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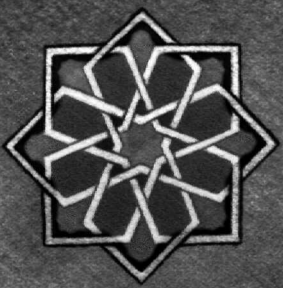

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individuals within a community was defined (see Ferguson's contribution for more details).

The final part, "Family as a Discourse," considers the discourses of modernity and the identities of family. Kenneth M. Cuno and Akram Khater both look at the ambiguous position of families that were neither modern nor traditional, and neither eastern nor western, at a time when Middle Eastern societies were changing under the waves of modernization, westernization, and globalization. Through case studies, respectively, of Egypt's khedival house and Lebanese immigrants in the United States, both authors argue that family becomes a historical process that evolves continuously due to endless negotiations between new sets of expectations and reality.

The book will attract the attention of readers, since it covers the dynamics of family issues from several angles and provides rich case studies from various disciplines. Most of the authors employed diverse methods of data collection, and sources include historical archives as well as field work (mainly oral sources). However, certain methodological questions can be raised. First, what were the actual relations of people beyond the written or registered records, especially with regard to gender relations, where women were interpreted as having inferior positions in the family hierarchy. Can we say that women were inferior to men simply because they were invisible and silenced in the formal records? Second, how accurate and reliable are the oral sources, which rely mainly on an individual's past memories.

The book's content and methodological and theoretical approaches make it a useful reference tool for academics as well as general readers interested in the history of the family in a Middle Eastern context. It is likely to stimulate interest in the study of family histories among ordinary people in the Middle East and, at the same time, open up new possibilities for future research.

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Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts

Michael Bonner, Mine Ener, and Amy Singer, eds.
Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003. 345 pages.

This volume, written by scholars in Middle Eastern history, addresses the history of charity in the Middle East, including its meanings, conceptions,

political milieu of the time (i.e., the emergence of nationalism and national identity).

Even though these three authors explore different groups of people in different cities, they all show that there is no single universal family entity, and that the notion of family, which is time- and culture-dependent, is transformable according to the changing sociopolitical milieu. In addition, as Fay's article shows, the definition of a family's boundary is also transformable. Comparing two generations (that of Umm Kabira, the first wife of Huda' Sha`rawi's father, and that of Huda Sha`rawi herself), Fay suggests that there is a different sense of family membership under polygyny and monogamy, as well as different emotional involvements among the family members (refer to Kenneth M. Cuno's contribution for more detail).

The second section, "Family, Gender, and Property," explores families and their relationships from an economic perspective, taking marriage as a starting point. Here, Erika Friedl, Martha Mundy and Richard Saumarez Smith, and Annelies Moors, explore such issues as how relations among family members are defined by inherited property and bridal gifts, how marriage reproduces family and gender relations, and how philosophies of marriage have been changed.

The common factor in their case studies is the suggestion that in the Middle East, family property and its inheritance and distribution between male and female family members are gendered. Generally speaking, the men inherit productive and/or residential property and are assigned several times more than the women, who usually inherit movable property, including jewellery (see Annelies Moors for more details). This social practice, while reproducing the patrilineal family type, confirms a patriarchal social structure and its embedded gender ideology.

The third section, "Family and the Praxis of Islamic Law," reconstitutes the family and the relations of family members in the legal arena. In their articles, Beshara Doumani, Iris Agmon, and Heather Ferguson explain how family members are defined in legal terms and how the process of contesting and conciliating family disputes in Islamic courts consolidates and confirms the boundary of family. Several examples are given in which legal representations in court cases suggested the family's patriarchally oriented nature in "public" and "formal" space. In other words, the family was inevitably represented through the male line in the court, and no women or children could represent themselves legally. These authors also identify the moral code of people in the nineteenth century in their case studies of legal representation in the courts, in which the correct and incorrect behavior of

practical patterns, motivations, and the ways of institutionalization and identifying its "deserving" beneficiaries throughout the last 14 centuries. It is addressed to academic readers interested in Middle Eastern history or in charity in a universal sense.

One aspect of charity dealt with throughout the book is that of motivation. It turns out that besides adhering to general Islamic principles, motivations of enhancing one's prestige and social clout have played an important role as well. Michael Bonner points out in his chapter, "Poverty and Charity in the Rise of Islam," that generosity in pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabia was clearly linked to competition for political and social prestige among tribal leaders. However, he does not adequately clarify these practices' role in the emergence of the Islamic charitable tradition. In "Charity and Hospitality," Miri Shefer describes how prominent individuals in the Ottoman Empire enhanced their own prestige by founding hospitals through the establishment of *awqāf*. Likewise, Ottoman sultan Abdülhamid II sponsored numerous charitable projects in order to enhance his own public image as a caring and fatherly benefactor toward his subjects, as Nadir Özbek describes in "Imperial Gifts and Sultanic Legitimation during the Late Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909."

Beth Baron and Kathryn Libal, authors of "Islam, Philanthropy, and Political Culture in interwar Egypt," and of "The Child Question," respectively, shed light on the emergence in Egypt and Turkey, during the first half of the twentieth century, of motivations informed by various philanthropists' (either Islamist or secular) ideological commitment to the well-being of the nation as a whole. They also describe how this commitment translated itself into civil society activism and public debates in both countries.

Another relevant aspect is institutionalization. Possibly, the earliest form of institutionalized charity in Islamic history is the collection and distribution of *zakāt*. Timur Kuran distinguishes, in his "Islamic Redistribution through *Zakāt*" (see the section "Instrument of Modern Redistribution?") the "proceduralist" from the "situationist" approach toward this basic Islamic duty. The former approach denotes a strict application of specific rules from the Islamic sources, regardless of the concrete situation at hand, while the second refers to a flexible implementation of general religious principles based on the current situation.

Another institutional form was the establishment of *awqāf*. Illustrative examples of this widespread phenomenon are given by Yasser Tabbaa in "The Functional Aspect of Medieval Islamic Hospitals"; by Miri Shefer in "Charity and Hospitality"; by Miriam Hoexter in "Charity, the Poor, and

Distribution of Alms in Ottoman Algiers"; and by Amy Singer in "Charity's Legacies, A Reconsideration of Ottoman Endowment-Making." Charitable institutions in medieval and early modern times were largely individual initiatives to serve needy individuals, rather than society at large. This pattern changed during the nineteenth century, when the modern nation-state brought with it an increased concern with the general population's public health and productivity. Mine Ener illustrates this in "The Charity of the Khedive" (see the section "The Centralization of Poor Relief"), where she explains how centralized state-run institutions in nineteenth-century Egypt provided assistance to needy applicants. On the discursive level, the new approach toward public welfare was reflected in the social thought of Egyptian Muslim thinker and reformer Rifa'ah Rafi al-Tahtawi (1801-73), as described by Juan R. I. Cole in "Al-Tahtawi on Poverty and Welfare." In Adam Sabra's "Prices are in God's Hands" (see the section "Public Policy in Mamluk Cairo"), we find that the medieval Muslim state sometimes interfered on an *ad hoc* basis in social welfare through price-control measures and aid distribution in times of crisis.

The question of institutionalization is closely related to that of eligibility for charity. In "Status-Based Definitions of Need in Early Islamic *Zakāt* at and Maintenance Laws," Ingrid Mattson describes the legal discourse of medieval Muslim jurists on defining a person's need and eligibility for receiving *zakāt*. Mattson, like Sabra, gives an interesting account of Islamic medieval legal discourse on issues related to poverty. However, the contributions of both could have been made more insightful if they would have involved the socioeconomic status and interests of the Islamic jurists themselves.

Mark R. Cohen highlights, in "The Foreign Jewish Poor in Medieval Egypt," the importance of social connections regarding eligibility for aid in the case of foreign visitors. The contributions by Hoexter and Eyal Ginio, both dealing with eighteenth-century Ottoman society, point out the traditional inclusion of religious scholars and students in the category of needy recipients of aid. Ginio, in "Living on the Margins of Charity" (see the section "The Limited Scope of Institutional Charity for the Poor"), analyzes this in the case of Salonica and shows that being part of a solidarity network, such as a neighborhood or guild, often proved indispensable to being eligible for aid on a regular basis. Nonetheless, the impact of belonging to certain social networks or religious status-groups on eligibility is not dealt with in the chapters dealing with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The contributions represent concrete and illustrative case studies, as well as meticulous historical analyses. At the same time, the chapters' chronological order and the way they relate to one another gives one the sense of a coherent volume. Readers interested in the present upsurge of Islamic voluntary welfare activism could use this work in conjunction with anthropological and political science studies written by such authors as Dennis J. Sullivan, Janine A. Clark, Quintan Wiktorowicz, and Jonathan Benthall. Such an endeavor enables the reader to analyze this activism in its historical dimensions. We can think here of aspects like personal motivations; political or social agendas behind welfare initiatives; gender issues; the interrelationship between disciplining, empowerment, and dependency; and the role of religious discourse in all of this. The work could be equally used for the sake of comparison across cultural regions and religions. In spite of some gaps and shortcomings noted above, I would recommend *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts* as a well-written and insightful book to anyone interested in the topic.

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An Introduction to Islam

David Waines
Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
2d ed., 367 pages.

An Introduction to Islam by David Waines consists of three parts: "Foundations," "Islamic Teaching and Practice," and "Islam in the Modern World." The author begins by characteristically painting the picture of pre-Islamic pagan Arabia on the eve of Islam's advent. He discusses the role and significance the pre-Islamic Arabs accorded their pantheon of deities, as well as the (largely inherited) moral codes that governed their conduct in tribal society. Waines neatly ties this into what follows, where he discusses the birth of Prophet Muhammad, the event of the Qur'an's revelation, and the opposition he encountered from his fellow tribesmen in Makkah. This is followed by an analysis of the Qur'an's significance, its conception of divinity, and the content and importance of the Hadith as a source of guidance for Muslims. The section is rounded off with examinations of such topics as the

first period of civil strife (*fitnah*) after the Prophet's death and the interesting body of literature devoted to Muslim-Christian polemics in early medieval Islam.

The transition from the first part of the book to the second part is rather fluid, for the second part is essentially an elaboration of the themes discussed in the first. With remarkable ease and accuracy, the author elucidates the historical development and main features of Islamic law in both its theory and practice. Returning to his earlier discussion on the Hadith, here he briefly outlines how its corpus came to be collected. Readers unfamiliar with the main theological controversies that confronted Islam in its formative years (e.g., the problem of free will and the status of the grave sinner) will find the section devoted to Islamic theology fairly useful.

Waines goes on to explain some of the principle Mu`tazilite and Ash`arite doctrines, and outlines some of the ideas of Neoplatonic Islamic philosophy, albeit through the lenses of al-Ghazali's famous refutation. Surprisingly, the author does not address any of the major developments in Islamic philosophy post-Ibn Rushd, such as the important work of the Ishraqi (Illuminationist) school (incidentally, the founder of this school, Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, was a contemporary of Ibn Rushd). The last two chapters are devoted to Sufism and Shi`ism, respectively. Although Waines does misrepresent Ibn al-`Arabi's metaphysics of Being by calling it a "system" (pp. 153 and 192), on the whole he presents the Islamic mystical tradition in a refreshing and informed manner. His section on Shi`ism is splendid. It is written with considerable care, and he effectively isolates the main themes characteristic of Twelver Shi`ite thought and practice.

In the third and longest part of this work, Waines incorporates Ibn Battutah's travel accounts into the book's narrative. This works very well, as it gives readers a sense of the diverse and rich cultural patterns that were intricately woven into the fabric of fourteenth-century Islamic civilization. After reading through the section, this present reviewer could not help but marvel at how the observations of a fourteenth-century traveler and legal judge from Tangiers could so effectively contribute to a twenty-first century introductory textbook on Islam. Additionally, Waines takes readers through some of the essential features of the three important "gunpowder" Muslim dynasties, devotes an interesting discussion to the role played by the mosque in a Muslim's daily life, and outlines some of its different architectural and artistic expressions throughout Islamic history.

The remainder of the book looks at various important topics, such as the emergence of Wahhabism, Muslim reformist thought in the nineteenth and

ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) is a nonprofit, professional academic organization. It was founded towards the end of the fourteenth *hijrī* century (1391/1972) for the express purpose of providing a forum for both Muslim and non-Muslim social scientists interested in pursuing Islamically-oriented research and scholarship in the social sciences.

In order to help scholars with their activities, AMSS organizes specialized seminars and an annual conference to help its members keep current on those developments and people who are relevant to their particular fields, and identifies other social scientists who share similar interests. The AMSS then encourages them, through its seminars, conferences, and annual convention to discover the many ways in which Islam is relevant to their disciplines.

Membership in AMSS entitles one to receive *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)* at no extra cost. This journal deals with the new and exciting field of the Islamization of Knowledge, the relevancy of Islam to modern life, be it personal or professional, and provides guidelines for the reordering of the Ummah's priorities away from the current dominant western secular pradigm and towards an Islamic *tawḥīdī* paradigm.

AMSS cooperates in a variety of ways with other research and Islamic organizations with similar goals. In addition, AMSS introduces its members to placement opportunities and explores possibilities of initiation and participation in research projects through active contact with universities and research centers interested in Islam and its role in the modern world.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT

The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) is a cultural and intellectual foundation. It was established and registered in the United States of America at the beginning of the fifteenth *hijrī* century (1401/1981) with the following objectives:

- To provide a comprehensive Islamic outlook through elucidating the principles of Islam and relating them to relevant issues of contemporary thought.
- To regain the intellectual, cultural, and civilizational identity of the ummah through the Islamization of the humanities and the social sciences.
- To rectify the methodology of contemporary Islamic thought in order to enable it to resume its contribution to the progress of human civilization and give it meaning and direction in line with the values and objectives of Islam.

The Institute seeks to achieve its objectives by:

- Holding specialized academic conferences and seminars.
- Supporting and selectively publishing works of scholars and researchers in universities and academic research centers in the Muslim world and the West.
- Directing higher university studies toward furthering work on issues of Islamic thought and the Islamization of Knowledge.

The Institute has a number of overseas offices and academic advisors for the purpose of coordinating and promoting its various activities. It has also entered into joint academic agreements with several universities and research centers to implement its objectives.

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