Natana J. DeLong-Bas (ed.), *Islam, Revival, & Reform. Redefining Tradition for the Twenty-first Century. Essays Inspired by John O. Voll*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2022 (Modern Intellectual and Political History of the Middle East). xxi, 333 pp., ISBN 978-0-8156-3750-9.

From the late 1970s onwards, John Obert Voll made two important contributions to the field of Islamic Studies in two different areas. His seminal articles on the Kūrānī and Mizjājī networks, as well as the volume edited together with Nehemia Levtzion, kindled the interest in the hitherto neglected intellectual history of the Islamic World in the 18th century. By stressing the continuing importance of Islamic thought and Islamic movements throughout the 20th century, Voll first swam against the current by defying the modernization theory derived idea that secularization would in the near future inevitably lead to a diminished importance of religion in Middle Eastern societies. But it soon turned out that religion was much more resilient.

In order to honor Voll, Natana DeLong-Bas has edited a kind of *Festschrift* without special occasion for which she brought together a number of scholars whose research has been influenced or is connected to one of the two major fields of Voll’s scholarship. In her own contribution “The Role of Women in Solidifying Eighteenth Century Revival and Reform Initiatives into Ongoing Mass Movements” she tries to demonstrate that the puritanical movements which emerged in the 18th and early 19th century opened a space for women’s scholarly and literary activities. With this she succeeds when it comes to Nānā Asmāʿu (1793-1864), who was educated by her father Osman dan Fodio (ʿUthmān b. Fūḍī), the founder of the Sokoto Caliphate, in the traditional Islamic scholarly disciplines. She later translated scholarly works into Haussa and wrote herself treatises and poetry. In addition, she introduced the systematic education of female religious instructors. Regarding the contribution of women to Wahhabi scholarship the result of her efforts is less convincing as the few examples of poetry and manuscripts of scholarly works dedicated to foundations hardly appear to be exceptional. Marcia Hermansen criticizes the tendency in scholarship on Walī Allāh Dihlawī to overemphasize his criticism of Sufi practices and play down the importance of Sufi teachings for his work (“Neo-Sufi Haith Interpretation in Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi’s *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha* [*The Conclusive Argument of God*], Volume 2”). With this contribution she puts a footnote on earlier own research as Knut Vikør does in “When Does a *Ṭarīqa* Become a *Ṭārīqa*: The Story of a Break-up”. On the basis of new material he reconsiders the chronology of the break between Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Sanūsī and Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd. The fact that in his polemics against al-Rashīd, al-Sanūsī denounced the latter of not keeping to the *madhāhib*, underlines that al-Sanūsī and his order should only with caution be classified under the label “reformist”. In the last contribution referring to the 18th/early19th century reform movements Albrecht Hofheinz also bridges the gap to the modern period, by tracing the continuing importance of the *majādhīb* of Qaḍārif in the history of the Sudan through the 19th and 20th century (“A Flame of Learning in the Winds of Change: Notes on the History of the Majādhīb of Qarāḍif”). The article contains reproductions, transcripts and translations of letters, *ijāza*s and petitions to the government dating back to the early 20th century from the mosque of al-Ṣūfī al-Azraq in Qaḍārif.

“Relational History, the Long Great War, and the Making of the Modern Middle East” by Jonathan Wyrtzen is a comprised version of his recently published book *World Making in the Long Great War* (Columbia University Press, 2022). He argues against limiting the First World War to the 1914-18 timeframe by which it is defined in Western political history with exclusive focus on the major powers involved. He argues that Western, in particular Italian, interventions in the MENA region and the Balkans, contributed decisively to the tensions and alignments which led to the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. Inspired by Robert Gerwarth’s similar argumentation concerning Eastern Europe, Ireland and Anatolia (*The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End*, Macmillan, 2016) he asserts that the period up until 1930 must be considered as a prolongation of the First World War in the Middle East and in Morocco, as both borderlines and internal power constellations remained contested. In “Turkish Liberal Conceptions of the Caliphate, 1909-1924”, York Norman draws attention to the efforts of Turkish Liberals like Celal Nuri and Hüseyin Cahit to establish a parliamentary Caliphate inspired by the British system. This objective contradicted the Kemalist vision of a total break with the Ottoman past following the model of the French Revolution. Nonetheless, the leading liberals played a role as loyal opposition in the early phase of the Republic until they were after religious and tribal insurgencies lumped together with the latter as enemies of Atatürk’s Bonapartist project. In “Taking Religion Seriously in the Study of Islamist Movements”, Shadi Hamid argues that Voll’s stance against modernization theory and reductionist attempts to explain the religious factor away turned out to be far sighted. According to him the religious factor accounts for the greater resilience of Islamism in face of worldly failure when compared to secular ideologies like Arab Nationalism. Being based on faith, a comprehensive worldview and common practices, he asserts, Islamist movements can mobilize more people than other political currents can. Exactly therefore the role of religion is not only relevant for explaining Islamists but also for explaining secular counter reactions, in particular for liberals allegedly favoring liberalism over democracy when the two principles clash. Abdullah Al-Arians’s “Islamists and the State: The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood’s Evolving Mission” appears a bit of a fight against straw men as at least in academic literature hardly anybody has recently doubted that Islamist movements consider the existing nation states as the central space of political contestations. Rather to the contrary, as this focus has in some cases led to the neglect of transnational bonds, both ideological and organizational. He himself attributes the political turn of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt to the pervasive state in the “bureaucratic authoritarianism” of Nasser’s Egypt. Like Hamid in his contribution he explains this trait of the regime as a response to the Brotherhood’s defiance to its secular agenda. When it comes to explaining Sayyid Quṭb’s concepts *ḥākimiyya* and *jāhiliyya* he correctly cautions against interpreting them as responses to regime violence because he had already formulated them *in nuce* in writings authored before his persecution. Nonetheless his presentation of Quṭb is problematic in two respects. Firstly, the inspiration from outside namely by Mawdūdī is ignored, and secondly, it is not made clear that Quṭb’s ideology was not adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood but lead to breakoffs. The account of the Brotherhood under Sadat and Mubarak provides nothing new, in the final section of the contribution al-Arian argues that the Brotherhood in the post-revolutionary phase never showed signs of “post-Islamism” as understood by Baya. Instead of reflecting on the role of the state in society, the organization accepted the existing state and wanted to use its instruments to implement an order according to their vision of society.

The last three contributions are dedicated to academia and media. Shuang Wen’s “A Short History of Arab Knowledge Production on China” is an overdue contribution that addresses the research gap on Arab understanding and knowledge of other non-Western societies. The picture she draws of the development of Chinese studies is, however, not encouraging. Chinese studies had been introduced at Egyptian universities with the help of Chinese Muslims (Hui) in the interwar period and even experienced a boost in the first phase of the Nasser era, but estrangement between Egypt and China and the “Cultural Revolution” brought these efforts to a standstill. In other Arab countries Chinese Studies as area studies are not existing and teaching Chinese is impeded by the lack of textbooks adapted to the needs of Arab speakers. In “Muslim Media Preachers as Agenda Setters: Teaching Religion and Promoting Social Change”, a comparative analysis of the three contemporary media preachers (*duʿā*) ʿAmr Khālid, Ṭāriq al-Suwaydān and Aḥmad al-Shuqayrī, Tuve Buchmann Floden claims to overcome the concept of the entity “consumer” that allegedly characterizes traditional media studies. Following Norwegian media theorist Trine Syvertsen he argues that these three preachers encourage their followers in a much larger degree to become involved as “players” by commenting or starting initiatives related to their programs. He describes differences in style in comparison with older “media-shaykhs” like al-Qaraḍāwī and he demonstrates the great interest of the three preachers in societal issues like unemployment. Although the results may not be as revolutionary as the author asserts, the contribution provides an interesting insight in the current Arab public sphere. In his contribution “Music with a Message: Maher Zain and the Rise of Awakening’s Global Message”, Sean Foley lacks a bit critical distance to the subject of his research, and some not completely convincing judgments on musical styles, starting with assertion that *Hasat Vakti* (Harvest-time), a campaign song for Recep Tayyip Erdoğan performed by the Swedish singer of Lebanese origin Maher Zain, stands in the tradition of the *nashīd*, whereas its music is better described as Turkish synth-pop. This correlates with his general use of musical styles and genres of Middle Eastern, Western and Latin American pop music which hitherto had hardly been considered fit for religious purposes. As Foley shows Zain is the most successful example for the approach of the British label Awakening to promote an Islamic pop culture among a transnational audience via social media. Foley’s conclusion that Islamic pop music is per se an alternative to “angry politics and divisive rhetorics” is, however, not completely convincing if one takes the mentioned campaign hymn for Erdoğan into consideration, in particular as the video clip is characterized by the classical topoi and implicit messages of personality cults in Middle Eastern authoritarian regimes.

Like many publications of the *Festschrift*-type the volume is characterized by a great heterogeneity of topics, occasional reference to the writings of Voll are not enough to establish some kind of thematic coherence. Few of the contributions are based on completely new research, some are very relevant supplements to earlier research of the respective authors, others summaries of research published elsewhere.

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