

ment to those from St. Catherine's and a basis for comparison. Here it should be mentioned that the Jerusalem Haram documents also include petitions and decrees related to *mazālim*, though the relevant publications came too late to be used by Nielsen in this work. But this is not true of several important works of secondary scholarship, including those by J. Escovitz on the Kātib al-Sirr, W. Brinner on Dār al-'Adl, and D. Richards on petitions and decrees, all of which were available when this book was published and could have been consulted with advantage. Finally, I would have appreciated documentation of Nielsen's opinion, expressed on several pages, that most Bahrī Mamlūks were Ḥanafīs. After all, the most influential and longest reigning Bahrī, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, is known to have been a confirmed Shāfi'ī, and the Shāfi'ī judges certainly enjoyed preferential treatment throughout the period. That being the case, the Mamlūks' adherence to the Ḥanafī *madhhab* is exceedingly interesting, if, that is, it can be proved.

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DONALD P. LITTLE

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Philip S. KHOURY, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism. The Politics of Damascus 1860-1920*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983 (24 cm., XII+153 pp.). ISBN 0 521 24796. £ 18.50.

"No idea has captured the imagination or expressed the hopes of the Arabs in the twentieth century as has Arab nationalism, and perhaps no subject has received so much attention from historians of the Middle East. But while many historians have explored its sources, few have considered the social and political environment in which Arab nationalism evolved as an ideological movement. This study attempts to correct the imbalance", Khoury notes in the preface (p. ix) to his book. Khoury focuses his study on social and political life in Damascus in the period between 1860, when bloody events gave the Ottoman government an opportunity to alter the local political configuration in order to facilitate its programme of centralization and modernization, and 1920, when the Arab nationalist movement met with a setback with the beginning of the French mandate over Syria. In fact, Khoury's work is a study mainly of one social class in one city, Damascus, as he argues that "Damascus supplied a disproportionate share of the leading lights guiding the growth of the Arab nationalist movement in the early years of the twentieth century and that most important nationalist politicians in Damascus emerged from a single class in that city" (p. 1), this class being identified by Khoury as the "landowning-bureaucratic class". He describes how, out of a struggle for power and positions between two factions of this leading class, the idea of Arabism emerged as a political movement which ultimately achieved widespread appeal in the Arab world.

Although one might expect otherwise from the title of the book, Arab nationalism itself is not the major and central theme of Khoury's book. Two thirds of it are in fact devoted to the backgrounds and shifting composition of the Damascus political elite in a period when Arab nationalism as such had not yet come into being, or hardly played any

role. In fact Arab nationalism was of marginal importance during most of the period covered in this study. Khoury describes in minute detail how shifting political alliances coincided with the changing interests of local notables, and how conflict within the upper class in Damascus took on the distinctive political colouring of "Ottomanists" versus "Arab nationalists" only after the 1908 revolt of the "Committee of Union and Progress" resulted in increased Ottoman centralization and "Turkification". The latter development apparently jeopardized the material well-being and careers of a large enough faction of the landowning-bureaucratic class in Damascus to elicit a political reaction. This trend caused its less fortunate politically active members to seize on the emerging idea of Arabism and to fashion it into a political opposition movement.

Khoury's study is far more a detailed analysis of the political and social environment which produced the Arab nationalist movement, than an historical account of Arab nationalism as an ideological movement. By strongly focusing on this environment, Khoury successfully contributes to "correcting the balance" of studies on the subject of Arab nationalism which tend to overestimate the significance of the origins of this political movement which is so important at present. Thus Khoury reduces to correcter proportions the place Arabism occupied in the period described. In doing so, on the one hand Khoury stresses that Damascus was the major centre of Arabism in Syria during the period 1908-1914; on the other hand, however, he does not deny that at the time Damascus was also the most formidable seat of resistance to Arabism and the Arab movement in Syria. Like C. Ernest Dawn in his earlier essays on the origins of Arab nationalism, Khoury concludes that Arabism was not translated from an idea into a viable political instrument until just before the First World War, and that, although it was in ascendance, and was attracting and converting influential elements in Damascus at this period, it nevertheless remained a minority movement in Damascus and elsewhere, unable to break the allegiance of the dominant faction of the Arab political elite in Syria to Ottomanism.

Khoury's *Urban notables and Arab nationalism* may be considered an adequate socio-economic history of political developments, useful as an introduction to the sequel which he recently published under the title *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Nationalism, 1920-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).

The Hague, December 1987

NIKOLAOS VAN DAM

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Samir A. MUTAWI, *Jordan in the 1967 War*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987 (24 cm., XIV+228 pp.)=Cambridge Middle East Library. ISBN 0 521 34352 6.

The present book is the author's thesis which earned him his doctor's title. He became the Chief of Press, Research and Studies at the Royal Hashemite Court in Amman only after he had completed his studies which means that he did not write this book as the Chief of Press etc. but as an independent citizen of the Jordanian State.