true that the high Umayyad period is the key period during which many classical doctrinal positions first began to coalesce. But it is wholly unclear why it was necessary for the anonymous agents of Umayyad legitimacy to construct such a convoluted family history for the Prophet to achieve the political and theological purpose Powers ascribes to them. He holds that five verses in Surat al-Ahzab were fabricated, corresponding to discrete stages in that history: verse 36 forced Zaynab to comply with Muhammad's arrangement of her marriage to Zayd; after their divorce, verse 37 lubricated her subsequent marriage to Muhammad himself by stipulating that such marriage was licit because her ex-husband was Muhammad's adopted and not biological son; verse 40 rendered that judgment moot in establishing Muhammad's special status as the heirless Seal of the Prophets; and verses 4–5 at the beginning of the sura did the same by abolishing adoption entirely. The conjectured relationship of these purportedly invented verses to the likewise purportedly invented narrative set pieces that provide the context for their revelation is clear enough, but what is unclear is why this was all necessary to demonstrate that Muhammad could not be claimed to have either biological or adoptive heirs. We might propose that Zayd and Usama were authentic historical figures whose claims based on adoption held traction for some parties in early Islam, thus necessitating the creation of these verses to disqualify them; but the clear implication of Powers's analysis is that *all* of the narratives concerning Zayd and the others are literary set pieces. If the point was simply establishing Muhammad as sonless, surely our anonymous Umayyad fabricators could have taken a less winding road to get there. (For example, if verses 4–5 deliver the coup de grace annulling the possibility of succession through adoptive heirs once and for all, why was this single verse not sufficient to achieve the conjectured ideological goal in the first place?)

This is to say nothing of the more acute objections that may be raised against Powers's assertion of forged and interpolated verses in the Umayyad *textus receptus* of the Qurʾan. Powers is not the first scholar to suggest that post-prophetic incursions into the canonical *muṣḥaf* occurred, although the current consensus seems to militate against this, especially given the recent emphasis on the numerous early witnesses to the canonical Qurʾanic text that seem to date almost as far back as the time of the Prophet himself (or apparently even earlier, in the case of the so-called "Birmingham Qurʾan"). As already noted, that in this case the intrusion is so inchoate—not to mention lacking corroboration in extant early witnesses to the Qurʾanic text—may prevent many readers from accepting Powers's thesis as plausible. Moreover, a reader uncommitted to Powers's method of literary analysis may very well see his meticulous cataloging of biblical and parabiblical precursors simply as parallelomania run totally amok.

JOHN MCHUGO, *A Concise History of Sunnis & Shiʿis* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017). Pp. 347. $89.95 cloth. ISBN: 9781626165861

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John McHugo's *A Concise History of Sunnis & Shiʿis* surveys the historical development of Sunni and Shiʿi identities from the 7th-century lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad to the present, approximately 2013, providing students and non-specialists with one clear

account of the development of Muslim sectarian identities. McHugo presents an important argument that bears repeating in a book aimed at a general audience: for the majority of history, Sunni and Shiʿa have lived in harmony and the violence associated with contemporary sectarianism in the Middle East has not been a permanent feature of Sunni–Shiʿi relations. Rather, McHugo outlines the origins and development of the division between different religious groups within Islam, providing an in-depth account of the diversity within medieval Islamic identities and how these identities have become politicized in the modern era.

The scope of *A Concise History of Sunnis and Shiʿis* is impressive. It is divided into two parts: Part 1 consists of seven chapters examining early Islamic history through the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals, while Part 2 analyzes the long 19th century into the 21st century in six additional chapters. However, simply stating the range of the book does not do it justice: McHugo manages to deal effectively with not only the broad extent of Muslim history but also incorporates the complexity of divergent perspectives on early Islamic history. For example, the story of the Sunni–Shiʿi split remains contested. Rather than simply present a finished narrative as a *fait accompli*, McHugo shows some of the competing views of the events after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Providing his readers with this diversity of narratives allows them to understand the complexity of early Islamic history and may, perhaps, give them insight into understanding how the first Muslims came to civil war over the question of who should lead their community. In addition to the narrative of early Islamic history, he also brings in topics as varied as the emergence of the Druze, Gnostic sects of Islam, the effect of the Mongols and Turkic tribes on the development of Islam, the Safavids and their influence on Shiʿism in Iran, and the split between the Akhbaris and Usulis.

McHugo's account is strongest in its coverage of modern sectarian history. Building upon recent scholarship, such as *Sectarianization: Mapping the New Politics of the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) edited by Nader Hashemi and Danny Postel, McHugo traces the increasing sectarianization of the Sunni–Shiʿi relationship to the era following the Iranian Revolution in 1979 through the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003). His chapter "Tides Ebb and Flow," which covers the exceedingly complex period between World War II and 1979, manages to address the effects of Arabism, nationalism, the discovery of oil and concomitant rise of Saudi power, as well as debates within Iran between anti clerical Marxists and the religious establishment. In the final chapter, "Wedges into Fault Lines," McHugo provides an incredibly clear and concise account of how the fall of Saddam Hussein led to the breakdown of Iraqi society into violent sectarian factions, which led to a regional increase in sectarianization. He contextualizes this process within the competition between Shiʿi Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia, showing how the failure of the Arab Spring protests was sectarianized, weaponized, and turned into a proxy war.

For the period spanning the 10th through 14th centuries, however, I fear that McHugo may sometimes leave a student audience needing more background. The complexities of this era can be difficult to present to even a more advanced reader, especially in a "concise" history, but McHugo's chapter "Of Ismailis, Assassins, Druze, Zaydis, Gnostic Shiʿis, Alawis and Sufis" addresses a few too many movements in medieval Islamic sectarianism for a more general reader to follow easily. It very quickly becomes overly encyclopedic. Further, this chapter, in particular, overly relies on more general works on

Shiʿism by Heinz Halm and Moojan Momen. While no one can challenge the erudition of their contributions to our understanding of Islamic history, I was surprised that McHugo did not cite or include references to a broader range of authors and works on medieval Islamic sectarianism. For example, he cites an article by Farhad Daftary in *The New Cambridge History of Islam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010) but none of Daftary's other more in-depth work on Ismaʿilism. I was particularly surprised not to see any citations of Najam Haider's excellent recent work on Shiʿism.

However, while I would have liked McHugo to spend a few more pages on medieval sectarianism, I suspect that the purpose of his book lies with providing students with an overview to grapple with the issues of contemporary Islamic sectarianism. In this task, McHugo overwhelmingly succeeds. It is clearly written in accessible language and McHugo provides a thorough index and glossary of terms. I would not hesitate to recommend this book or assign it to an advanced class of undergraduates.

ROHAN DAVIS, *Western Imaginings: The Intellectual Contest to Define Wahhabism* (Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 2018). Pp. 232. $55.00 cloth. ISBN: 9789774168642

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As part of his recent public relations drive, Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman has sought to push an account of Wahhabism as a historically ecumenical and authentically "moderate" brand of religiosity which was only transfigured into its current form in reaction to the Iranian Revolution. In doing so, he has inserted himself into polemic debates about the nature of this subtradition within Islam which have been particularly to the fore in the Western media since the events of 2001. The project that Rohan Davis takes up in this book involves interrogating liberal and neoconservative perspectives on such matters; specifically, he sets about exploring how intellectuals situated within these traditions have gone about constructing a particular set of images of the Wahhabi other.

Beyond the introduction, the first chapter offers a "cursory review of some of the scholarly literature dedicated to Wahhabism" in order to draw out some select issues like the kinds of truth claims at stake (p. 23). It is indeed an extremely cursory review; the bulk of the most interesting and insightful scholarship on Wahhabism in recent years, including by scholars like Madawi Al-Rasheed and Stéphane Lacroix, does not feature in the book at all. While this might be defended on the grounds that the work focuses on liberal and neoconservative representations of Wahhabism rather than Wahhabism itself, it surely remains the case that such literature provides an indispensable foundation for opening up critical perspectives on these discourses, and it cannot simply be disregarded.

The next two chapters discuss theoretical and methodological issues, including the social positioning of intellectuals, the nature of critical discourse analysis, and conceptual tools like dialectical imagination and Weberian ideal types. The substantive analysis begins in Chapters 4 and 5, which consider how "liberal imaginings of Wahhabism" are structured around tropes, including an emphasis on the challenges presented by Wahhabism to liberal values like individual freedom and secularism. Chapter 6 reflects