.

In many ways, each of the content sections follows the model of the introduction by using two chapters to thoroughly discuss the sources and important questions that they raise. Section one, "Being Modern in the Time of Revolution", focuses on the role of print culture and volunteerism within the framework of a shifting identity from 1908 to 1918. It shows how language and journalism styles both reflected and shaped a new modern identity and that print culture helped form the way that urban intellectuals understood themselves within a changing city. His discussion of the ways that the media supported quasi-official and cultural institutions to shape the middle class in Aleppo is particularly enlightening.

The second section of the book, "Being Modern in a Moment of Anxiety", tackles the development of the urban middle class during the beginning of the mandate period from 1918 to 1924 which also marked the first half of the interwar period. It deals with the anxiety that the middle class felt because of shifting identities that transformed them from Ottomans to budding Syrian nationalists. It was a "moment of anxiety [that] made unprecedented demands on the Eastern Mediterranean middle class" (126). This anxiety was exacerbated by the pressure of foreign troops and the ruling elite. This tension resulted in the middle class's articulation of anxiety through "modern intellectual, social and cultural tools" (125).

The third section of the book, "Being Modern in the Era of Colonialism", deals with the development of the urban middle class during the second half of the interwar period from 1925 to 1946. It shows how the French model of colonialism during the mandate period affected the people of Aleppo. The French "hands-on approach" model of empire faced violent opposition in many parts of Syria, but Aleppo remained relatively calm during uprising in places like Druze Mountain and the Great Syrian Revolt of 1926 to 1927. The discussion of Aleppo's temperate response to French colonialism illustrates that each region faced different challenges and that local particularities dictated how Aleppo's middle class responded in ways dissimilar to places like Druze Mountain.

The greatest strength of this text is the way that the argument unfolds over the two introductory chapters and three sections. The author took great care to bring organization from a rich body of sources to help disentangle the relationship between modernity and the formation of the middle class during the period after the departure of the Ottoman Empire and the development of the Syrian nation. This text is based on an exhaustive list of print media, particularly newspapers and journals as well as an extensive list of archival sources. *Being Modern in the Middle East* is well grounded within the historiography on Syria and Lebanon (the Levant) and framed within a larger historiography of modernity and its relationship to the middle class in the age of empire during the transition from an Ottoman province to a nation-state.

*Being Modern in the Middle East* challenged the dominant model of the nation-state and political history as either relevant or organic ways to understand what happened in Greater Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean during the period of transition. It shows that the interwar period forced the diverse middle class to recast themselves into a national identity as they faced both occupation and upheaval of the existing system. This text signposts a shift in the field that understands the Eastern Mediterranean as a zone of intellectual relationships that were somewhat severed by the mandated structure and the nation states that followed. Another contribution of this text is that it seamlessly illustrates the diversity of Aleppo's urban middle-class without falling into the pitfall of depicting Aleppo as a city segregated by religion or ethnicity. The discussion of difference illustrates that conflicts or violence that arose came about because of complicated identities that were not limited to religious or ethnic identity but a result of interwar tension that was complicated by the intersection of class identity.

*Being Modern in the Middle East* is an important text that rests within a shift in understanding the Middle East in more global and regional terms between World War I and World War II. It eloquently illustrates, through a rich body of primary sources, that the middle class of Aleppo found ways to cope with and mourn the way that they understood their intellectual, social and cultural community. Watenbaugh's important text offers new energy into urban history will positioning itself within existing literature and offering other avenues to explore middle-class Aleppo from 1908 to 1946.

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## North America

Deborah A. Rosen. *Border Law: The First Seminole War and American Nationhood*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015. 316 pp. ISBN: 9780674967618. \$45.00.

*Border Law: The First Seminole War and American Nationhood* is a fascinating look at the impact the first Seminole War had and links the discussion over Andrew Jackson's actions during the war to the growth of American nationalism and the conception of law as only protecting civilized groups and the placing of uncivilized groups outside the bounds of law. Rosen's book is highly informative, well written, and absorbs the reader. At multiple times, Rosen directly introduces and engages with the secondary literature relating to her topic and allows the reader to follow along without constantly looking up cases or legal precedents. Her primary sources draw upon Congressional documents, law treatises, newspapers, and letters