

2013. Nonetheless, her analysis gives readers important insights on whether the state can use formal representation as a bridge to reach out to armed resistance groups without officially recognizing them (if and when needed) and the possible consequences of such a decision. These recent developments further emphasize that the pro-Kurdish challenger parties are more connected to and more representative of the PKK than Watts presents in the book. ✂

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LAURENT BONNEFOY. *Salafism in Yemen: Transnationalism and Religious Identity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011. xxi + 313 pages, abridged bibliography, index. Cloth US\$60.00 ISBN 978-0-231-70296-6.

Studies of the transnational dimensions of salafism often fall into two camps: the critically concerned, holding salafism to be the intellectual gateway to dangerous anti-establishment dissent especially when fomented against the West, and the critically supportive, which emphasize the ways in which salafis, though not easy neighbors, might yet hold the keys to upending modern structures of state and global inequality. Laurent Bonnefoy's book proves to be an elegant and timely contribution to navigating beyond these essentialisms. Drawing from political science as well as sound ethnographic research conducted in southern Yemen between 2002 and 2006, Bonnefoy provides what he calls a "counter-field" to narratives that locate salafism's alleged hostility to local environments and authority structures in the experience of uprooted transnational migrants who grope for identity through recourse to an idealized past. While training his insights on the profound importance of transnationalism to salafi thought and identity, Bonnefoy argues that salafism is far more responsive to local social dynamics than many of us tend to think. No more is this the case than in the context of Yemen in the penumbra of conservative twentieth and twenty-first century Saudi Arabian Wahhabism.

The idea of a virulent and well-financed Wahhabi fundamentalism being exported across the world to the detriment of local Islamic cultures is an enduring paradigm both in specialist studies as well as in popular attitudes in a variety of Muslim societies. In Yemen's case, much has been written about the ways the modern Saudi state has worked persistently to undermine its impoverished southern neighbor in efforts to prevent its own oil-charged monarchical system from collapse. Yemenis' roles in such a lopsided game have largely been construed as either impoverished victims or shrewd consumers.

Bonnefoy's fascinating interviews and fieldwork at salafi educational institutes belie the fiction that Yemeni salafism is bereft of its own indigeneity. Critical leverage for his book stems from two interweaving theses: first, the key criterion of apoliticism, so central to salafi discourse and doctrinal priorities, is largely an illusion, and second, the politics of salafism has no *a priori* content but rather emerges through competition for identity and moral rectitude that make sense only within projects of state formation. The chapters of *Salafism in Yemen* provide thoughtful introductions to the topic of salafism in the Arabian Peninsula and beyond; they build strength as readers are granted access to a fascinating and remarkably clear exposition of the ways the movement has worked for Yemenis in the wake of the Gulf War of 1990 as well as the 9/11 attacks in the United States.

The introduction, as well as chapters one and two, lay out the critical contributions of the volume to studies of salafism in ways readily accessible to non-specialists. The author's observations and claims are given substance through recourse to Yemeni and Saudi fields of intellectual discourse among salafis. Valuable insights, for example, are provided through the works of Yemen's most influential salafi thinker Muqbil al-Wadi'i as well as through the views of his supporters and detractors. Bonnefoy challenges critics of al-Wadi'i's conservatism that describe his students as prone to charges of impiety (*takfir*), militant jihadism, and dogmatic inflexibility. Most of al-Wadi'i's students proclaim a disengagement with political partyism (*hizbiyya*) not out of a desire to mobilize activism in contexts of potentially severe state repression, as argued by scholar Victor Wiktorowicz, but rather for ideological reasons: they wish to preserve their integrity as moral brokers in a field of competitive religious movements that are far more overt about their political ambitions. Non-salafis, among them powerful state leaders, are not altogether averse to salafis' objectives in this respect, esteeming them for not only for their moral ideals but for their status as political "outsiders" who might, at times, make good allies.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine the transnational aspects of salafism in the Yemeni case study. As Bonnefoy shows, the material and symbolic rewards of Yemeni labor migration to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, as well as return migration to Yemen, have proven ambiguous. Enamored with the ideals of success and a puritanical Saudi piety, most Yemeni migrants, acutely marginalized while in the Kingdom, acquire deep disenchantment with these ideals, their commitments to "Saudization" all the more vitiated by the dilapidated facilities of most salafi institutes in Yemen. The final three chapters, to my mind the strongest, devote attention to the ways various strands of salafism have matured in Yemen under the leadership of personalities and institutions

whose moorings have been defined through competition with Zaidis, Muslim Brothers, and Sufis for leverage within a state marked by strong tribal alliances.

Well prepared with an introductory glossary of terms as well as a comprehensive bibliography and index, *Salafism in Yemen* charts exciting new ground for scholars looking to move beyond simplistic characterizations of salafi thought, behavior, and identity in the modern Middle East. Bonnefoy's in-depth analysis is all the more noteworthy given his own identity as a non-Muslim French researcher; his felicitous reception among many salafis, acknowledged to be strained at times, gives much credence to his thesis that we would do well to move beyond images of salafism as inflexible, dogmatic, and forever wed to doctrinal puritanism. Equally remarkable is his assessment that, however dire the headlines in Western newspapers, Yemen's salafis have steered the country more toward moderation than extremism since 9/11. His work underscores the ways Yemen will continue to prove a generative field site for studies of modern Muslim reform and activism. ✨

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JOSHUA L. GLEIS AND BENEDETTA BERTI. *Hezbollah and Hamas: A Comparative Study.* Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012. 249 pages, endnotes, glossary, and bibliography. Cloth US\$50.00 ISBN 978-1-4214-0614-5; Paper US\$24.95 ISBN 978-1-4214-0615-2.

Two of Israel's most serious security threats are Hezbollah, the Shi'a terrorist organization based in Lebanon, and the Sunni Hamas who rule the Gaza Strip. Both are capable of launching missiles into Israel as well as sending suicide bombers into Israel. *Hezbollah and Hamas: A Comparative Study* discusses both movements in a historical and comparative context, focusing on their organizational, ideological and operational structure. The authors' goal is to foster not only a better understanding of these groups role in the broader Arab-Israeli conflict, but also an understanding of terrorist groups in general.

They succeed in doing so by presenting a comprehensive discussion of both movements in parts 1 and 2 of the book. Each is addressed by presenting the background leading to their founding, a survey of their history, beliefs and ideals, structure, and their strategy and tactics. The authors organize each part in a manner that facilitates comparison of the two. The social welfare and political programs, as well as the fundraising methods, sponsored by Hezbollah and Hamas illustrate the difficulty of separating their terrorist activities from more innocent pursuits. In examining the comparisons of the movements