ELIAS MUHANNA

THE WORLD IN A BOOK
AL-NUWAYRI AND THE ISLAMIC ENCYCLOPEDIA TRADITION

"The World in a Book is a superb, original study that makes a major contribution to the understanding of Arabo-Islamic cultural production, Mamluk history, and Arabic literature. Elias Muhanna’s book is the first about al-Nuwayri’s work in English and by far the finest in any language."
—Li Guo, University of Notre Dame

The World in a Book
Shihab al-Din al-Nuwayri was a fourteenth-century Egyptian polymath and the author of one of the greatest encyclopedias of the medieval Islamic world—a thirty-one-volume work entitled The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition. In the first study of this landmark work in a European language, Elias Muhanna explores its structure and contents, sources and influences, and reception and impact in the Islamic world and Europe.

ELIAS MUHANNA is the Manning Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at Brown University.

December 2017. 224 pages. 7 halftones. 4 line illus. 14 tables.
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“A major achievement, this impeccably researched book contributes significantly to our understanding of Arab and Islamic politics, supplementing and correcting much of it.”
—James Piscatori, Australian National University

**Making the Arab World**

In *Making the Arab World*, Fawaz Gerges, one of the world’s leading authorities on the Middle East, tells how the clash between pan-Arab nationalism and pan-Islamism has shaped the history of the region from the 1920s to the present. Based on a decade of research, including in-depth interviews with many leading figures in the story, *Making the Arab World* is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the roots of the turmoil engulfing the Middle East, from civil wars to the rise of Al-Qaeda and ISIS.

**FAWAZ A. GERGES** is professor of international relations and Emirates Chair in Contemporary Middle East Studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

“A major accomplishment. Yılmaz argues that Ottoman political thinking in this period should be viewed as a richly interconnected amalgam of juristic, ethical, and mystical strains of thought that come together to provide a colorful and forceful justification of Ottoman political legitimacy. His prose is fluent, lucid, and even elegant.”
—Ahmet T. Karamustafa, author of *Sufism: The Formative Period*

**Caliphate Redefined**

The medieval theory of the caliphate, epitomized by the Abbasids (750–1258), was the construct of jurists who conceived it as a contractual leadership of the Muslim community in succession to the Prophet Muhammad’s political authority. In this book, Hüseyin Yılmaz traces how a new conception of the caliphate emerged under the Ottomans, who redefined the caliph as at once a ruler, a spiritual guide, and a lawmaker corresponding to the prophet’s three natures.

**HÜSEYIN YILMAZ** is associate professor of history and director of the Ali Vural Ak Center for Global Islamic Studies at George Mason University.
“No other book considers so deeply the afterlife of the caliphate as a literary, religious, and political theme in Islamic history. . . . Hassan shows that in the world of nation states, the caliphate remains an expression of the yearning for a universal religious identity.”

—Ira M. Lapidus, University of California, Berkeley

**Longing for the Lost Caliphate**

This book explores the myriad meanings of the caliphate for Muslims around the world through the analytical lens of two key moments of loss in the thirteenth and twentieth centuries. Through extensive primary-source research, Mona Hassan explores the rich constellation of interpretations created by religious scholars, historians, musicians, statesmen, poets, and intellectuals.

**Mona Hassan** is an assistant professor in the departments of Religious Studies and History and the International Comparative Studies program at Duke University.

“Few scholars are more fun to read than Robert Irwin. Not just an authority on medieval Arabic culture, he’s also a literary journalist and novelist who writes with clarity, zest, and an almost encyclopedic erudition.”

—Michael Dirda, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic

**Ibn Khaldun**

Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) is generally regarded as the greatest intellectual ever to have appeared in the Arab world—a genius who ranks as one of the world’s great minds. Yet the author of the *Mugaddima*, the most important study of history ever produced in the Islamic world, is not as well known as he should be and his ideas are widely misunderstood. In this groundbreaking intellectual biography, Robert Irwin provides an engaging and authoritative account of Ibn Khaldun’s extraordinary life, times, writings, and ideas.

**Robert Irwin** is senior research associate at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and a former lecturer at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland.
“Lively, open-minded and erudite…. You don’t have to be a Muslim or all that religiously inclined to find this book, the latest installment in the sprightly Princeton University Press series called ‘Lives of Great Religious Books,’ delightful reading.”
—Patrick Reardon, Chicago Tribune

The Koran in English

For millions of Muslims, the Qur’an is sacred only in Arabic, the original Arabic in which it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century; to many Arab and non-Arab believers alike, the book literally defies translation. Yet English translations exist and are growing, in both number and importance. Bruce Lawrence tells the remarkable story of the ongoing struggle to render the Qur’an’s lyrical verses into English—and to make English itself an Islamic language.

BRUCE B. LAWRENCE is the Nancy and Jeffrey Marcus Humanities Professor Emeritus of Religion at Duke University.

This is the best study to date of how Sufism has been conceptualized and interpreted by a wide variety of insiders and outsiders down into modern times.”
—William Chittick, Stony Brook University

Sufism

After centuries as the most important ascetic-mystical strand of Islam, Sufism saw a sharp decline in the twentieth century, only to experience a stunning revival in recent decades. In this comprehensive new history of Sufism from the earliest centuries of Islam to today, Alexander Knysh, a leading expert on the subject, reveals the tradition in all its richness. Knysh explores how Sufism has been viewed by both insiders and outsiders since its inception. He examines the key aspects of Sufism, from definitions and discourses to leadership, institutions, and practices. Based on a wealth of primary and secondary sources, Sufism is an indispensable account of a vital aspect of Islam.

ALEXANDER KNYSH is professor of Islamic studies at the University of Michigan.
A History of the ‘Alawis

The ‘Alawis, or Alawites, are a prominent religious minority in northern Syria, Lebanon, and southern Turkey, best known today for enjoying disproportionate political power in war-torn Syria. In this book, Stefan Winter offers a complete history of the community, from the birth of the ‘Alawī (Nusayri) sect in the tenth century to just after World War I, the establishment of the French mandate over Syria, and the early years of the Turkish republic.

STEFAN WINTER is associate professor of history at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM).

“A History of the ‘Alawis is a pathbreaking work that attacks the prevailing lachrymose version of ‘Alawi history and its focus on the community’s perpetual isolation and repression. Stefan Winter debunks numerous myths in the first sweeping study of the ‘Alawis to use the Ottoman archives systematically. Anyone who wants to understand Syria’s tragic civil war must read this exciting and magisterial survey.”

—Joshua Landis, University of Oklahoma

“A highly valuable model of the use of biography in the service of history and the social sciences.”

—Hamit Bozarslan, author of Violence in the Middle East: From Political Struggle to Self-Sacrifice

Talaat Pasha

Talaat Pasha (1874–1921) led the triumvirate that ruled the late Ottoman Empire during World War I and is arguably the father of modern Turkey. He was also the architect of the Armenian Genocide, which would result in the systematic extermination of more than a million people, and which set the stage for a century that would witness atrocities on a scale never imagined. Here is the first biography in English of the revolutionary figure who not only prepared the way for Atatürk, but who shaped the modern world as well.

HANS-LUKAS KIESER is associate professor in the School of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Newcastle in Australia and adjunct professor of history at the University of Zurich in Switzerland.
“Elegantly argued and thoroughly researched, The Arabic Freud demonstrates that when psychoanalysis and Islam are pitted as strangers today, this is not only historically inaccurate but also colonial in its ideology.”
—Ranjana Khanna, Duke University

The Arabic Freud

In 1945, psychologist Yusuf Murad introduced an Arabic term borrowed from the medieval Sufi philosopher and mystic Ibn ‘Arabi—al-la-shu’ur—as a translation for Sigmund Freud’s concept of the unconscious. By the late 1950s, Freud’s Interpretation of Dreams had been translated into Arabic for an eager Egyptian public. In The Arabic Freud, Omnia El Shakry challenges the notion of a strict divide between psychoanalysis and Islam by tracing how postwar thinkers in Egypt blended psychoanalytic theories with concepts from classical Islamic thought in a creative encounter of ethical engagement.

OMNIA EL SHAKRY is professor of history at the University of California, Davis.
The strength of this book lies in its broad and deep engagement with a wide variety of interpreters of Islamic thought in Pakistan... A tour de force.

—David Gilmartin, North Carolina State University

Islam in Pakistan

The first modern state to be founded in the name of Islam, Pakistan was the largest Muslim country in the world at the time of its establishment in 1947. Today it is the second most populous, after Indonesia. Islam in Pakistan is the first comprehensive book to explore Islam’s evolution in this region over the past century and a half, from the British colonial era to the present day. Muhammad Qasim Zaman presents a rich historical account of this major Muslim nation, insights into the rise and gradual decline of Islamic modernist thought in the South Asian region, and an understanding of how Islam has fared in the contemporary world.

MUHAMMAD QASIM ZAMAN is the Robert H. Niehaus ’77 Professor of Near Eastern Studies and Religion at Princeton University.

“Feitman’s courageous and illuminating book is essential reading for anyone who wonders or cares about what it really means to be a Jew.”

—Jonathan Kirsch, Jewish Journal

The Origin of the Jews

The Jews have one of the longest continuously recorded histories of any people in the world, but what do we actually know about their origins? While many think the answer to this question can be found in the Bible, others look to archaeology or genetics. Some skeptics have even sought to debunk the very idea that the Jews have a common origin. In this book, Steven Weitzman takes a learned and lively look at what we know—or think we know—about where the Jews came from, when they arose, and how they came to be.

STEVEN WEITZMAN is the Abraham M. Ellis Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages and Literatures and Ella Darivoff Director of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.
“Witty and learned…. I thought that I was well versed in the history of Hebrew, but there was hardly a page in this book on which I didn’t learn something new.”
—Alan Mintz, Jewish Review of Books

The Story of Hebrew

This book explores the extraordinary hold that Hebrew has had on Jews and Christians, who have invested it with a symbolic power far beyond that of any other language in history. Preserved by the Jews across two millennia, Hebrew endured long after it ceased to be a mother tongue, resulting in one of the most intense textual cultures ever known. It was a bridge to Greek and Arab science. It unlocked the biblical sources for Jerome and the Reformation. Kabbalists and humanists sought philosophical truth in it, and Colonial Americans used it to shape their own Israelite political identity. Today, it is the first language of millions of Israelis.

LEWIS GLINERT is Professor of Hebrew Studies at Dartmouth College, where he is also affiliated with the Program in Linguistics.

“Elegant and accessible…. Michael Brenner treats a highly contentious subject with grace and tact.”
—Derek Penslar, Harvard University

In Search of Israel

Many Zionists who advocated the creation of a Jewish state envisioned a nation like any other. Yet for Israel’s founders the state that emerged against all odds in 1948 was anything but ordinary. Born from the ashes of genocide and a long history of suffering, Israel was conceived to be unique, a model society and the heart of a prosperous new Middle East. It is this paradox, says historian Michael Brenner—the Jewish people’s wish for a homeland both normal and exceptional—that shapes Israel’s ongoing struggle to define itself and secure a place among nations.

MICHAEL BRENNER is the Seymour and Lilian Abensohn Chair in Israel Studies and director of the Center for Israel Studies at American University and Professor of Jewish History and Culture at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich.
COMING OF AGE IN MEDIEVAL EGYPT
Female Adolescence, Jewish Law, and Ordinary Culture

EVE KRAKOWSKI

December 2017. 360 pages. 2 halftones. 12 line illus. 2 tables.
Cl: 978-0-691-17498-3 $39.95 | £32.95

Coming of Age in Medieval Egypt

Much of what we know about life in the medieval Islamic Middle East comes from texts written to impart religious ideals or to chronicle the movements of great men. How did women participate in the societies these texts describe? What about non-Muslims, whose own religious traditions descended partly from pre-Islamic late antiquity? Coming of Age in Medieval Egypt approaches these questions through Jewish women’s adolescence in Fatimid and Ayyubid Egypt and Syria (c. 969–1250).

EVE KRAKOWSKI is assistant professor of Near Eastern Studies and Judaic Studies at Princeton University.

Writing on the Wall

Few direct clues exist for the everyday lives and beliefs of ordinary Jews in antiquity. Prevailing perspectives on ancient Jewish life have been shaped largely by the voices of intellectual and social elites, preserved in writings of Philo and Josephus and rabbinic texts of the Mishnah and Talmud. Commissioned art, architecture, and formal inscriptions displayed on tombs and synagogues equally reflect the sensibilities of their influential patrons. The perspectives and sentiments of nonelite Jews, by contrast, have mostly disappeared from the historical record. Focusing on these forgotten Jews of antiquity, Writing on the Wall takes an unprecedented look at the vernacular inscriptions and drawings they left behind and sheds new light on the richness of their quotidian lives.

Illustrated throughout with examples of ancient graffiti, Writing on the Wall provides a tantalizingly intimate glimpse into the cultural worlds of forgotten populations living at the crossroads of Judaism, Christianity, paganism, and earliest Islam.

KAREN B. STERN is assistant professor of history at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

“This breathtaking triumph of research and synthesis brings to life the young Jewish women who inhabited the medieval Islamic world. . . . An extraordinary achievement by a rising star.”
—Ivan G. Marcus, Yale University
“Drawing on fascinating original research about the inner workings of Iraq’s Ba’thist regime, State of Repression enhances our understanding of authoritarian politics.”
—Amaney A. Jamal, Princeton University

State of Repression
How did Iraq become one of the most repressive dictatorships of the late twentieth century? The conventional wisdom about Iraq’s modern political history is that the country was doomed by its diverse social fabric. But in State of Repression, Lisa Blaydes challenges this belief by showing that the country’s breakdown was far from inevitable. At the same time, she offers a new way of understanding the behavior of other authoritarian regimes and their populations.

LISA BLAYDES is associate professor of political science and senior fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University. She is the author of Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak’s Egypt.

“This is truly a work of depth, narrative power, and substantive importance.”
—M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, author of Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography

The Formation of Turkish Republicanism
Turkish republicanism is commonly thought to have originated with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the founding of modern Turkey in 1923, and understood exclusively in terms of Kemalist ideals, characterized by the principles of secularism, nationalism, statism, and populism. Banu Turnaoğlu challenges this view, showing how Turkish republicanism represents the outcome of centuries of intellectual dispute in Turkey over Islamic and liberal conceptions of republicanism, culminating in the victory of Kemalism in the republic’s formative period.

BANU TURNAOĞLU is a postdoctoral research associate in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge.
“Joanne Randa Nucho brilliantly captures the everyday acts that continually reinvent sectarianism and she challenges the assumption that sectarian communities are old and natural.”
—Suad Joseph, University of California, Davis

**Everyday Sectarianism in Urban Lebanon**

What causes violent conflicts around the Middle East? All too often, the answer is sectarianism—popularly viewed as a timeless and intractable force that leads religious groups to conflict. In *Everyday Sectarianism in Urban Lebanon*, Joanne Randa Nucho shows how wrong this perspective can be. Through in-depth research with local governments, NGOs, and political parties in Beirut, she demonstrates how sectarianism is actually recalibrated on a daily basis through the provision of essential services and infrastructures.

**JOANNE RANDA NUCHO** is a Mellon-Chau postdoctoral fellow in anthropology at Pomona College.

“Combines impressive ambition and empirical depth with a powerful comparative approach.”
—Jason Owen-Smith, University of Michigan

**Seeing the World**

US research universities have long endeavored to be cosmopolitan places, yet the disciplines of economics, political science, and sociology have remained stubbornly parochial. Despite decades of government and philanthropic investment in international scholarship, the most prestigious academic departments still favor research and expertise on the United States. Why? *Seeing the World* answers this question by examining university research centers that focus on the Middle East and related regional area studies.

**MITCHELL L. STEVENS** is associate professor of education at Stanford University. **CYNTHIA MILLER-IDRISS** is associate professor of education and sociology at American University. **SETENEY SHAMI** is a program director at the Social Science Research Council and founding director of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences.
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GILLES KEPEL is professor of political science at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris.

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