

delightfully human stories intrude throughout. The book is therefore a model for how to balance people and concepts, history and theory. It should be required reading for a very wide range of scholars and students. Historians, anthropologists, and sociologists of Egypt, globalization, time, and technology will all find a great deal to inform and intrigue them.

———David Gange, University of Birmingham

Peter Arnade and Walter Prevenier, *Honor, Vengeance, and Social Trouble: Pardon Letters in the Burgundian Low Countries*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015.

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Until now, scant attention has been paid to this extraordinary series of over two thousand pardon letters issued by the rulers of the Burgundian Low Countries between 1386 and 1500, overturning convictions for crimes. This book's authors demonstrate just how undeserved this neglect has been. The letters draw back the curtain onto an astonishing range of social worlds, from the dinner tables of noble residences to the taverns, bathhouses and gutters of small-town backstreets. The voices of people usually silent in the historical record seem suddenly audible: tales of women, street actors and prostitutes are recorded in narratives that often suggest a "world turned upside-down."

Arnade and Prevenier have fully transcribed a careful selection of these letters to disclose this social range. But this is the least of their achievements since the interpretative framework in which they place the letters brilliantly extends their significance well beyond being a source for "social facts." The legal context is explained to show how petitioners and their notaries constructed their narratives, and anthropological and sociological theories are drawn upon to interpret these narratives as strategies. Also revealed is how closely these pardons resemble the tales of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* enjoyed by Burgundian courtiers. Whether composed of "fact" or "fiction," story-telling in the letters provides access to a wider culture: how its social norms and hierarchies operated and how they were challenged; how relations between rulers and towns were governed and undermined, how honour was upheld and threatened, and how masculinity and femininity were constructed.

The authors thus deepen the possibilities for interpreting these letters by removing them from the archive and deftly placing them alongside other texts and discourses. Yet they also do so by returning them to the archive. In many cases, further sources tracked down in other archives reveal more about the letters' petitioners and protagonists to provide an even richer, multi-layered understanding of their motives and why they were pardoned. This book is an exemplary model of archival research and its interpretation. Scholars and students of the Burgundian Low Countries across a range of disciplines will

find it invaluable, as will anyone interested in the process of reconstructing and understanding past cultures from difficult sources.

———Andrew Brown, Massey University, New Zealand

Lara Deeb and Mona Harb, *Leisurely Islam: Negotiating Geography and Morality in Shi'ite South Beirut*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013, 304 pp.

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Only a few of Lara Deeb and Mona Harb's informants explicitly speak of a "right to the city." Nevertheless, a central theme of this thoroughly researched study of South Beirut is the efforts of the neighborhood's Shi'ite youth, paraphrasing David Harvey, to make and remake their city and themselves. As in their previous work, Deeb and Harb work to deconstruct both Euro/American and Lebanese clichés about the Beirut suburb of Dahiya, which is commonly depicted as a culturally provincial, lower-class, and militarized "stronghold" of the militant Islamic group Hizbullah.

The authors are careful to offer important historical and political context, and they outline the success of the party's older generation vanguard in the building of an "Islamic milieu" within Shi'ite areas of Lebanon that valorize the ongoing mission of the Islamic Resistance in its decades-old struggle against the Israeli occupation of Lebanon. The bulk of the study then explores the rise of café culture within Dahiya as it developed in the years following the 2000 Israeli evacuation of its "security zone" in southern Lebanon. Hizbullah, and much of Lebanon, celebrated the moment as a victory for the Hizbullah-led resistance. With detailed surveys and extended interviews, Deeb and Harb document the opening of cafés, restaurants, and leisure complexes within this densely populated area that had previously lacked such commercial outlets. In doing so, and with a focus on the discourse of the middle-class Shi'ite youth of the area, *Leisurely Islam* provides a map of the moral geography of leisure and how these youth negotiate it. In contrast to widespread Western-liberal narratives that read leisure activity as signs of Western influence and liberalizing social practice, Deeb and Harb explain how these youth engage in public leisure behavior within a normative framework defined by multiple (social, political-sectarian, and religious) moral rubrics. While they report the vast majority of these youth embrace the ideal of seeking fun within such a normative framework ("pious leisure"), the text surveys the complex forces seeking to define, interpret, and enforce these codes. These forces include institutions such as the Lebanese Association for the Arts that develop cultural projects to advance Hizbullah's political project like Mleeta, the "Resistance Tourism" museum in Southern Lebanon. Deeb and Harb draw on their own interviews and queries (via user-friendly websites) and