

is unclear why he did not turn to the vast amount of scholarship on Islam that is better examined in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* than in John Pair Brown (1868), James Creagh (1880), and Thomas Hughes's *A Dictionary of Islam* (1886). Hughes, for instance, had been a missionary in India and wrote his book, as he stated in his 1885 introduction "to the Government official called to administer justice to Muslim peoples; to the Christian missionary engaged in controversy with Muslim scholars; to the Oriental traveler seeking hospitality amongst Muslim peoples" (Hughes, 290). Such a view does not reflect the rigors of modern scholarship, which may help to explain why Hughes made mistakes. On some occasions, Butler corrected Hughes's mistakes, but he referenced authors on Islam who did not take into account academic research (Sharfaat, 301), and he quoted from sources of uncertain authority (305, *Dictionary of Spiritual Terms*). My second reservation concerns generalizations. While Butler consulted scholars on conundrums in Turkish history and language, and cited the most recent studies in the field, he did not consult scholars on Islam—an area that was clearly not his forte. Do all Muslims believe that "only a member of the Quraish tribe . . . could be a prophet or successor to Muhammad" (307)? True, the caliph had to be a member of Quraish, but was there to be another "prophet" from Quraish? Do the one-billion-plus Muslims in the world believe that "hell is divided into seven parts"? (Do all Christians in the world believe that there are seven mortal sins?) This and other generalizations about "Islam" and "Muslims" ("according to Muslims"), and repeatedly stated without any scholarly support, are disturbing. And what exactly is the value of referring to the Taliban (322) and their abhorrence of music in the twenty-first century? Would an edition of a seventeenth-century Muslim description of Europe need to appeal to presentism and mention a contemporary Western aberration? And how reliable is hearsay in confirming Rycaut's views ("In our own day, I am informed that" [312])?

It is unfortunate that Butler did not take as seriously his research about Islam as he did about other subjects. Still, this edition of *The Present State* in the ACMRS series is a must for students and scholars alike who wish to examine a foundational text about England's knowledge of the early modern Ottoman world.

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The Sultan's Renegades: Christian-European Converts to Islam and the Making of the Ottoman Elite, 1575–1610. Tobias P. Graf.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. xxiv + 262 pp. \$100.

The stories of renegades—Europeans who had converted to Islam in the early modern Ottoman world—lured their contemporaries as well as present-day historians. The latter, often fascinated by the topic of religious transgression, tend to approach this

heterogeneous group by focusing on individual renegades whose conversion was followed by exceptionally successful political and military careers. In his recent *The Sultan's Renegades*, Tobias P. Graf examines how these European converts assimilated into the Ottoman elite and engaged with its agenda, suggesting that the scholarly portrayals of renegades as exceptional individuals have frequently been exaggerated and that these converts did not stand out in comparison with other outsiders who became servants of the sultan.

In five chapters Graf analyzes different aspects of renegades' conversion and their assimilation into Ottoman imperial structures. The first chapter provides an important panorama of the military-administrative Ottoman elite and its evolution in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Graf presents the partly overlapping groups and institutions that channeled the professional careers and lives of members of the military-administrative elite: *timar* (revenue grant) holder cavalrymen, *kul* (slaves), *devşirme* (conscription system based on the recruitment of boys from among the Anatolian and Balkan Christian populations), and the households of the sultan and the grandees.

The following chapters focus on European renegades and compare their trajectories with other outsiders assimilated into the empire's political structures. The second chapter explores the rituals European converts to Islam had to go through—from the proclamation of faith through the reception of new names, change of clothing and dietary regime, and circumcision, to the gifts the converts received from their patrons. Graf convincingly argues that religious conversion was a process with cultural, social, political, legal, and fiscal implications. Converts learned a new language, were inserted into social networks and political institutions, were bound to new taxation regimes, and enjoyed full equality in Muslim courts. More than anything, conversion emerges as a political act, a demonstration of the convert's loyalty to the sultan.

The next two chapters use well-documented test cases to discuss specific aspects of conversion. The third explores how converts might have experienced their conversion, showing how they alluded, often pragmatically, to large-scale political-religious processes such as confessionalization in order to construe and construct their conversion, but also to advance their admission into the political elite. The fourth chapter further pursues the problem of renegades' incorporation into the military-administrative structure, stressing the role of the sultan's and grandees' households in the process. In analyzing these cases, Graf demonstrates how the careers and forms of association of European renegades were not exceptional in comparison with other outsiders the empire incorporated, most notably the *devşirme* conscripts. If the second and third chapters debunked the idea of conversion as a single moment of transformation of the self, the final stresses the continuation of social and kinship ties between converts and their previous communities. Graf shows how, in principle, conversion to Islam in the Ottoman Empire was not forced. In fact, while the majority of renegades converted in the context of captivity, there is evidence of converts who voluntarily migrated to the Ottoman Empire to convert to Islam. And yet, with the geopolitical

stabilization that characterized the second half of the sixteenth century, the empire became more exclusive, forced conversions were recognized as valid, and in general career paths previously open to converts only became dominated or at least widely populated by born Muslims.

Graf's *The Sultan's Renegades* is an important addition to recent research on the topic and is the first to focus on converts' assimilation into the imperial structures. Its publication stresses the relative dearth of similar studies focusing on the Western Mediterranean in the period. *The Sultan's Renegades* will be of great interest for scholars of the Ottoman Empire, Mediterranean studies, religion and conversion, cross-confessional encounter, and cultural intermediaries.

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Liturgical Life and Latin Learning at Paradies bei Soest, 1300–1425: Inscription and Illumination in the Choir Books of a North German Dominican Convent. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Eva Schlotheuber, Susan Marti, and Margot Fassler. 2 vols. Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2016. xiv + 782 pp.; x + 634 pp. €178.

From the late twelfth to the early fifteenth century, nuns at the Dominican convent of Paradies, near the Westphalian town of Soest, created liturgical choirbooks filled with potent visual images, poetry, and music, both traditional and original—all intricately linked. The surviving manuscripts and fragments testify to a thriving community of literate Latinating sisters—a socially equalizing and elevating community that developed within two or three generations after the convent's founding from a small group of socially and educationally heterogeneous women, most of them illiterate. The manuscripts open a window on the nuns' intellectual, artistic, and spiritual lives as interwoven with their liturgical practices, creating a context and offering a case study for understanding the thinking and expression of women for a period sorely lacking in firsthand documentation on such questions. The authors stress that late medieval female monasticism must be understood as a part of the larger social fabric, and "in this, as in so much else, the material from Paradies might be considered paradigmatic" (1:769). However, these books offer not only a cultural paradigm, but also a witness to a specific spiritual world; the books' collective authorship is examined "based, not on generalizations regarding life in a Dominican convent of the later Middle Ages, but on the particularities presented by the physical evidence" (1:171). The books from Paradies present a rare opportunity to understand collaboration along with individual contributions in a known monastic setting.

Liturgical Life and Latin Learning at Paradies bei Soest, 1300–1425 mirrors the meaningful materiality of the nuns' practices in a massive two-volume study (1,440