

## *Choice* reviews 2008-2023

Wolf, Anne. **Ben Ali's Tunisia: power and contention in an authoritarian regime.**

Oxford, 2023. 272p bibl index ISBN 9780192868503, \$110.00; ISBN 9780191964541 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Dr. Wolf has completed a fascinating study of Ben Ali's regime (1987-2011) and skillfully connected it to the voluminous body of academic literature about authoritarian regimes, notably dictatorships with ruling parties, in countries ranging from China and the Soviet Union to Algeria, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. As a case study, Tunisia illustrates processes of consolidation and expansion of personal power as well as its eventual collapse. She examines the ideational dimensions of incumbent power and strategies of legitimation, notably "correctivism" and the creation of new normative priorities—and backlash. Whereas most studies of the Tunisian Revolution of 14 January 2011 focus on the popular uprising, Wolf uncovers the contentious behavior and passivity within the ruling party that facilitated the demise of the regime. Her study is richly documented with scores of interviews, and she was well aware of the potential pitfalls in interviewing regime actors after the revolution, when they might tend to reposition themselves. Yet she also saw it as "the rare opportunity to do research on the many different aspects of authoritarian politics" in the mid-2010s, a time of democratic politics. Her efforts deserve the highest praise. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Advanced undergraduates through faculty; professionals. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 61, Issue

Brew, Gregory. **Petroleum and progress in Iran: oil, development, and the Cold War.**

Cambridge, 2022. 261p bibl index ISBN 9781009206341, \$99.99; ISBN 9781009206358 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Extensively researched using Persian as well as British and American resources, this book dissects the political economy of Iran from the early 20th century, when oil was first discovered, until 1965, after the shah finally consolidated his power. Brew (history, Yale Univ.) traces the efforts of Iranian and foreign (mainly American) public officials, politicians, consultants, and businessmen to construct Iran's "petro-state." By 1964, one of Iran's leading technocrats, Hossein Mahdavy, became so disillusioned that he left the state planning bureau and subsequently, in 1970, penned a famous article about "rentier states" that inspired much of the literature over the subsequent half-century about oil's blessings and curses. The present study provides the historical background that inspired Mahdavy and substantiates his warnings about "oil-based authoritarianism." Brew also suggests that in 1952, after oil was nationalized and banned from international markets controlled by the multinationals, Iranian development planning could have survived. Instead, the CIA removed the nationalists in 1953. Once the oil

flows resumed, the revenues enabled the shah to eliminate potential opposition among landowners without investing in local village support. The revenues whetted his military ambitions at the expense of the economic planners. **Summing**

**Up:** Recommended. Advanced undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 61, Issue 4, Dec 2023

Mazaheri, Nimah. **Hydrocarbon citizens: how oil transformed people and politics in the Middle East.** Oxford, 2022. 264p bibl index ISBN 9780197636725, \$39.95; ISBN 9780197636756 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Unlike most studies of oil rentier states in the Middle East, this book focuses on the impact of oil and gas revenues on the people of these states rather than on their governments. Though oil rents may provide governments with the means to govern without taxation or representation, they also foster what Mazaheri (Tufts Univ.) calls "hydrocarbon citizens." In lieu of representation, these "citizens" have come to expect and receive various services as part of an implicit social contract. Mazaheri uses the first five waves of Arab Barometer surveys to compare hydrocarbon citizens with people living in other Arab states, and he supplements the data with online surveys that he conducted in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in 2018. In a masterful use of statistical techniques, including ordered logistic models, Mazaheri shows that hydrocarbon citizens, notably those employed in government ministries, are more loyal consumers of various services than inhabitants of other Arab states and are less enthusiastic about democracy. Education, however, is associated with more critical attitudes toward government services, except in the UAE, where citizens are a small, privileged minority. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Advanced undergraduates through faculty; professionals. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 61, Issue 3, Nov 2023

Badran, Sammy Zeyad. **Killing contention: demobilization in Morocco during the Arab Spring.** Syracuse, 2022. 224p bibl index ISBN 9780815637745, \$75.00; ISBN 9780815637844 pbk, \$24.95; ISBN 9780815655688 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Badran (international studies, American Univ. of Sharjah, UAE) presents a compelling inside story of the demobilization of Morocco's February 20 movement (F20) during the 2011 Arab Spring. As an American of Palestinian origin, he enjoyed remarkable access to the movement's activist leaders because of their support for Palestine. He vividly portrays the various stages of F20 through the eyes of a representative sample of 46 ideologically disparate activist leaders and journalists across several urban centers. He shows how the monarchy's sequencing of reforms followed by repression "killed" F20 far more efficiently than immediate repression followed by weak promises of reform, as in Egypt and Tunisia. In March and April 2011, King Mohammed VI first responded to

mass demonstrations throughout the kingdom with promises of constitutional reform and concessions to labor unions followed by brutal repression in May. The strategy peeled off reformists from F20 and elicited ideological divisions between the remaining Marxist and Islamist revolutionaries. Finally, in November, free and fair elections leading to a government led by an Islamist party effectively terminated F20. In his conclusion, however, Badran is less sanguine about the monarchy's continued ability to preempt protest with credible reforms.

--C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

**Summing Up:** Recommended. Advanced undergraduates through faculty; professionals.

September 2023 Vol. 61 No. 1

Willis, Michael J. **Algeria: politics and society from the dark decade to the Hirak.**

Oxford, 2023. 320p bibl index ISBN 9780197657577, \$60.00; ISBN 9780197693575 ebook, contact publisher for price.

In *Algeria*, Willis (Univ. of Oxford, England) offers a wealth of information, fastidiously documented and laced with interviews, about contemporary Algeria, up to fall 2022. While focused on the period since 1999 when Abdelaziz Bouteflika was elected president, the book presents the country's political background since independence in 1962. Branching out from a summary history of the new state, it offers thematic chapters on elite politics; buying peace after the dark decade of the 1990s; the economic underpinnings of Bouteflika's rule, political parties, and public opinion; the alienation of ordinary people from formal politics, including political Islam; the restive regions of Kabylia, the Mزاب, and other flash points in the Sahara; and foreign relations. The major story is how Bouteflika used booming oil revenue to build business patron-client works, enabling him to consolidate power over various military factions. His campaign for a fifth term in 2019, despite his poor health, extensive corruption, and collapsing oil revenues, provoked the Algerian people to protest. These unprecedented, peaceful, weekly demonstrations went from February 2019 until COVID-19 interrupted them. They resumed in February 2021, albeit effecting little change after Bouteflika's departure.

--C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

**Summing Up:** Recommended. Undergraduates through faculty; general readers. Choice Vol. 60, No. 11, July 2023

Ashford, Emma. *Oil, the state, and war: the foreign policies of petrostates.* Georgetown University, 2022. 365p bibl index ISBN 9781647122379, \$34.95; ISBN 9781647122393 ebook, \$34.95.

Emma Ashford explores several ways that oil (and gas) may shape the foreign policies of petrostates as diverse as the United States and Equatorial Guinea. The forty-nine of

them that she identifies seem more likely to start wars than other states. To gain clues of possible causal mechanisms, she groups them into four overlapping categories, those dependent on oil for at least 10% of GDP, oil wealthy ones with per capita hydrocarbons income of at least \$1000, major producers of over 2% of the world market, and the exporters among these producers. Oil dependent states are likely to suffer institutional deficits— “the resource curse” -- and engage in reckless foreign policies unless, as in Norway, strong state institutions preceded the oil revenues. Wealthy states may recycle their revenues into arms purchases enabling more muscular foreign policies. Major producers, especially exporters, may enjoy “hegemonic” protection to pursue war against their neighbors. Ashford roughs out logical hypotheses and supports them with logit regressions based on large data sets and with cleverly selected vignettes. She displays diplomatic tact in dealing with the United States, the “elephant in the room...in an era of contested multipolarity.” A pioneering study.

--C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

**Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Undergraduates through faculty and general readers.

Choice Vol. 60, Issue 4, Dec. 2022

Ilahiane, Hsain. **The mobile phone revolution in Morocco: cultural and economic transformations.** Lexington Books, 2022. 109p bibl index ISBN 9781793616586, \$85.00; ISBN 9781793616593 ebook, \$45.00.

This amusing little book depicts the simple mobile phone as magic, a total social artifact endowed with baraka or blessedness in the words of one Moroccan domestic. The mobile is *le portable* in French or *al-portable* in her language. She went on to say that *sidi al-portable* is a miracle worker deserving shrines for its inventors to be worshipped. In his participant observation the author gathered together many insights into the uses of this simple device by street vendors, micro entrepreneurs in construction industries, and farmers as well as domestic help. He even compared the economic advantages relative to costs of mobiles for the Moroccan farmers with snowmobiles for Arctic reindeer pastoralists—showing the mobile phone to have more sustainable benefits for competitors. The author, who chairs the Department of Anthropology and Middle Eastern Cultures at the University of Mississippi, conducted interviews in Moroccan Arabic and Tamazight (Berber) with a street vendor in Rabat, 51 workers in Mohammedia (a coastal city between Rabat and Casablanca) shantytowns, and 21 farmers in the Zis River Valley of the Errachedia region of southeastern Morocco. Three of his chapters were revisions of earlier articles but the book holds together nicely.

**Summing Up:** Recommended. General readers through faculty; professionals. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 60, Issue 3, Nov 2022

Wright, Andrea. **Between dreams and ghosts: Indian migration and Middle Eastern oil.** Stanford, 2021. 288p bibl index ISBN 9781503629516, \$90.00; ISBN 9781503630109 pbk, \$28.00; ISBN 9781503630116 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Professor Wright presents a fascinating, creatively researched study of Indian migrant workers in the oil industry of the Gulf states, principally the United Arab Emirates. She did field work in Mumbai and other towns and villages where the workers came from, along with visits to the Emirates where they worked, particularly on a semi-submerged oil rig that they referred to as their “temple.” She ascribes their treatment as commodities or “self-disciplining moveable parts” to the racist colonial legacies of the oil corporations, still largely run by Western expatriates, rather than to indigenous practices of the oil rentier states. She carefully analyses the links between corporate demand processes and the intricate networks of supply in India. She was able to follow an employment bureau to the subagents paid up to \$2000 by aspiring migrant workers, some of whom subsequently became subagents after returning home. Her story is one of exploitation, centered in Mumbai, at both ends of the migratory arc. Getting access to the exploiters as well as those exploited –and their ghost stories– was a tribute to her daring strategies of research. She writes well, free of discursive anthropological jargon. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. General readers through faculty; professionals. --

*C. M. Henry, emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 60, Issue 2, Oct 2022

Becke, Johannes. **The land beyond the border: state formation and territorial expansion in Syria, Morocco, and Israel.** SUNY Press, 2021. 302p bibl index ISBN 9781438482231, \$95.00; ISBN 9781438482248 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Becke (Center for Jewish Studies, Heidelberg, Germany) tries to bridge the fields of Israeli studies and Middle East studies by comparing the formation and territorial expansions of Morocco, Syria, and Israel. The intent is “to contribute to the research agenda of recontextualizing Israel into its regional and historical setting,” much like the Trump agenda of the Abraham Accords on the ground. All three states are viewed as institutionally deficient entities, carelessly constructed in catch-as-catch-can late colonial situations, a description fitting Syria and Mandate Palestine but certainly not Morocco or Eretz Israel within Palestine. The latter’s Ashkenazi European settlers were more comparable to the white settlers in South Africa or Southern Rhodesia, who also rebelled against their colonial masters and succeeded for a time in dominating the natives in their societies. Progressive Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, first within its 1948 borders and then expanding after 1967 to East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, has culminated in a Greater Israel more comparable to apartheid South Africa than to Morocco’s expansion into the ex-Spanish Sahara or Syria’s, temporarily, into Lebanon. However, the author has amassed provocative sets of facts well worth a critical reading by specialists.--*C. M. Henry, emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 59, Issue 8, April 2022

Aran, Amnon. **Israeli foreign policy since the end of the Cold War**. Cambridge, 2020 (c2021). 433p bibl index (Cambridge Middle East studies, 61) ISBN 9781107052499, \$99.99; ISBN 9781107280618 ebook, \$80.00.

This authoritative study characterizes Israel's foreign policy stances since 1990 as having represented entrenchment under Yitzhak Shamir, engagement under Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, unilateralism under Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon, and back to entrenchment under Benjamin Netanyahu. Entrenchment is based on Israel's "iron wall of military might rather than on diplomacy and making peace with the Arab world in exchange for peace not territory." (1) Aran (City, Univ. of London) expresses concern about the continued occupation of the West Bank cementing "Israel's deepening ethnocracy in what is a de facto binational state." (400) He questions Netanyahu's boast in 2018 of having presided over a "wondrous decade" and concludes with a critique of the Trump administration's supposed "Deal of the Century" followed by a bleak comparison of Netanyahu's victories with those of Napoleon during the latter's advances on Russia going into a harsh winter "as Israel ceases to be a Jewish and democratic state." This book contains many insights into Israeli foreign policy making, including sections on Israel's evolving relationships with China, India, the US, and the European Union—relationships that may significantly reshape the geopolitics of the Middle East region. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates. Graduate students and faculty.--C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 59, Issue 7, March 2022

Medie, Peace A. **Global norms and local action: the campaigns to end violence against women in Africa**. Oxford, 2021. 252p bibl index ISBN 9780190922962, \$74.00; ISBN 9780190922986 ebook, contact publisher for price.

This study by Medie (Univ. of Bristol, UK) compares the efforts of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire to hold perpetrators of sexual violence accountable. After emerging from protracted periods of strife and heavy peacekeeping presences, each country was under intense international pressure to implement and protect international women's rights norms. Each country established a specialized agency within its police force to do so. Medie argues that the institutionalization of these units proceeded more rapidly in Liberia than in Côte d'Ivoire, resulting in the greater willingness of its police to report domestic violence. The author carried out extensive fieldwork in both countries between 2010 and 2017, conducting hundreds of interviews with victims, police, and other officials, as well as five focus group discussions in Côte d'Ivoire. Her study carefully extends the research begun in her doctoral dissertation about her native Liberia. The text is repetitive but full of interesting anecdotes about how international

norms are imposed domestically. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Advanced undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin Choice* Vol. 59, Issue 6, Feb 2022

Henneberg, Sabina. **Managing transition: the first post-uprising phase in Tunisia and Libya.** Cambridge, 2020. 266p bibl index ISBN 9781108842006, \$99.99; ISBN 9781108902182 ebook, \$80.00.

This book microscopically examines the political transitions in Tunisia and Libya from 2011 to 2019. The “first interim government” between a fallen authoritarian regime and a new political order, or disorder, is considered here to deserve comparative analysis. The initiator of transition by definition lacks legitimacy and is supposed to serve as a bridge between the overthrown authoritarian regime and a new government.

Henneberg (Johns Hopkins Univ.) records the details of events and decisions of various collective bodies founded after the Tunisian Revolution of 2011 and the subsequent formation of Libya’s National Transitional Council almost eight months before the capture and summary killing of Muammar Gaddafi. She stresses the critical importance of various decisions for subsequent developments but rarely specifies the connections or relates them to the key differences she recognizes between Tunisia and Libya. She preserves the anonymity of her informants as if, in Tunisia, they were still operating under an authoritarian regime. Her lifeless presentation concludes with a plea for more data, but what exactly is being compared is not clear. This is heavy reading of possible interest to chronologists of political transitions. **Summing Up:** Optional. Faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin Choice* Vol. 59, Issue 3, Nov 2021

Orkaby, Asher. **Yemen: what everyone needs to know.** Oxford, 2021. 195p index ISBN 9780190932268, \$74.00; ISBN 9780190932275 ebook, \$18.95; ISBN 9780190932299 ebook, contact publisher for price.

This broad survey is organized according to a series of questions with answers that would yield excellent grades in any course on Yemen. For instance, “Who are the Houthis?” and “Are the Houthis allied with Iran?” lead to “What role is Iran playing in Yemen?” in the final chapter. Orkaby (Princeton Univ.), who grew up in Yemen, is aware of its many internal divisions. His answers are balanced and display how Saudi Arabia's “fear of Iran has become a self-fulfilling prophecy.” The Houthi movement has deep historical roots in Yemen and is certainly no Iranian terrorist proxy, as it is sometimes depicted in the press. This book not only covers the Houthis but also presents an overview of Yemen’s rich history and archaeological treasures, its cuisine, its non-Muslim minorities, its agriculture and economy, its diverse regions, and their divisions in tribes and sects, noting that there was no longstanding division between the Zaydi branch of Shi'a Islam in the northern highlands and the various Sunni and Sufi

schools and orders prevailing along the coast and eastern regions. For the reader's convenience, the table of contents listing the questions covered in each chapter is elaborated on in an excellent 19-page index. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. All levels. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 59, Issue 2, Oct 2021

Eibl, Ferdinand. **Social dictatorships: the political economy of the welfare state in the Middle East and North Africa**. Oxford, 2020. 384p bibl index ISBN 9780198834274, \$80.00; ISBN 9780192571083 ebook, contact publisher for price.

This outstanding doctoral dissertation combines state of the art quantitative and qualitative methods of political science to understand how social welfare expenditures are distributed in the eight authoritarian regimes of the Middle East and North Africa for which lengthy time series data were available, including the Pahlavi shah's regime (1950-1978) as well as the Islamic Republic of Iran. All the larger nations in the region were included except Iraq and Saudi Arabia, for which the necessary data were lacking. Dr. Eibl shows how the relative wealth, geopolitical situation, and size of their respective "self-reinforcing" ruling coalitions—narrow, as in Morocco, Syria, and the shah's Iran, or broad as in Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, and Islamic Iran--conditioned the distribution of welfare. The best performer, Tunisia, and one of the poorer ones, Egypt, were analyzed in greater detail, illustrating intra-elite conflict giving rise to broad-based ruling coalitions that were eventually subverted by crony capitalists, amplified by the military in Egypt. The author's econometric exercises coupled with interviews of key players and shrewd rational choice analysis are a marvel of methodological calisthenics. This will be required reading for many graduate students of political economy. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 58, Issue 11, July 2021

Abouarab, Jessy. **Reframing Syrian refugee insecurity through a feminist lens: the case of Lebanon**. Lexington Books, 2020. 200p bibl index ISBN 9781793613912, \$90.00; ISBN 9781793613929 ebook, \$85.50.

This is a book almost as much about Lebanese anxieties over Syrian refugees as it is about the latter's insecurity. In a tangle of virtually indigestible sentences and diagrams, the author documents the tensions between the Lebanese government, which insists on viewing Syrian refugees as temporarily displaced persons, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), mandated to aid and protect them and to assist in their local integration if voluntary repatriation or resettlement in a third country is not possible. Abouarab's core 48-page chapter ("Alternative Refugee Insecurity Narratives") illustrates "Photovoice methodology" with 19 pictures taken on smartphones by five "nonpartisan" Lebanese volunteers working with Syrian refugees

over a four-week period (photos were taken with consent and without identifying specific persons or illicit activities). In consultation with the author, they then used these photos to illustrate three broadly defined themes of refugees' conditions: "Extreme Impoverishment," "Intersectionality of refugee Insecurity," and "(In)formal labor and shift of gender roles." This "flexible" research strategy also describes volunteers' anxieties in the findings, loosely connecting pictures with ideas, such as satellite dishes attached to refugees' tents being associated with Lebanon's chronic electricity shortages. **Summing Up:** Not recommended. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 58, Issue 8, April 2021

Martínez, Luis. **The state in north Africa: after the Arab uprisings**, tr. by Cynthia Schoch. Oxford, 2020. 221p bibl index ISBN 9780197506547, \$45.00; ISBN 9780197536032 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Luis Martínez is the nom de plume of an Algerian senior research associate at the Center for the Study of International Relations (CERI) of the Institut d'Études Politiques, Paris. He has gathered a glittering array of facts and insights about four countries—Tunisia, Libya, Morocco, and Algeria—and presents them here accompanied by extensive footnotes for the benefit of specialists on these countries. The narrative is occasionally repetitive or contradicted by subsequent events. The book's theoretical scaffolding is flimsy, and there is a brief misapplication of Tocqueville's insight into the revolutionary strengthening of the French state. The state is never defined, nor are differences specified between strong and weak states, although concluding chapters are devoted to their deconstruction by jihadist forces, regional disintegration, and border control, the ultimate litmus test of a state, especially for those concerned with refugee influxes. Martínez criticizes the French intervention in Mali in 2013 with Algeria's tacit approval. The jihadis were invigorated by the reappearance of a convenient imperialist enemy, and Morocco regained influence in the region, deepening the geopolitical divide with its Algerian neighbor. This is a book for experts. **Summing Up:** Recommended. With reservations. Graduate students, researchers, faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 58, Issue 7, Mar 2021

Wallenbrock, Nicole Beth. **The Franco-Algerian war through a twenty-first century lens: film and history**. Bloomsbury Academic, 2020. 223p bibl filmography index ISBN 9781474262804, \$115.00; ISBN 9781474262828 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Wallenbrock (Hostos Community College, CUNY) analyzes 10 films released between 2006 and 2013 about memories of the Algerian revolution, as well as two earlier memorial films for comparison. This close study, enriched by the author's interviews with some of the film directors, reveals "the contradictions and ambivalence" about the

legacy of Franco-Algerian conflict, often through the lens of the “theory of the rhizome.” Most of them are Franco-Algerian productions, and while intended primarily for European audiences, they portray many descendants of Algerian families who fought on both sides of the war. Some of the films also include references to other films, such as the famous *Battle of Algiers* (1966) by Gillo Pontecorvo. Revolutionary scenes of the Casbah stand in stark contrast with the Casbah’s current neglect. Other films also offer subtle critiques of contemporary Algeria by referring back to the halcyon days of the Boumedienne era. Coproduction was a litmus test of Algerian government censorship as well as changing French attitudes toward the war. This book is replete with incisive insights and supported not only with an impressive academic bibliography but also a “filmography” of the nearly 200 films it cites. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 58, Issue 4, Dec 2020

**Enforcing silence: academic freedom, Palestine and the criticism of Israel**, ed. by David Landy, Ronit Lentin, and Conor McCarthy. Zed Books, 2020. 377p index ISBN 9781786996510, \$95.00; ISBN 9781786996503 pbk, \$25.00; ISBN 9781786996534 ebook, \$25.00.

This is a stimulating set of essays about academic freedom stemming from a 2017 conference in Dublin, Ireland, organized by pro-Palestinian academics from across the English-speaking world, including Australia, the US, the UK, and Ireland, as well as Lebanon and the Netherlands. Essays ponder the meaning of academic freedom and whether it may be exercised against the freedom of other scholars and public intellectuals. In their well-crafted introduction the editors examine definitions of academic freedom and summarize the major arguments developed in the essays, which take the Palestine–Israel conflict as a fruitful case for analyzing clashes of academic freedoms. Contributors consider whether the movement to boycott Israel is really an infringement of Israeli scholars' academic freedom, and which kinds of freedom are being sacrificed at the expense of others. As they detail, supporters of Israel wage “lawfare” attacks against their opponents by conflating anti-Semitism with criticisms of Israel, exemplified by President Trump's "Executive Order on Combating Anti-Semitism," issued shortly after this volume went to press. These discussions of academic freedom across a range of countries offer comparative perspectives that may interest the general public as well as political theorists, lawyers, and Middle East experts. **Summing Up:** Recommended. All levels.--C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 58, Issue 3, November 2020

Doss, Alan. **A peacekeeper in Africa: learning from UN interventions in other people's wars.** L. Rienner, 2020. 340p bibl index ISBN 9781626378667, \$55.00; ISBN 9781626378803 ebook, contact publisher for price.

A career staff member of the United Nations, Doss recounts his fascinating experiences coordinating peacekeeping missions in Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 2000 until he retired in 2010 to head the Kofi Annan Foundation. As special representative of the UN secretary-general (SRSG), "a job like no other," Doss managed a kaleidoscopic array of individuals from different countries and cultures, operating in a variety of civilian humanitarian and military capacities and fulfilling the various tasks associated with peacekeeping—e.g., mediating political differences, disarming combatants, reforming the host country's security services, and supporting national reconciliation, human rights, and rule of law. Doss describes all this and concludes with a primer for prospective SRSGs, stressing the importance of patience and communication skills and the need to keep the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse "at the top of [the] agenda." Despite funding problems and growing gridlock in the Security Council, peacekeeping missions proliferate, and Doss calls for realistic, properly funded UN mandates and respectfully offers his advice for effecting compromises among warring groups and even within the UN Secretariat. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals; general readers.--C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin* Choice Vol. 58, Issue 1, September 2020

**The Future of petroleum in Lebanon: energy, politics and economic growth**, ed. by Sami Atallah and Bassam Fattouh. I. B. Tauris, 2019. 360p bibl index ISBN 9781788311717, \$115.00; ISBN 9781788318501 ebook, contact publisher for price.

This book is a sterling effort to prepare Lebanon for possible offshore oil or gas discoveries like those in neighboring Israel and Cyprus. The editors have commissioned and joined in writing an excellent set of policy papers designed to manage and channel any hydrocarbon windfalls into inclusive and sustainable economic development for the country. They display deep understanding of the risks Lebanon runs if it joins the ranks of wealthy petroleum rentier states. Hydrocarbons may deepen a country's dependence on their volatile export revenues, discourage economic diversification, and further empower political elites by increasing resources for patron-client networks and opportunities for corruption. Painfully aware of the sorry state of Lebanese governance today, the contributors boldly propagate policies designed to minimize the risks. This project, the product of prolonged interactions between the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies and the Lebanese Petroleum Authority, is designed to give civil society a voice in establishing needed transparency and accountability. The book concludes with a fascinating survey, based on a representative national sample of 2,496 adults, of what Lebanese citizens may want from hypothetical oil and gas revenues. Summing Up:

Recommended. Graduate students, faculty, and professionals--*C. M. Henry, emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 57, Issue 8  
April 2020

Peterson, Dave. **Africa's totalitarian temptation: the evolution of autocratic regimes.** L. Rienner, 2019 (c2020). 279p bibl index ISBN 9781626378247, \$85.00; ISBN 9781626378476 ebook, \$85.00.

This book is designed to warn readers of the perils of postmodern totalitarianism in Africa. Peterson is senior director of the Africa program at National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a privately incorporated but publicly funded organization in Washington, DC, and he has worked there for more than 30 years. His book may support NED's claims on the US tax payer by upgrading needs for political reform, but his use of the term "totalitarian" is problematic. Though in trying to define the term he cites various authors, he never summarizes those with the purpose of offering a definition of his own. Instead he cites possible indicators, beginning with Freedom House scores and moving on to regime characteristics of monism (conflating state, party, security, society, and the economy), Utopian ideology, and mass mobilization; finally citing indicators such as terror, police torture, surveillance, prisons and prisoners, rogue technology and bureaucracy, and the possible presence of genocide. Peterson's case studies—drawn from secondary sources and quick business trips—are of Eritrea (the "North Korea of Africa"), Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Equatorial Guinea. He concludes that only Eritrea, pre-2018 Ethiopia, and Rwanda "fully qualify" as totalitarian, with post-genocide Rwanda being the outstanding model of "postmodern totalitarian paradise." **Summing Up:** Optional. Graduate students and researchers. -- *C. M. Henry, emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 57, Issue 7  
Mar 2020

Ishay, Micheline R. **The Levant express: the Arab uprisings, human rights, and the future of the Middle East.** Yale, 2019. 338p index ISBN 9780300215694, \$30.00; ISBN 9780300249224 ebook, contact publisher for price.

*The Levant Express* is an artistic overview of the Arab uprisings of 2011, replete with specially commissioned graphic designs of railroad trains connoting revolution and progress. Derailed like the revolutions of 1848 in Europe, the Arab Spring has nonetheless sown the seeds of emancipation and human rights, according to Ishay (Univ. of Denver). Ever the optimist, often citing Hegel and Gramsci, she developed her ideas about the Middle East in off-campus seminars on political theory that she conducted with a prince and other elites while teaching at Khalifa University in Abu Dhabi from 2010 to 2013. She suggests that some Gulf states might replace the US, now

discredited by the Trump Administration's policies, to mediate between Israel and Palestine, even if in her view "Palestinians have lost the support of much of the broader Arab world" (p.113). She looks to Russia and the US to instead end the conflict in Syria. She further sees hope in Israeli and Saudi efforts to reconstruct the Hejaz Railway for eventually achieving economic integration and in social media for getting the region back on track. Readers may marvel at her imagination. **Summing Up:** Optional. General readers. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 57, Issue 5  
Jan 2020

Hansen, Stig Jarle. **Horn, Sahel and rift: fault-lines of the African jihad.** Hurst & Company, 2019. 316p bibl index ISBN 9781849044141, \$34.95.  
*Horn, Sahel and Rift* is a meticulously detailed survey of dozens of jihadist organizations operating across a wide swathe of African countries from Algeria to the Sahel countries of Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad; the Rift countries of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda extending to Congo and Sudan; and the Horn, consisting of Somalia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. The organizations are shaped by the degree of territorial control of the host state and its relative hostility or "friendliness" toward the jihadis. A given organization such as Boko Haram in Nigeria or Al Qaeda in the Sudan may change from being a tool of the government to a clandestine opposition network or an overt one integrated into clans or tribes and exercising "semi-territorial control." For a time, such an organization could enjoy full territorial control until the state and/or outside powers suppress it and reshape its network into semi-territorial control. The author concludes that "ongoing government military offensives transform [organizations] rather than truly defeating them" but avoids any analysis of how outside powers make use of their specters in the new scramble for Africa and its rich mineral resources. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 57, Issue 3  
Nov 2019

Packer, George. **Our man: Richard Holbrooke and the end of the American century.** Knopf, 2019. 592p ISBN 9780307958020, \$30.00; ISBN 9781984883278 pbk, \$32.00; ISBN 9780307958037 ebook, \$14.99.  
*Our Man* is required reading, a brilliant sequel to Packer's 2013 bestseller, *The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America* (2013, FSG), spun out in biographies. Richard Holbrooke's life (1941–2010) spanned that of the American Century proclaimed in 1940 but already declining, in Packer's opinion, during the self-absorbed Clinton administration. The author, given full access to Holbrooke's personal archives, spent four years reconstructing his career and complex love life and directly

cites more than 40 pages of his diary here. Entering the State Department out of college in 1962, Holbrooke was perhaps the most brilliant and enterprising diplomat of his generation. Volunteering immediately for Vietnam, he quickly discovered the futility of American counterinsurgency campaigns, whether in Vietnam or eventually in Afghanistan. He engineered the Dayton Accords to end the carnage in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 but unfortunately never knocked heads for Middle East peace. He avoided the region throughout his career because "it was too easy to piss off American Jewish organizations and hurt himself on his climb" to power and fame in Washington. **Summing Up:** Essential. General readers; upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin* Choice Vol. 56, Issue 12  
Aug 2019

Krane, Jim. **Energy kingdoms: oil and political survival in the Persian Gulf.** Columbia, 2019. 206p index ISBN 9780231179300, \$32.00; ISBN 9780231548922 ebook, \$31.99.

Krane (Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice Univ.) combines the theoretically sophisticated analytic style of a newly minted PhD with the jargon-free writing style of a seasoned journalist who has a good sense of humor. *Energy Kingdoms* offers a superb panorama of the political economies of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Though these countries already consume a quarter of their oil production and cannibalize their export revenues in an unsustainable spiral, their autocracies have rested until recently on a satiated citizenry accorded incentives to waste energy. Krane shows that these governments are gradually cutting back energy subsidies, altering implicit social contracts under the cover of economic and political crises in the wake of the Arab Spring. The surveys Krane undertook for his doctoral dissertation indicate greater public understanding and flexibility than previous studies have suggested. That said, Krane notes that one cost associated with the necessary reforms has been increased repression, especially in Saudi Arabia. (The book was completed shortly before the murder in Istanbul of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, inside his country's consulate.) Krane does not deal with the challenges of diversifying these countries' economies and gainfully employing their burgeoning young populations. **Summing Up:** Essential. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin* Choice Vol. 56, Issue 11  
July 2019

McCarthy, Rory. **Inside Tunisia's al-Nahda: between politics and preaching.** Cambridge, 2018. 234p bibl index ISBN 9781108472517, \$99.99; ISBN 9781108459938 pbk, \$29.99; ISBN 9781108680936 ebook, \$24.00.

McCarthy (Oxford, UK) presents 14 months of fascinating ethnographic field work interviewing 85 Islamists from Sousse and surrounding villages, the heartland of Tunisia's political elite before 2011 and home to former prime minister Hamadi Jebali, Tunisia's first to be elected after the 2014 revolution. McCarthy reaches down from Jebali to two generations of Islamist current and former members of the Nahda movement in its various incarnations since the mid-1970s. The sample includes simple members and local and regional officials as well as five senior leaders, the author's intent being to develop a "genealogy of meaning-making" in "the lived experience of Islamist activism." McCarthy registers the local responses to the politicization of the movement in the 1980s and 1990s and its resilience—buttressed by religious faith and informal networks—in the face of prison and subsequent social isolation under Ben Ali's repressive regime. His pioneering study traces the "conflicting and ultimately irreconcilable differences" between religious and political activism to the final break in 2016 of the Nahda Party from its proselytizing roots, and demonstrates Tunisia's relevance to other Islamist experiences in the Middle East. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 56, Issue 8

April 2019

Ben Naftali, Orna. **The ABC of the OPT: a legal lexicon of the Israeli control over the occupied Palestinian territory**, by Orna Ben Naftali, Michael Sfard, and Hedi Viterbo. Cambridge, 2018. 572p index ISBN 9781107156524, \$125.00; ISBN 9781108578462 ebook, \$100.00.

From A for "Assigned Residence" to Z for "Zone," this legal lexicon dissects the legal infrastructure of Israeli control over the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), defined here as all the territories seized in the 1967 war, notably the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem as well as the West Bank. The authors are distinguished international law scholar-practitioners who base their conveniently cross-referenced analysis on the body of law of belligerent occupation codified in the 1907 Hague Regulations Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War, and its Additional Protocol I of 1977. The supposedly lawless occupied territories are in fact "brimming with legalism" that Israel's High Court of Justice has attempted to legitimate, in part since 2002 by selectively applying this body of international law. Despite Israel's "disengagement" from Gaza in 2005, Q for "Quality of Life" demonstrates the law's tragic relevance to this "sui generis" zone. This reference book is an indispensable guide to the Palestinian-Israeli problem and deserves a place in any public library as well as in research institutions. **Summing Up:** Essential. General readers; upper-division undergraduates through faculty--C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*

*Choice* Vol. 56 No. 3 (November 2018)

Messick, Brinkley Morris. **Shari'a scripts: a historical anthropology**. Columbia, 2018. 519p bibl index ISBN 9780231178747, \$70.00; ISBN 9780231541909 ebook, \$69.99. Focused on "matters of textuality," Messick (Columbia) skillfully recovers the practice of Shari'a law in the highlands of prerevolutionary Yemen. He reconstructs the "library" of Zaydi Shari'a references, revealing differences between Zaydis and Sunnis to be minimal, and gathers a substantial sample of their related "archive" of court documents. Against the traditional view that the theory of a state based on Islamic law is a political fiction, he argues that a millennium of Zaydi rule in Yemen articulated a practical governance of Shari'a through a succession of some hundred imams, descendants of the prophet usually also qualified in law. The site of Ibb during 1920–62 was relatively uncontaminated by western imperialism or the brief Ottoman presence after 1878, making it an ideal setting for this historical anthropology. The research involved not only analyzing rolls of up to 13 feet of Arabic script but also "ethnographic sourcing" of the scholars who wrote, safeguarded, or legitimated the Shari'a archive and library documents under study by making "extended commitments to people and place ... knowing the archive in person, as it were." **Summing Up:** Recommended. Graduate students through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*  
*Choice* Vol. 55, Issue 11 (July 2018)

Abbas, Hassan. **Pakistan's nuclear bomb: a story of defiance, deterrence and deviance**. Oxford, 2018. 341p bibl index ISBN 9780190901578, \$34.95. This judicious study of Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear weapons, and their proliferation to Iran and North Korea, is the fruit of a doctoral dissertation written by a Pakistani lawyer and police investigator who had served as deputy director of investigations at Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau. He recommended that it not pursue a corruption case against A. Q. Khan, who was revered as "father" of the bomb. In Abbas's view, it would not have been wise for this nascent anti-corruption organization to pick Pakistan's most popular hero as its first target. Nevertheless, after years of study and interviews with major military and civilian leaders, Abbas concludes here that Khan "artfully deceived the state" at times, even if "on many occasions" the state exploited his services. In 2003, when operations with Libya exposed Khan, General Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's military ruler, made Khan confess to acting on his own, but he subsequently retracted his confession once Musharraf could no longer keep him silenced. The book rigorously assesses the motives and actions of the relevant state actors as well as Khan and his largely European network of proliferators. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 55, Issue 11  
July 2018

Morton, Michael Quentin. **Empires and anarchies: a history of oil in the Middle East.** Reaktion Books, 2017. 263p bibl index ISBN 9781780238104, \$40.00; ISBN 9781780238616 ebook, contact publisher for price.

Morton, son of a British geologist, grew up in Qatar, Bahrain, and Abu Dhabi in the 1950s and 60s, and has written extensively about oil in the Middle East. He does not offer any new theoretical insights about the impact of oil on the “empires” and “anarchies” of the region but rather, addressing general readers, tells the story of oil prospecting, discoveries, and development in Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Yemen from the 1850s to 2016. Morton adds occasional details omitted in Daniel Yergin’s *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power* (1990); for instance, that Socony (Mobil) was exploring in Palestine in 1914. Despite an insider’s knowledge of British companies operating in the region, his history of the rise of national oil companies and of oil prices in the 1970s seems balanced, as he can also empathize with nationalist grievances against imperial powers. While carefully marshaling all the circumstantial evidence to the contrary, Morton argues that access to Iraqi oil was not the prime driver of the US decision (without approval from the UN Security Council) to invade and occupy Iraq in 2003. **Summing Up:** Recommended. General collections and public libraries. -- C. M. Henry, *emeritus, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 55, Issue 7  
Mar 2018

Masri, Safwan M. **Tunisia: an Arab anomaly.** Columbia, 2017. 378p bibl index ISBN 9780231179508, \$35.00; ISBN 9780231545020 ebook, \$34.99.

Masri (Columbia) presents a stimulating account of Tunisia’s democratic transition that deserves to be read widely in the Arab world as well by students of the Middle East and policy makers. Tunisia is indeed the unique success of the “Arab Spring” and deserves the sympathy and balanced appreciation this delightful book presents. Based on hundreds of hours of interviews with dozens of Tunisians and impressive command of the secondary literature about Tunisia’s history as well as recent developments, Masri’s analysis reflects the keen insights of a Jordanian Palestinian Muslim who taught operations management in business schools, founded educational institutions in the Middle East, and currently heads Columbia University’s network of Global Centers. His work nicely synthesizes Tunisia’s Mediterranean identity and traditions of progressive reform, and compares its national identity with those of less open, less secular ones of other Arab countries. Buttressing Tunisia’s transition was an exceptional labor movement, consummate politicians, and a “Tunisian Islam” that developed over a

century of reforms. As an educator Masri views Tunisia's focus on progressive education as a major background condition for the country's transition to democracy, despite too many unemployed graduates. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- *C. M. Henry, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 55, Issue 5

Jan 2018

Ketchley, Neil. **Egypt in a time of revolution: contentious politics and the Arab**

**Spring.** Cambridge, 2017. 201p bibl index ISBN 9781107184978, \$99.99; ISBN 9781316636220 pbk, \$29.99; ISBN 9781316887011 ebook, \$24.00.

Here is a fascinating view of critical moments in Egypt's uprisings of 2011 and 2013 and subsequent Muslim Brotherhood protests. Based on two years of fieldwork between 2011 and 2015, Ketchley (King's College London) compiled a catalog, including videos, of 8,454 protest events. He conducted extensive interviews with activists as well as academics and analyzed the repertoires of contentious politics performed by the former both quantitatively and qualitatively. He shows how differently motivated activists coming from different strata demonstrated in public squares and burned police stations, building on one another's achievements to tire the police and overcome the regime. He also sees through the fraternization of the military with the crowds and the major differences between the relatively spontaneous demonstrations of 2011 and the officially sponsored one of June 30, 2013, engineered to justify Sisi's military coup. He speculates whether Egypt might have had a more successful transition if the Muslim Brotherhood had maintained better relations with other activists rather than withdrawing its support in the streets and engaging in elections. This book challenges some conventional wisdom about Egypt's uprising but does not compare it with other Arab cases. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- *C. M. Henry, retired from the University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 55, Issue 5

Jan 2018

Wolf, Anne. **Political Islam in Tunisia: the history of Ennahda.** Oxford, 2017. 269p bibl index ISBN 9780190670757, \$60.00.

This is an exceptionally well-crafted and objective history of Tunisia's principal Islamist movement and party, Ennahda, headed by Rachid Ghannouchi. It is based on over 400 interviews conducted over a four-year period of field work in Tunisia, together with relevant documents including WikiLeaks reports from the US embassy in Tunis. It is very reader-friendly, starting with concise political biographies of 23 leading personalities in the movement, many of whom are unknown to the public. It places the movement in the context of Tunisia's traditions of reform and modernization, cultivated

in the nineteenth century, and makes stimulating comparisons between Ghannouchi and Habib Bourguiba, who had condemned him to death. The book also places Ennahda in the context of competing Islamist tendencies and highlights its failure to tame Salafists by co-opting them or by supporting moderate Salafist parties. Ghannouchi has converted the movement into a political party that downplays identity politics but risks defections of activists to more extreme movements. This study, so well grounded in recent history, is essential reading for anyone interested in political Islam or the evolution of regimes in the Middle East and North Africa. **Summing Up:** Essential. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, retired from the University of Texas at Austin  
Choice Vol. 55, Issue 4  
Dec 2017

Winegard, Timothy C. **The first world oil war.** Toronto, 2016. 385p bibl index afp ISBN 9781487500733, \$36.95; ISBN 9781487511708 ebook, contact publisher for price. This book by a professional military historian documents the growing uses of oil for land, sea, and air operations in World War I, making it the "First World Oil War." The major consequence of this "industrialized war of attrition" on the western front is "oil imperialism." Winegard shows how after 1916, oil became not only a means but also an end, shaping British military campaigns and postwar diplomacy. He highlights little-known aspects of the war, such as Dunsterforce, a small, "hush-hush" band of elite volunteers tasked to defend or destroy Baku's oil installations. For the sake of oil, Britain also occupied Mosul two days after signing the Armistice of Mudros with the Ottomans, thereby expanding postwar Iraq. In his enthusiastic account of the marriage of war and oil, however, the author often exaggerates, conflating oil with other British wartime objectives, such as the defense of passage to India. The book is disorganized and repetitive and also replete with errors about the oil industry, such as Saudi Arabia's supplying 14 percent of America's oil by 1935, three years before oil was discovered there. **Summing Up:** Optional. Faculty. -- C. M. Henry, retired from the University of Texas at Austin  
Choice Vol. 54, Issue 8  
April 2017

**Gaza as metaphor**, ed. by Helga Tawil-Souri and Dina Matar. Hurst & Company, 2016. 267p afp ISBN 9781849046244 pbk, \$24.95. In these 21 short pithy essays, Gaza is variously viewed as overcrowded, economically unsustainable, a strip of land, a humanitarian disaster, a heart of darkness and tunnels, a microcosm of humanity and generosity, a symbol of resistance and defiance, an open air penitentiary or, worse, a zoo, a vast torture chamber, a closed cyst (under blockade since 2006), grass to be mowed periodically (by F-16s and other US financed weapons

systems), and an archive of the Palestinian condition. The writers include the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) commissioner-general, some Israeli as well as many Palestinian and other academics, artists, and a clinical psychologist. The purpose of *Gaza as Metaphor* is, in its coeditors' words, "to humanize it, maybe even to change it ... through metaphors" and, despite Gaza's isolation and destruction, point to "its centrality to the Palestinian cause and to the unfinished struggle for national dignity everywhere." The book conveys images of the traumatic impact of the 50-day war waged in the summer of 2014, which killed 2,131 Palestinians, including 504 children, 66 Israeli soldiers, and five civilians in Israel, and further ruined Gaza's infrastructure. **Summing Up:** Recommended. General readers. -- C. M. Henry, retired from the University of Texas at Austin

Choice Vol. 54, Issue 3

Nov 2016

Byrne, Jeffrey James. **Mecca of revolution: Algeria, decolonization, and the Third World order.** Oxford, 2016. 388p bibl index afp ISBN 9780199899142, \$65.00; ISBN 9780199899159 ebook, contact publisher for price.

This flowing narrative of revolutionary Algeria's international relations in the late 1950s and early 1960s is an important reminder of the legacies of colonial repression and the struggles for national liberation that continue to spark anti-Western sentiments in parts of Africa and Asia. Byrne (Univ. of British Columbia) has dug into the archives of the Algerian revolution in France and Algeria, including police tape recordings of Algerian leaders in French prisons before 1962. He had access to the files of the fledgling Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the early 1960s and could document the development of its archives and its internal deliberations as the newly independent government tried to shape its revolutionary vision of "third worldism" into practical foreign policies. Algeria, as an internal document reported in March 1965, had to have an "indispensable presence" in the global arena because of "our international obligations, our political choices, our prestige among Third World countries." Byrne's brilliant focus on Algeria's external image is less successful, however, in explaining how easily its weak president was toppled in June 1965 on the eve of Algeria's greatest diplomatic triumph, the stillborn Second Bandung conference. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, retired from the University of Texas at Austin

Choice Vol. 54, Issue 3

Nov 2016

**North African politics: change and continuity**, ed. by Yahia H. Zoubir and Gregory White. Routledge, 2015 (c2016). 397p index ISBN 9781138922945, \$140.00; ISBN 9781138922969 pbk, \$52.95; ISBN 9781138922969 ebook, contact publisher for price.

This volume conveniently extends North Africa eastward from Algeria and Tunisia to Libya and Egypt and south from Morocco to the Western Sahara and Mauritania for readers interested in sequels to the Arab uprisings of 2010–11. The editors point to their beginnings in the Western Sahara in November 2010 rather than in Tunisia a few weeks later, where the toppling of President Ben Ali in turn inspired popular movements to do likewise in Egypt, then Libya. The 20 essays are generally of excellent quality, loosely organized around the three themes of “drivers of change,” including West Sahara, the internal dynamics of the six states in the region, including manipulations of Amazigh (Berber) identity, and their international relations. Of particular interest are relations with the US; China; the Gulf Cooperation Council, notably Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates; and international oil companies. Two consultants tell a tale not of wealthy rentier states but of lost opportunities for all three producers, Algeria, Libya, and Egypt. Zoubir and Stephen Zunes point to the region’s growing strategic significance for the US military. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- C. M. Henry, retired from the University of Texas at Austin

Choice Vol. 54, Issue 1

Sept 2016

Aronoff, Yael S. **The political psychology of Israeli prime ministers: when hard-liners opt for peace.** Cambridge, 2014. 229p bibl index ISBN 9781107038387, \$80.00; ISBN 9781107669802 pbk, \$29.99; ISBN 9781139950398 ebook, \$64.00.

In this study of six Israeli prime ministers, Aronoff (Michigan State Univ.) finds correlations between psychological profiles and dispositions to change from hard-line positions to peacemaking with the Palestinians. She profiles Yitzhak Shamir, Benjamin Netanyahu, Ariel Sharon, Yitzhak Rabin, Ehud Barak, and Shimon Peres in this order with respect to their psychological dispositions for change (i.e., ideology, time orientation, cognitive flexibility, risk propensity, and emotional intelligence). For example, Shamir remained a hard-liner because he was rooted in revisionist ideology, stuck in the past, rigid of thought, risk averse, and a loner. At the other extreme, Peres’s Zionism was flexible concerning territory and did not presume time to be on Israel’s side. Originally a hard-line supporter of Ben Gurion and father of Israel’s nuclear capability, he was future oriented, sensitive to changes in the Palestine Liberation Organization, ready to take risks and relate to a wide range of advisers, including young architects of the Oslo peace process. Based on extensive interviews, including with most of the prime ministers or their close family members, she weaves a well-written if incomplete story of critical moments in Israeli decision-making that deserve further research. **Summing Up:** Recommended. All readership levels. -- C. M. Henry, National University of Singapore

Choice Vol. 52, Issue 5  
Jan 2015

Burki, Shireen K. **The politics of state intervention: gender politics in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran.** Lexington Books, 2013. 307p ISBN 9780739184325, \$100.00; ISBN 9780739184332 ebook, \$99.99.

Burki (National Defense Univ.), "a female of Pushtun and Irish heritage who grew up in Pakistan," compares the status of women in her home country with their status in the neighboring Muslim-majority countries of Afghanistan and Iran. She discovers many similarities but concludes that the Pakistani judiciary offers slightly better safeguards for women against the tide of misogynist "Shariahization" that has swept across all three countries, beginning with Pakistan in the 1970s. Women have been political footballs in battles raging between secularists and Islamists, and imposing literal interpretations of Sharia law has offered cheap gains for politicians seeking backing from conservative public opinion. Feminists were divided between those seeking reforms for Westernized elites and their poor conservative sisters. Burki sensibly concludes that the "pursuit of unrealistic goals ... based on culturally alien practices" has distracted attention from "the enactment of laws and the provision of essential services that constitute *more realistic and achievable first steps toward female empowerment in the long run*" (italics in original). Her study is an excellent source of material for systematic comparisons between weak Muslim-majority states and civil societies, especially those undergoing political transitions and coping with political Islam. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. General readers; upper-division undergraduate students and above. --

*C. M. Henry, American University in Cairo*

Choice Vol. 51, Issue 11  
July 2014

Kabha, Mustafa. **The Palestinian people: seeking sovereignty and state.** L. Rienner, 2013. 399p ISBN 9781588268822, \$68.50.

Originally published in Hebrew by the Academic Press of the Open University of Israel as *The Palestinians: A People Dispersed*, this book is more of a compilation of sources for a graduate student than an original work of research. It is a chronological recounting of the development of Palestinian politics from 1936 to 2011, including the Arab Spring. The book relies heavily on Yezid Sayigh's masterful *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993* (CH, Dec'98, 36-2403) for 9 of its 15 chapters. A graduate student might continue this reviewer's close study of tracing the footnotes from pp. 315-322 back to Sayigh's publication. Kabha (history, Open Univ., Israel) indeed cites Sayigh's translated Arabic edition, but he does not cite it as the source of many of his other footnotes. **Summing Up:** Optional. Graduate collections. --

*C. M. Henry, National University of Singapore*

Choice Vol. 52, Issue 2  
Oct 2014

Laron, Guy. **Origins of the Suez crisis: postwar development diplomacy and the struggle over Third World industrialization, 1945-1956.** Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Johns Hopkins, 2013. 260p ISBN 9781421410111, \$55.00.

Laron (Hebrew Univ., Jerusalem) traces the origins of the Suez crisis to great power rivalries over Third World industrialization that conditioned the more immediate causes of the Suez War of 1956, when Israel conspired with Britain and France to invade Egypt, only to be halted by the two superpowers. His sectoral analysis of the British and American "internationalist" and "isolationist" business communities offers a novel perspective on the interactions of their countries' respective policies toward Egypt before and after the Free Officers came to power. In preserving colonial empires, British and French "isolationist" interests supported the tripartite aggression. Laron's "mirror" Soviet and American strategies, based on "internationalist" constituencies after the death of Stalin in 1953, also point to their convergent interests in Third World industrialization as well as to Cold War rivalries. The author crafts a rich narrative of the early 1950s leading up to the crisis. He commands a full array of the archival sources of the major players, including the Soviet Union. It seems a stretch, however, to situate emergent Brazil, Russia, India, and China in the policies of the superpowers toward Egypt in the mid-1950s. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Graduate and research collections. -- C. M. Henry, *American University in Cairo*

Choice Vol. 51, Issue 8  
April 2014

Zoubir, Yahia H. **Global security watch--the Maghreb: Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia,** by Yahia H. Zoubir and Louisa Dris-Aït-Hamadouche. Praeger, 2013. 213p ISBN 031339377X, \$52.00; ISBN 9780313393778, \$52.00.

Three Algerian academics (including Cherif Dris, who wrote the first chapter) examine the national and regional security perceptions of the regimes of four Maghreb countries (omitting Mauritania), as well as their relationships with outside powers. National state security is confounded with regime security. Why, for instance, does Algeria support self-determination for the west Sahara territory ruled by Spain until 1975 and subsequently occupied by Morocco? Algeria understandably views colonial borders as sacrosanct, but less well known is its military's determination to keep in check Moroccan claims to much of the western Algeria, northern Mali, and Mauritania. Substantial Algerian arms acquisitions ignited an arms race with Morocco that the kingdom can ill afford without help from the Gulf Cooperation Council. Collective Maghreb security seems a distant prospect, though the authors suggest a possible scenario of democratization for all four countries. Zoubir (Marseille School of

Management, France) and Dris-Aït-Hamadouche (Univ. of Political Science and Information, Algiers) have many interesting observations about everything from campaigns against al Qaeda in the African Sahel, notably Mali, to food subsidies and salary increases to head off domestic uprisings, and even the outsourcing of EU border control; however, the book could be better organized and security more systematically defined. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Research and professional collections. -- C. M. Henry, *American University in Cairo*  
Choice Vol. 51, Issue 4  
Dec 2013

Pedahzur, Ami. **The triumph of Israel's radical Right**. Oxford, 2012. 277p ISBN 9780199744701, \$29.95.

Pedahzur (Judaic studies, Univ. of Texas, Austin) has crafted a remarkable, crisply written history of the rise of the settler movement after the 1967 War leading to recent triumphs of the radical Right in Israeli policies and elections. The movement's religious fundamentalist component is converging with the nativism and populism that it shares with contemporary European racisms. In its most recent formulations "the democratic principles of the state should be secondary to the ethno-Jewish ones" calling for separation from the Palestinians of Gaza and the West Bank; loyalty oaths to the Jewish state for the one-fifth of the citizens inside Israel's expanded boundaries who are not Jewish (along with foreign workers and asylum seekers), or else their expulsion; Pedahzur relies on the elastic concept of a settler network to explain the rise of the radical Right. It consists not only of various extremist parties and factions but also of individuals strategically placed in key ministries and other state agencies that generated "an effective settling machine that had gotten caught up in a state of perpetual motion," regardless of official policies. Israel's 2013 elections preserved the radical Right's parliamentary majority as documented by the author. **Summing Up:** Recommended. General readers; upper-division undergraduate students and above. -- C. M. Henry, *American University in Cairo*  
Choice Vol. 50, Issue 11  
July 2013

**Beyond the Arab spring: authoritarianism & democratization in the Arab world**, by Rex Brynen et al. L. Rienner, 2012. 349p ISBN 9781588268532, \$68.50; ISBN 9781588268785 pbk, \$27.50.

Designed as an introduction to Arab politics, *Beyond the Arab Spring* is divided into two parts. The first part is descriptive country studies; the second explores thematic issues such as political culture, varieties of Islamism, elections, oil rents, economic as well as political liberalization, the new Arab media, and regional and international interactions. Still rooted in the traditional political science binary of authoritarianism versus

democracy, the authors analyze the various interlocking factors that contributed to and continue to shape the uprising of 2011, without arriving at any definitive conclusions about directions of political change. They also note how new media are fashioning a fresh "polyphonic and expansive Arab identity" that amplifies public awakenings. There are divisions within the region among competing Islamisms, be they inclusive or exclusive, and between Islamists and other more liberal "revolutionaries," not to mention those forces opposed to all putative revolutions or political transitions. Well documented in the recent literature about persistent authoritarianism and social movements for change, this undergraduate introduction may also serve as a useful reference for more advanced scholars and professionals. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduate, graduate, research, and professional collections. -- C. M. Henry, *American University in Cairo*  
Choice Vol. 50, Issue 11  
July 2013

Pargeter, Alison. **Libya: the rise and fall of Qaddafi**. Yale, 2012. 289p ISBN 9780300139327, \$30.00.

Pargeter (Menas Associates) vividly recounts the rise and fall of Libya's dictator. She skillfully uses British and US diplomatic archives as well as most of the standard secondary sources to develop the background to Qaddafi's 1969 coup, and she fills in many interesting details of his reign (1969-2011) with citations from defectors from his inner circle, such as Abdel Salam Jalloud, who had been his second in command for many years. This book is timely for documenting the exciting recent events on the ground that led to Qaddafi's downfall. Additionally, it benefits from the flood of interviews picked up in the Arabic press from leading figures who shed light on earlier events, including his son Saif Al-Islam's reform efforts. Although it is too early to critically dissect these memoirs and somehow infer what was really "deep in his [Qaddafi's] heart," as Pargeter occasionally claims to discover, she gives shrewd guesses, documenting them as well as any observer can, given the current state of research into these tortured years. This is an excellent read for academics and the general public alike. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. General readers, undergraduate students, graduate students, and research faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *American University in Cairo*  
Choice Vol. 50, Issue 6  
Feb 2013

Eland, Ivan. **No war for oil: U.S. dependency and the Middle East**. Independent Institute, 2011. 214p ISBN 9781598130546, \$24.95; ISBN 9781598130461 pbk, \$18.95. Eland (Independent Institute) displays a libertarian faith in the ability of unregulated markets to maintain steady supplies of petroleum to meet world demand at affordable

prices. He reduces most US initiatives in the Middle East, even sending marines to Lebanon in 1958, to "the mercantilist policy of using force or covert action to ensure such incoming supplies." His book is riddled with misleading statements about US foreign policy and the oil industry. He vastly underestimates the capacities of the Texas Railroad Commission to regulate supply (and hence price) until the early 1970s, and the Seven Sisters to engage in similar self-regulation at the international level. And he minimizes not only the economic and financial effects of subsequent price volatility but also Saudi efforts to dampen it. Would there really be little damage to the world economy if Saudi Arabia were lost to radicals intent on destroying it? The author rightly argues that the reckless US military buildup in the Arab Gulf countries since 1987 may hasten that day. He is well worth reading despite his belief that markets cannot fail. **Summing Up:** Recommended. General readers and undergraduate students. -- C.

*M. Henry, American University in Cairo*

Choice Vol. 49, Issue 12

Aug 2012

Maddy-Weitzman, Bruce. **The Berber identity movement and the challenge to North African states.** Texas, 2011. 292p ISBN 0292725876, \$55.00; ISBN 9780292725874, \$55.00.

Maddy-Weitzman (Tel Aviv Univ., Israel) has written the first full-length academic study of the rise of the Amazigh (Berber) identity movement in North Africa. While focusing on the postcolonial states of Algeria and Morocco, especially since the 1980s, he has crafted an excellent history of North Africa that critically highlights Berberist interpretations in competition with the standard Arab Islamic narratives of Maghribi identity. Moroccan King Mohammed VI tried to co-opt the movement as part of Morocco's multicultural (including Jewish) identity, and Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika tried to absorb the movement ("We are all Arab Amazigh"), but struggles for greater recognition persist in both Algeria and Morocco. "Amazigh" also means "free man," and indeed the struggles about Maghribi identities contribute to the larger struggle in the region not only for pluralism but for possible federalism and constitutional democracy. Supplemented by some fieldwork in France and Morocco, the Israeli American author deepens academic understandings of the diverse interpretations of identity, and the book should be of interest to scholars and general readers interested in southern Mediterranean cultures. **Summing Up:** Recommended.

All readership levels. -- C. M. Henry, *American University of Cairo*

Choice Vol. 49, Issue 7

Mar 2012

Amit, Zalman. **Israeli rejectionism: a hidden agenda in the Middle East peace process,** by Zalman Amit and Daphna Levit. Pluto, 2011. 208p ISBN 9780745330297, \$95.00; ISBN 9780745330280 pbk, \$30.00.

Amit (emer., Concordia Univ., Canada) and Levit (Ben Gurion Univ., Israel), respectively a behavioral neuroscientist and a financial analyst, present a concise, carefully documented analysis of the missed opportunities for peace among Israel, the Palestinians, and other Arab neighbors. They persuasively argue for the existence of a hidden agenda, namely that "an equitable peace settlement was never Israel's top priority." They are all the more persuasive for having themselves been committed members of the Labour Youth, the Histadrut's ideological vanguard. As late as 1967, when they were already respectively in their 30s and 20s, they believed the official narrative that Israel had invaded the Golan Heights to defend victimized Israeli settlements from Syrian attacks. Israel's preference in 1967 for holding on to territories gained in its preemptive war over negotiating a durable peace triggered the authors' growing doubts about Israel's unending, supposedly defensive struggles against its neighbors and subject populations. Rather than being a country with an army, Israel became "an army that has a country," refusing any concessions for peace. This expert account should be required reading for concerned Americans. **Summing Up:** Essential. General readers; upper-division undergraduate students and above. -- C. M. Henry, *American University of Cairo*  
Choice Vol. 49, Issue 4  
Dec 2011

Balala, Maha-Hanaan. **Islamic finance and law: theory and practice in a globalized world**. I.B. Tauris, 2010. 211p ISBN 9781848850767, \$99.00. Dedicated to the Almighty, this book is an important critique of contemporary Islamic banking. Balala analyzes the root principles of commerce expressed in the Quran and important Muslim commentaries. She challenges the "pedantic restrictions of form over substance" in Islamic banking and argues the need to bring its rules up to date in the true spirit of Islam "catering [efficiently] to social justice and equity." The prohibition of *riba* (usury), for instance, is not really about charging interest, as most traditional Muslim scholars claim, but rather a prohibition against any commercial exchange that exacts inequitable benefits for one party by straying from fair market practices. Debt is not money but rather a kind of right that may be securitized without engaging in medieval juristic gymnastics. Islamic bond issues should be structured so as to converge with English common law practices, which share the same Arab-Islamic origins but were not frozen in time by the 13th-century Mongol invasion that closed Islam's door to legal innovation. This book should be required reading for international business and law students as well as pious Muslims. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. General readers; upper-division undergraduate students and above. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 48, Issue 10  
June 2011

Zunes, Stephen. **Western Sahara: war, nationalism, and conflict irresolution**, by Stephen Zunes and Jacob Mundy. Syracuse, 2010. 319p ISBN 9780815632191, \$49.95. This outstanding study of the former Spanish Sahara documents the largely forgotten cause of self-determination for the indigenous inhabitants of the territory and their descendants living in the Moroccan-occupied territory or as refugees in bordering Algeria and Mauritania. If the West Saharans are ever to gain self-determination, despite US and French support for Morocco's colonizing enterprise, it will be through pressures on the international community by an international civil society of nongovernmental organizations supporting human rights and national self-determination. If the issue remains unresolved, it may continue to impede progress toward the economic as well as political integration of the Maghreb, and drain Moroccan resources needed for development. Zunes (Univ. of San Francisco) and Mundy (PhD candidate, Univ. of Exeter, UK) argue that Algeria's role has been exaggerated and that growing Saharan opposition to Moroccan rule, even among some of its settlers, may be the monarchy's Achilles heel. Despite its apparent impracticality, the universal principle of self-determination trumps the monarchy's irredentist claims, and Saharan nationalism continues to develop inside and outside the occupied territory. A must read for policy makers and students of northwestern Africa as well as for international human rights activists. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. General readers, upper-division undergraduate students, and above. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 48, Issue 7

Mar 2011

Hafez, Kai. **Radicalism and political reform in the Islamic and Western worlds**, tr. by Alex Skinner. Cambridge, 2010. 253p ISBN 9780521763202, \$95.00; ISBN 9780521137119 pbk, \$28.99.

Hafez (media and communications studies, Univ. of Erfurt, Germany), who frequently advises his government about the Western-Islamic dialogue, wrote this courageous, thought-provoking book in 2009, expertly translated into English by British social anthropologist Alex Skinner. Hafez evenhandedly critiques the ideological discourses of both the Western and Islamic worlds, deconstructing "Islamofascism," for instance, as well as varieties of Islamic fundamentalism. He boldly compares the Turkish military presence at the gates of Vienna (already in 1529) with contemporary Western and Israeli military occupations of Muslim territories. Just as the specter of the Ottoman Empire once facilitated the rise of Protestantism among threatened Christians, so now is Western neo-imperialism radicalizing Islam. The author "cherishes the hope" that the West may reverse gears and assume the risk of engaging Muslim radicals to promote democracy "in a largely consensual project of modernity" at the expense of incumbent

authoritarian regimes. This book should stimulate thinking among Western, especially US, policy makers as well as students interested either in a more reflective comparative politics or in examining the internal contradictions of liberal international relations theory. **Summing Up:** Recommended. General readers, upper-division undergraduate students, graduate students, and research faculty. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 48, Issue 4

Dec 2010

Pelletière, Stephen C. **Israel in the second Iraq War: the influence of Likud.** Praeger Security International, 2009. 134p ISBN 9780313382307, \$34.95.

Pelletière skillfully documents the US's disastrous invasion and occupation of Iraq as only a retired CIA professional immune from domestic political pressures--unlike the US media--can tell it. The media, he explains, obliged the political class in the US by "consistently misrepresenting the situation." The ideological blinkers blocked any understanding of Iraqi nationalist resistance. Pelletière argues that Israel did not push the US into the war--it was the Pentagon's push for bases, not Israel or oil, and certainly not weapons of mass destruction that drove the decision for war. However, the neoconservatives who made it happen were interwoven with Israel's right-wing Likud Party, and for the Iraq War adapted the aerial destruction of cities and other counterinsurgency measures that Israel had pioneered against the Palestinians and Lebanese. This book is written haphazardly, and there are a few errors. For example the author writes that Clinton was president in 1991 (p. 50); and claims that Israel pulled out of Gaza in 1994 (settlers were not withdrawn until 2005) (p. 53); however, it still deserves a wider reading than most specialized security studies. **Summing**

**Up:** Recommended. General readers, undergraduate students, graduate students, and professionals. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin*

Choice Vol. 47, Issue 12

Aug 2010

Badran, Amneh Daoud. **Zionist Israel and apartheid South Africa: civil society and peace building in ethnic-national states.** Routledge, 2009. 255p ISBN 9780415489812, \$125.00.

Since the breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, comparisons between apartheid South Africa and Greater Israel have proliferated. Badran (Al-Quds Univ., Palestine) presents an original contribution to the growing literature because, while aware of the demographic, economic, and religious differences among the two colonial settler states, she focuses on the similarities and differences between South Africa's white protest movement against the apartheid regime in the 1980s and early 1990s and

Israeli-Jewish protest against the prolonged occupation of Palestinian territories. Based on over 40 semi-structured interviews with white South African academics and former leaders of various protest groups and over 50 interviews with Israeli activists, she observes major differences between the two but highlights the significance of liberal minorities in opposing discriminatory regimes. Her study still bears the marks of a turgid doctoral dissertation but will be of interest to scholars of colonial and post-colonial societies and resistance movements. She unfortunately did not project the demography of Israel and the occupied territories beyond 2004, nor, in this reviewer's opinion, did she pay adequate attention to the significant differences among the respective business communities. **Summing Up:** Optional. Graduate, research, and professional collections. -- *C. M. Henry, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 47, Issue 10  
June 2010

Hilliard, Constance. **Does Israel have a future?: the case for a post-Zionist state.** Potomac Books, 2009. 183p ISBN 9781597972345, \$24.50.  
Underlying her provocative title is Hilliard's deep concern for the victims of Western anti-Semitism "trapped" in Israel, a country promoted by the US and its allies because they were unwilling to admit adequate numbers of Jewish refugees into their respective countries before, during, or after the Holocaust. As hopes fade for a just peace between an Israeli and a Palestinian state, Hilliard urges the creation of a post-Zionist state along lines once advocated by Albert Einstein, Martin Buber, Hannah Arendt, and many other liberal Jewish intellectuals. Based largely on Israeli and other Jewish sources, Hilliard (Univ. of North Texas) portrays Israel as an economically viable society on the verge of emotional collapse, suffering post-traumatic stress disorder caused by Palestinian suicide bombings and other Arab attacks brought on by its aggressive expansion and colonization policies. Much of its educated elite are leaving the country, and Palestinians will soon outnumber Jews in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. This book is rich, timely, and disturbing reading, presenting information about "apocalypse fever" and "magical thinking" in Israel that deserves greater publicity in the US. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. All readership levels. -- *C. M. Henry, University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 47, Issue 9  
May 2010

Hill, J. N. C. **Identity in Algerian politics: the legacy of colonial rule.** L. Rienner, 2009. 223p ISBN 9781588266088, \$55.00.  
This book, based on secondary sources, is a survey of Algerian history since the 19th century. It is loosely organized around the themes of nation building and national identity. These themes get stretched to include economic policy as well as Islam and

Arabism. Hill (King's College London) argues Algeria never recovered from the *mission civilisatrice* imposed since 1830 by the French occupation and definition of the country. Independent since 1962 after violently rejecting the French presence, Algerians continued to disagree violently about the new definitions imposed successively by Ahmed Ben Bella (1963-65), Houari Boumediene (1965-78), Chadli Benjedid (1979-92), the High Security Council (1992-93), Mohamed Boudiaf (1992), Ali Kafi (1992-94), Liamine Zeroual (1994-98), and Abdelaziz Bouteflika (1999-present), each of whose "nation-building" is chronicled. The historical inventory covers much ground including recent terrorist attacks, but while citing a (very) few sources written in French, it omits critical ones written by major Algerian actors. It is still a useful, if superficial, summary of events for researchers and might be used as supplementary reading for undergraduates. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduate, graduate, and research collections. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin* Choice Vol. 47, Issue 5  
Jan 2010

Milton-Edwards, Beverley. **The Israeli-Palestinian conflict: a people's war.** Routledge, 2008. 228p ISBN 0415410444, \$140.00; ISBN 0415410436 pbk, \$39.95; ISBN 9780415410441, \$140.00; ISBN 9780415410434 pbk, \$39.95.

This book tries to be objective by presenting the spectra of Israeli and Palestinian perceptions of their conflict and possible resolutions. It offers historical background from Ottoman times until the breakdown of the British Mandate and then presents the period from 1948 to 2008 by topic, including "Israel reborn," Palestinian refugee problems, the Palestinian national movement, the uprisings of the "occupation generation," the roles of international and regional actors, and the broken paths to peace since 1991. The design is excellent, the intent is laudable, but the implementation is patchy, although Milton-Edwards (Queens Univ., UK) knows the subject well. Each chapter begins with a summary and concludes with a bibliographic essay for further reading. The four-page chronology is also useful, but the author's presentation is often disorganized and in need of better copyediting. Useful Palestinian and Israeli public opinion polls are not consulted, and demographic data are disorganized and incomplete. The book's pessimistic conclusion suggests continuing domination, if not "transfer," of the non-Jewish majority presently surviving in Israel and the occupied territories. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduate collections. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin* Choice Vol. 47, Issue 1  
Sept 2009

Dunning, Thad. **Crude democracy: natural resource wealth and political regimes.** Cambridge, 2008. 327p ISBN 9780521515009, \$90.00; ISBN 9780521730754 pbk, \$29.99.

Against the conventional wisdom that oil rents promote authoritarianism and discourage democracy, Dunning (Yale Univ.) argues that oil rent surges may enhance, not diminish, the prospects for democracy under certain conditions. If the economy is relatively diversified rather than heavily dependent on oil revenues, and if there is sufficient economic inequality, then economic elites will not have adequate incentive to overthrow democracy, whereas incumbent autocrats may liberalize to stave off revolutionary threats. Game theoretic arguments to these effects are supplemented by aggregate cross-national analysis to reach a balanced conclusion about the potentially positive as well as negative political effects of oil rents. Scholars like Michael Ross who have propounded the conventional wisdom recognize the "compelling argument" of this finely crafted study. Rich Latin American case studies further develop the author's argument, although Middle Eastern cases of economic diversification and increasing inequality have yet to be explored. Best suited for energy policy specialists (who may also appreciate the mathematics). **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduate students and above. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 46, Issue 12  
Aug 2009

Zeitoun, Mark. **Power and water in the Middle East: the hidden politics of the Palestinian-Israeli water conflict.** I.B. Tauris, 2008. 214p ISBN 9781845114640, \$85.00. This very informative volume about hydraulic aspects of the Palestinian-Israeli conflicts elucidates the "asymmetries" and injustices of water distribution between Israel and the occupied territories. Written by a water engineer with extensive experience in other conflict zones, it displays political as well as hydraulic intelligence about the processes of water allocation and exposes the efforts of the international donor community, led by the US, to hide a politics of Israeli hegemony under a fictitious peace process between riparian adversaries. As such, it should be required reading for US policy makers as well as students once the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians is resumed after the November 2008 US presidential elections. Zeitoun (London School of Economics and Political Science) argues that water scarcity has technical solutions that the political adversaries seem unwilling to implement as long as the US seems content to push technical solutions without putting equal pressure on the Israelis and Palestinians to implement a just peace. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. All readership levels. -- C. M. Henry, *University of Texas at Austin*  
Choice Vol. 46, Issue 2  
Oct 2008