

ally through alterations in the social structure. The socialist state, on the other hand, has from the time of its inception considered the emancipation of women an inseparable part of the wider revolutionary struggle to emancipate humankind; here, priority is given to society. Thus East Germany has been committed to an official governmental policy of "furtherance" of women, a type of reverse discrimination.

Shaffer's most telling point is that after some thirty years of socio-political separation, in which the most conspicuous changes have occurred in the most recent decades, women in East Germany clearly have made superior progress, though complete equality of the sexes has fallen short of reality in both states. The persistent cultural legacy of prejudice and discrimination continues to blight present efforts to achieve actual social equality. Few episodes in human history, in fact, so clearly illuminate the differential effects of social and cultural phenomena on behavior, and this study might have been a richer delineation of those processes had the author been more fully cognizant of them.

Skirting a theoretical approach, and with a minimum of discourse, the book derives its impact from a cumulative buildup of detailed information organized under the rubrics of law, work, education, domestic life, and women's organizations. Concerning work, we learn that in West Germany, 80 per cent of all working women are locked into typical women's low-level jobs, while less than half of their East German counterparts work in traditional occupations. Yet in both states women occupy less than 2 per cent of the top management and leadership positions, a figure almost identical to the U.S. and attributable to the same familiar problems: lingering male chauvinism even in the GDR, inferior and insufficient education of women for careers; pregnancy and childbirth that, despite compensatory legislation in the GDR, handicap women insofar as they interrupt work and cause experience and training losses. The East Germans concede that women always work a "second shift" because of their primary responsibility for childcare and household duties, but no East German women expressed the preference heard among some West German women to remain unmarried or at least childless in order to pursue a career.

Spokeswomen in West Germany re-

alize that no equal rights amendment can change a whole cultural tradition; but Shaffer correctly asserts that the law can serve as a foundation for true equality. That East Germany has such a law in place may justify the optimism of its younger women about their future political roles, as well as account for the author's Marxist bias. He argues convincingly that major credit or blame for the significant dissimilarities in women's status lies with the respective social systems, "each with its very different ideology, social fabric, economic framework, political structure..." and that this profound difference permeates the entire outlook of the two peoples. Shaffer implies that West Germany and the West generally lag in a social sense because they have failed to develop a collective consciousness, a cultural ideology favorable to raising women's social status to a level of true equality with men. [WV]

THE ARABS

by Maxime Rodinson

translated by Arthur Goldhammer

(University of Chicago Press; 188 pp.; \$12.50/\$5.95)

ISLAM IN THE MODERN WORLD AND OTHER STUDIES

by Elie Kedourie

(A New Republic Book; Holt, Rinehart and Winston; 332 pp.; \$17.95)

Daniel Pipes

Who are the Arabs? Whoever speaks Arabic. This obvious response ignores both the Arabic-speaking groups who shy away from Arab identity (Berbers, Maltese, Copts, Druze, Jews, Kurds) and non-Arabic speakers who cultivate it (Somalis, Comoro islanders). Out of this complexity Rodinson produces an amazingly intricate definition. Arabs are those who:

1. speak a variant of Arabic and regard it as their natural language, the language they ought to speak or, if they do not speak it, nevertheless have the same estimation of it;

2. regard as their patrimony the history and cultural traits of the people that has called itself and that others have called Arab, for whom one of those cultural traits has been, since the seventh century, belief in the Muslim religion (which is not limited exclu-

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sively to this people);

3. (what amounts to the same thing) claim Arab identity and possess an awareness of being Arab.

Rodinson's book systematically looks at Arab history, pan-Arabism, future prospects, and common elements among Arabs. The author, a leading authority at the Sorbonne, is knowledgeable and specific. His short book, though it often reads like a reference work—or physics text—contains much of interest: "Arab" probably derives from the Semitic word *carabah*, "steppe"; the earliest inscription in Arabic dates from A.D. 328, on a tombstone of a ruler who called himself "king of all the Arabs"; Maltese is a dialect of Arabic but its speakers, being Catholic, try to forget this fact. Communist parties first put forward the notion of unity among Arabs; according to UNESCO, a quarter of the "brain drain" involves Arabs.

But there is much to criticize. As the definition above shows, the style is turgid and the translation reads too much like French. Rodinson's biases against Turks, Israel, liberalism, and the West frequently intrude on otherwise restrained prose. More serious, the central question of pan-Arabism is unac-

countably neglected—how Arabs came to believe they form a single people and why they want to live under a single government. Arabic speakers never thought of themselves as a people before this century, identifying themselves by family, tribe, village, region, class, or religion, but not by language. Today no other group of sovereign states considers its divisions a moral offense. Though Rodinson traces the history of pan-Arabism, he fails to explain its origins. Perhaps his adamant Marxism prevents him from appreciating the crucial role of Islam, which calls on its adherents to unite under a single rule and not to fight each other. While hardly ever realized, this ideal has retained a strong hold on Muslims throughout the centuries. Pan-Arabism represents a modernized, secularized version of this ideal. The urge to unite Arab speakers draws on the powerful emotions associated with unifying Muslims. Without a discussion of this Islamic element Rodinson misses the most intriguing aspect of the Arab identity.

Elie Kedourie, professor of history at the London School of Economics, promises that he will explore in detail "the

fortunes of Islam in the Middle East," but he does less than justice to his promise, devoting less than a quarter of his text to Islam. The book is a collection of seventeen essays following comparable collections published in 1970 and 1974. Most of the essays deal with Kedourie's two principal interests, "Great-Power policies in the [Middle East] from the first world war onwards and the coming to be and spread of an ideological-nationalist and radical style of politics in the Arab world."

Kedourie's erudition is impressive. He knows remarkably much about political history, both general and Middle Eastern—the kind of detailed familiarity that comes only with decades of experience. His passionate, unconventional views are striking. Kedourie approves of very little about the twentieth century and not much more about the nineteenth, be it the Romantic movement, the trend toward greater government control, or the advent of psychohistory. Without saying so in so many words, he regrets the passing of both the Ottoman and British empires. This takes on added interest when one realizes that Mr. Kedourie grew up in Iraq, for centuries under Ottoman control and for decades under British.

One theme runs through most of Kedourie's writings—the interaction of Europe and its culture with the Middle East. He has little interest in the indigenous culture itself but is fascinated to show, in differing contexts, its response to Europe. He calls the "spread of European ideas and techniques...the most significant and striking theme in the modern history of Islam," concluding that it aggravated conditions in the Middle East, making Muslims "highly strung and deeply disturbed." Unfortunate as he considers European influence, the author does not believe independence has been better. The empires meant stability. Discussing the "perils of independence" in Lebanon, for example, he notes that if Lebanese history in the twentieth century has a moral, "it is surely that independence can be as constraining as dependence, and sometimes perhaps even downright disastrous."

It should be evident that Kedourie thrives on debunking current wisdom. His minority views make him a *bête noire* in some intellectual circles; but few of his critics have the wit and command of facts to challenge his arguments. **WV**

Middle East Wrap-Up

The idea of order in the Middle East may be anomalous, but we try here to put some order into the explosion of books about that traditional focal point of apocalyptic expectations. Albert Hourani's **The Emergence of the Modern Middle East** (University of California; 220 pp.; \$30.00) is a collection of thirteen historical essays in a companion volume to the same press's earlier **Europe and the Middle East**. Thomas A. Bryson, in **Seeds of Mideast Crisis: The United States Diplomatic Role in the Middle East During World War II** (McFarland & Co.; 226 pp.; \$15.95), traces America's present involvement in the area to its groping for ways of containing the USSR, among other concerns, during the war. Robert Legvold of the Council of Foreign Relations sounds a "restrained alarm" in **The Middle East Challenge: 1980-1985** (Southern Illinois University; 192 pp.; \$12.95 [paper]). Paul Jabber investigates the prospects for arms control in the light of developments since 1973 in **Not by War Alone: Security and Arms Control in the Middle East** (University of California; 200 pp.; \$12.50), and he includes a case study of a previous attempt to develop an arms control system for the area. **Change and the Muslim World**, edited by Philip H. Stoddard, et al. (Syracuse University Press; 224 pp.; \$9.95 [paper]), contains seventeen essays that deal with the differing assumptions and perceptions of Muslims and non-Muslims. Another collection of essays, **Islam and Power in the Contemporary Muslim World**, edited by Alex Cudsi and Ali E. Dessouki (Johns Hopkins; 224 pp.; \$20.00), addresses problems of tradition and modernity.

David Holden, a correspondent of the London *Times*, was mysteriously murdered while writing, with Richard Johns and James Buchan, **The House of Saud: The Rise and Rule of the Most Powerful Dynasty in the Arab World** (Holt Rinehart; 464 pp.; \$17.95). Irvine H. Anderson takes a look at the complex relationships between the U.S. Government and the business world in **Aramco, the United States, and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamics of Foreign Oil Policy, 1933-1950** (Princeton; 288 pp.; \$15.00). *More to come.*

Briefly Noted

VARIETIES AND PROBLEMS OF TWENTIETH CENTURY SOCIALISM

edited by Louis Patzuras
and Jack Ray Thomas
(Nelson-Hall; 189 pp.; \$15.95/\$8.95)

The editors of this collection of essays on modern socialism hope to prove they are dealing with a "diverse" phenomenon. They break down socialism into three main currents—communism, democratic socialism, and anarchism—and then offer the reader biographical sketches of ostensibly representative proponents of these socialist schools of thought. In some cases their choice of prominent socialists is intriguing. One chapter, for example, deals with the oft-neglected boss of the Comintern, Georgi Dimitrov. Other chapters deal with the likes of Lucio Colletti and Léon Blum.

On the whole both the editing and the scholarship of this book are uneven in quality. Some of the chapters read like encyclopedia accounts of the lives of great socialist heroes, others slide into obscure philosophical arguments, and one essay almost loses sight of the thinker it purports to describe.

The major problem, which undoubtedly contributes to the imbalance, is that the book lacks any kind of central focus. It is true, of course, that socialism historically has been quite diverse, but so too have many other political movements. We still need to know more about socialism itself. It would have been illuminating, for example, had the editors explained clearly just what it is about socialism that led them to select only three characteristic currents.

Since socialism is so diverse, it might also have been interesting to explore the reasons particular socialists chose one current over another. Why should a Jean Grave choose anarchism and a Ho Chi Minh fight equally fervently for communism? These questions can be addressed only by systematically comparing variants of the socialist phenomenon, over time and against each other. Without such a comparative perspective, generalizations about the "varieties and problems of twentieth century socialism" are rarely provocative or informative.

— A. James McAdams

CONTRIBUTORS

George A. Silver is Professor of Public Health at Yale University School of Medicine.

Ronald Weber, Professor of American Studies at the University of Notre Dame, is author of the recently published The Literature of Fact: Literary Nonfiction in American Writing.

Ernest H. Schell is completing a dissertation on justice in early American foreign policy.

Miles Wortman is a specialist on Latin America and author of the forthcoming Government and Society in Central America, 1680-1840 (Columbia).

Margery Fox is an Associate Professor of Sociology/Anthropology at Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Daniel Pipes, author of Slave Soldiers and Islam (Yale, 1981), has written widely on the Middle East and Islam for the national press.

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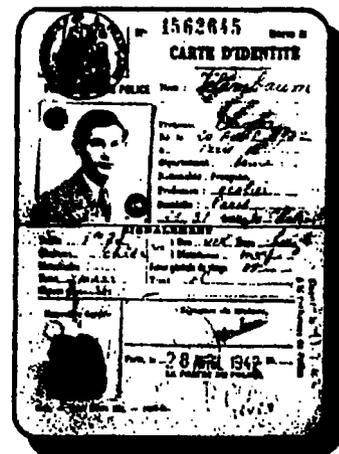
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