

Reviews and Abstracts

Reviews

Mark Slobin, *Afghanistan Untouched*. Traditional Crossroads CD 4319, 2003. 2 CDs, 40 pp., notes, photos, ASIN B0000A4GAH, \$14.00.

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"Before its lands were crushed, its people scattered, and its music silenced by chaos and decree, Afghanistan overflowed with musical treasure" (CD back cover).

On the eve of the US-led overthrow of Taliban rule, that regime's suppression of music became a powerful symbol in Western portrayals of Afghanistan (Baily 2001). Footage of unspooled cassette tape hanging from Afghan trees came to symbolize the cultural wasteland. In the aftermath of the Afghan war, with the introduction of a more liberal regime at least in Kabul, Western groups have been active in seeking to aid a musical renaissance. Crate-loads of classical Western instruments have arrived at the Kabul conservatory, where no one can be found who knows how to play them; a passing German rock band persuaded two *burqa*-clad women to pose for photographs playing an electric guitar and drum set. Ethnomusicologists have been more interested in the possibilities for revival of the myriad Afghan traditions. This new release joins a number of re-issues of books (Sakata 2002) and CDs (*Ustad Mohammad Omar* 2002), and complements Mark Slobin's new website (<http://www.wesleyan.edu/its/acs/modules/slobin/html/>) which makes available a great deal of original material from his earlier book on music in Northern Afghanistan (Slobin 1976).

The sound quality on these CDs, mastered largely from the original 1968 Uher 4000/L mono recordings, is remarkably fresh and immediate. The tracks on the first CD were recorded among the Central Asian peoples of northern Afghanistan, descendants of Uzbeks who crossed the Amu Darya in 1500 and Tajiks, Kazakhs, and Turkmen who fled

the USSR in the 1920s. These are Central Asian folk traditions, a world away from the "classical" Indian-derived tradition of the Afghan *rubab*. There are some fabulous recordings of the *felak* songs of tragic love which are also common in southern Tajikistan, (CD1, tracks 2 and 5, with beautiful translations of the lyrics), and there is a rare recording of professional Uzbek women wedding singers (CD1, track 12) which is very reminiscent of the Bukharan style. The second CD contains some real treasures from the eastern city of Herat with its Iranian influences: a charming children's song (CD2, track 9), and some stunning Herati *dutar* playing (CD2, track 10). This CD also includes some extraordinary rarities from the small Kazakh and Turkmen communities in Afghanistan.

The accompanying liner notes are lucid and packed with information. The recordings serve as an admirable illustration of Slobin's earlier theories of shared and discrete music cultures, but these notes differ from his earlier writing in their attention to the personal. They include many sensitively drawn portraits of the featured musicians, complemented by some beautiful black and white photographs. It is the throw-away remarks which are most revealing of the culture of the time: the inclusion of Hindi film tunes in the local repertoire; references to the expensive local delicacy of Polish candy; the musicians' habit of "vamping indeterminately" to keep the dance going. The freshness of the material at this remove in time is a tribute to the great dedication and care with which the original fieldwork was undertaken. This is a welcome and moving addition to the excellent Traditional Crossroads series.

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Eric W. Sievers, *The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia: Sustainable Development and Comprehensive Capital*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003. 264 pp., illustrations. ISBN 0700716602, \$75.00.

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That the 1990s was a decade of decline for Central Asia is a conclusion that resonates with the experience of many, and yet largely for reasons of politics is one that few have admitted in official reports and scholarly writings. In this idiosyncratic and yet important work, Eric Sievers bravely attempts to develop a "robust" explanation for this decline, using the idea of "comprehensive capital." The author begins to unpack this concept in the introduction, arguing that sustainable development involves more than just preserving physical capital, but depends upon a virtuous cycle of increasing stocks of physical capital along with less tangible phenomena of health, education, institutions and trust. The author draws on a number of theories that have attached the label "capital" to such issues, and takes these disparate theories and attempts to relate them to each other under the heading "comprehensive capital," focusing on the way that deficits in one can negatively affect the others. This is then illustrated in the first half of the book, as the author charts the squandering of capital stocks built up in the Soviet era in the areas of natural capital (Chapter 1), human capital (Chapter 2), organizational capital (Chapter 3), and social capital (Chapter 4). The chapters are full of well-judged commentary and tantalizing detail, and reflect the author's depth of experience in the region and an equally impressive breadth of understanding of theoretical approaches. His case for the decline of human capital is particularly compelling, and the section on social capital showcases an ability to draw from a range of material — a quantitative study of *mahallas* (neighborhoods) in Uzbekistan

accompanied by excellent insights into how everyday phenomena such as queues and taxi rides can illuminate wider social processes.

The second half of the book takes international environmental law as the "lens through which to frame a workable investigation into how Central Asia's comprehensive capital relates to aspirations for sustainable development" (p. 27). There follows a somewhat involved investigation into how the Central Asian states have encountered and responded to the increasing number of environmental treaties, institutions and NGOs that make up the "international environmental regime." His conclusion is that "both donors and Central Asian governments can pretty much say whatever they want and do whatever they want in *Central Asia* without much concern ... for their veracity, legality, or [the] consequences of their actions" (p. 144).

Considerable blame for this is attributed to the actions of donors, and Sievers concludes his critical review of "internationalizing" the Central Asian environment by asking whether things would have been much worse if the international community had not become involved (Chapter 6). Given the amount of resources invested in seeking to lead the new Central Asian states down the right path, it is damning that Sievers ends on an equivocal note. The World Bank and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) come off particularly badly, being likened to Soviet institutions in their command style of management, their lack of democracy, their violations of their own rules, and in particular the

UNDP's effective arrogation of the role of ministries of the environment in many of the republics.

The final chapter sums up the decline and makes explicit a theme implied in many of the chapters, namely that Central Asia took a wrong turn in the early 1990s by rejecting perestroika dialogues on issues such as the environment and the rule of law in favor of nationalist ideologies and the embrace of the international community, neither of which proved to be sufficient checks on the self-serving behavior of local elites.

While the book is full of firsthand and thorough insight into the decline of Central Asia during the 1990s, the volume sets itself up to be judged at a higher level — as offering a unique and comprehensive explanation for this decline. As such,

the question is whether the book is anything more than the sum of its excellent parts. A table on the interrelations of the various types of capital (p. 29) promises much, yet some might question whether it really delivers. Theoretically this work may not be rigorous enough for the macro-theorist who wants to see a few more testable hypotheses and more added to the conceptual backbone of interrelated capital stocks. On the other hand, those favoring an ethnographic approach could be uncomfortable with reducing complex social processes to a game-theory-driven understanding of social capital, or the rather broad concept of organizational capital. Whether the concept of comprehensive capital can provide a framework for further research is unclear, yet I consider that the case made in this volume was very stimulating and worthwhile.

Brian Glyn Williams, *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation*. Leiden: Brill, 2001. xxvii + 520 pp., maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. ISBN 9004121226, \$123.00.

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Brian Williams' ambitious history of the Crimean Tatars sweeps from the prehistoric to the present day, offering a comprehensive work that is both rich in detail and broad in scope. Drawing from a wide variety of sources including travelers' accounts, recently de-classified NKVD documents, interviews with surviving deportees, Ottoman histories, Russian periodicals, Crimean Tatar ballads, recent Western scholarship, and personal observations, Williams creates a multi-textured account which combines ethno-genetic, political, social, economic, and cultural histories. While guiding the reader carefully through time in a series of 14 chapters, Williams simultaneously constructs an interpretive/theoretical layer, which he uses to explain and shape the phenomena he describes. Consistently reminding the reader that he is working in a highly contested and politicized arena, Williams challenges Russian, Soviet, Tatar, and Western views alike, offering his own "fundamental reinterpretation" (p. 42) of Crimean Tatar history.

The book is organized chronologically in clearly marked thematic sections. Beginning with ethnic origins, Williams elucidates the genesis of the various subgroups that constitute the Crimean Tatar people, emphasizing their status as indigenous peoples of the Crimean Peninsula. As he leads the reader through the periods of the Crimean Khanate,

Russian imperial rule, and diaspora in the Ottoman Empire, Williams presents and discusses previous histories and eyewitness accounts culled from letters, travelogues, periodicals, etc., before constructing his own versions. Williams treats each topic carefully and gives detailed attention to many areas seldom explored in Western sources, such as the social and cultural life of the Crimean Tatars before and during Russian colonial rule. He also provides an excellent and often harrowing section on the fate of those who emigrated to the Dobruca region, and an in depth-investigation of the 1944 deportation and ensuing life of exile in Central Asia. Ending with recent descriptions of new Tatar settlements, the book will leave many readers concerned and eager to find out more about the current state of affairs in the Crimea. Interviews with survivors of the deportation, and important national leaders such as Mustafa Jemilev together with the author's eyewitness accounts greatly enliven the later sections.

In Chapters 5 and 6, which treat the period of Russian colonial rule and the Tatar "migration" to the Ottoman Empire, Williams elaborates on the central argument of his work, which seeks to explain the construction of Crimean Tatar nationality as a process of development from a pre-modern, Islamic identity to a modern, secular-nationalist identity. As

support for his argument Williams highlights the two waves of migration to the Ottoman Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. Williams contends that after Russian colonization “the Crimean shores, mountains, and steppes had ceased to be considered their homeland in the traditional Islamic sense and had been transformed into the *Dar al-Kufr* (Abode of the Infidel)” (p. 108). While asserting the reality of the sufferings of non-Russian nationalities under Russian rule, Williams argues that the Crimean Tatars left the Crimea because of factors inherent in their cultural belief system, migrating to the *Dar al-Islam* (Abode of Islam) to preserve their religious identity. Completing the argument in subsequent chapters, Williams describes the transformation of the Crimean Tatars into a people with a national territorial identity, attributing this change to a combination of factors including the diaspora experience, the influence of Western ideas, the impact of modernist Ismail Gaspirali (Gasprinskii) and his followers, and, ironically, the enthusiasm of early Soviet policies intended to encourage national culture. Tracing the growth of a politicized sense of national consciousness, Williams explains why this people, whom he repeatedly characterizes as having “abandoned” their lands, maintained an intense attachment to the Crimea as an idealized, Edenic homeland while in diaspora, and braved many miseries to return there fifty years after their forced deportation.

Williams crafts his argument well, building it carefully from chapter to chapter. However, it is disappointing that this author, who so effectively deconstructs other versions of history, does not clearly explain the underpinnings of his own constructions. Although he appears occasionally in the narrative as an observer, Williams does not elaborate on his own position as an American scholar, consider what may be his own biases, or explain the development of his theoretical framework. Problematic concepts, such as the assumed opposition of Islam to modernity, or the meanings of “pre-modernity” and “modernity” in this context, are not sufficiently discussed, and could be challenged by readers coming from other disciplines where these terms are strongly contested. Although unstated, Williams’ biases seem to show up in the unfortunate characterization of pre-modern Crimean Tatars as “apathetic Muslim peasants” (p. 3), along with the repeated use of the word “simple” to describe the non-literate peasant class. These designations, which belie the well-known complexities of orally transmitted culture, are

contradicted by Williams’ own descriptions of the activity, creativity, and resourcefulness of the Crimean Tatar villagers. At times, it seems that Williams is so enthusiastic about his theoretical paradigm that he fails to see places where it might be challenged by his own evidence. For example, the *destan* ballads he uses to illustrate the Tatars’ voluntary abandonment of the Crimea, could be interpreted to the contrary, as an indication that they were forced out from a cherished place which they had already constructed as a homeland. An awareness of his own interpretation as one of many possible constructions, and a stronger consideration of possible alternative interpretations, would add depth and maturity to Williams’ work.

Any discussion of this book also needs to consider the issues involved in representing living people, particularly those at the mercy of an extreme power imbalance. The knowledge that policies and decisions are currently being made that could affect the people in question would call for extreme caution, particularly when representing a small Muslim minority claiming land in a region that is already being contested between Russia and Ukraine. While Williams undertakes his work with clearly expressed compassion and respect for the Crimean Tatar people, quotes such as “it was only in the 20th century that the Crimean Tatars ceased to abandon their ancestral land” (p. 2) could be used out of context by those who aim to delegitimize the Crimean Tatars’ current settlements. At the very least, the use of the words “abandon,” and “migration,” which connote a voluntary action rather than a reaction to an outside force, should be considered very carefully along with other alternatives. In addition, his characterization of a beleaguered Crimean Tatar leadership fraught with petty infighting could have a negative effect on the vital fundraising work among foreign governments and NGOs that these same leaders need to accomplish, and seems an absolutely unnecessary addition to this work. This is not the place to debate problems of representation, but because of the precarious nature of the Crimean Tatars’ situation and their extreme hardships with regard to basic human needs such as housing and healthcare, issues surrounding both the positive and negative possible impact of this work cannot be ignored.

In spite of, or perhaps because of, these problematic areas, this book makes for engrossing reading. Written with the dramatic flair of a novel, this history is ideal for an advanced undergraduate or graduate seminar and could spark a great deal of

productive discussion. The writing is accessible to specialists and non-specialists alike, and would be of great interest to anyone working in the fields of diaspora research, identity construction, nationality studies, and of course Russian, Soviet, Turkish, Ottoman, or East European history. The volume includes 35 illustrations (many from the author's own travels in the Crimea), a detailed index, and an

extensive bibliography (with sources in Russian, Turkish, and several Western languages). An important contribution to a seldom explored yet very contentious area of history, Brian Williams' book will hopefully bring more attention to the past, present, and future of the Crimean Tatars, and catalyze a lively debate on many aspects of this important subject.

Bruce G. Privratsky, *Muslim Turkistan: Kazak Religion and Collective Memory*. Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001, xxi + 321 pp., map, plates, bibliography, glossary, index. ISBN 0700712976, \$85.

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Bruce G. Privratsky's book, *Muslim Turkistan: Kazak Religion and Collective Memory*, analyzes the persistence of Islam among Kazakhs in the city of Turkistan in southern Kazakhstan during the Soviet period. The author specifically focuses on religious terminology in the Kazakh language and places his analysis within the theoretical framework of collective memory. The book is the end product of field research conducted between 1991 and 1999, when the author lived in Turkistan and taught ethnology at Yasavi University.

The first chapter provides the historical setting as well as a general introduction to the book. Chapters 2 to 6 cover various aspects of popular Islam in Turkistan. In Chapter 2 the emphasis is on Kazakh demography and Kazakh ethnic markers, and to what extent they are interrelated with Muslim values. In Chapter 3 the author specifically focuses on Kazakh values in Islam, daily experiences related to the Muslim Five Pillars, and finally memories of the Sufi tradition. Chapter 4 deals with the Kazakhs' intense involvement with their ancestor-spirits and how this is reflected in their religious rites and practices. In Chapter 5 the author puts the emphasis on the Muslim saints and the tradition of shrine pilgrimage among the Kazakhs. Chapter 6 deals with the practices and importance of Kazakh healers and their activities. The last two chapters focus on the specific case of Kazakh religion within collective memory theory.

Privratsky's book is, in very general terms, ethnography: "a traditional empirical effort to specify cultural content" (p. 237). The basic theme of the book is the survival of Islam among the Kazakhs in Turkistan. According to the author, the religious experiences of the Kazakh Muslims must

be understood as "an integral experience of the Muslim life and a local version of the Islamic cultural synthesis, rather than as a survival of shamanism or a shamano-sufic hodge-podge" (p. 237). In other words, the author suggests that Kazakh religion is a local contextualization of Islam in which ethnicity is conceived of as a Muslim identity shaped by the local practices of remembering Kazakh ancestors (the cult of ancestor-spirits), pilgrimage to peripheral shrines and family cemeteries, and the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses by traditional Islamic medicine and the blessings of the healer's ancestor spirits.

In analyzing these local practices the author examines the Kazakh language closely and elaborates on the religious content of many words and phrases used in everyday life. According to the author it is important to find out "how Kazakhs describe and categorize religious things in their own language" (p. 24), because there is "basic linguistic evidence" of the Islamization of the "conceptual apparatus of the Kazakh religion" (p. 76).

In his book Privratsky places this linguistic emphasis on local religious rites of Turkistan's Kazakhs within the general context of Maurice Halbwach's theory of collective memory. According to the author, collective memory is "the key to understand the social forces that have enabled Kazakh religion to persist into the 21st century" (p. 252). Privratsky suggests that collective memory is "primarily affective, only secondarily cognitive," and that it is "embodied" (p. 21). Privratsky further suggests that "landscape evokes collective memories," and "language stores collective memories" (p. 23). Throughout the book these characteristics are applied to the case of Turkistan's

Kazakhs. According to Privratsky, "Islam has survived among the Kazakhs because both holy places and holy people have survived to remind them of it. The collective memory works through its architectural monuments and its living memorials" (p. 102).

This heavy emphasis on the theory of collective memory is one of the most important contributions of the book. The author reconstructs, or "reworks" (p. 247), a theory that has been used "primarily for radical postmodernist projects, which explain religion away as a social construction" (p. 20). However, according to Privratsky the idea of the construction of history and religion is problematic. Anthropological theories of religion have one major weakness: "the tendency to dismiss religious explanation of religion" (p. 20). Thus, attempts to develop collective memory "as a theory of religion *per se*" are meaningful because this theory has "particular value for the study of religion" (p. 20).

In this general perspective it is possible to suggest that Privratsky provides new, rich data on the semantics of Kazakh religion and popular Islamic practices in the city of Turkistan in his well-organized and well-researched book, which is enriched by maps and plates. His analysis of the theory of collective memory further provides an insightful approach. However, one should question whether the findings of the book are applicable to *all* Kazakhs (including for example, the urban Kazakhs in Almaty), let alone to other Central Asian people. The author conducted his work in Turkistan, a city of Islamic heritage "that has been tested and distended, but not destroyed" (p. 2). There is no

doubt that Turkistan is a very famous and important city, the "holy hearth" and the "axis" as described by the Kazakhs (p. 28). This is mostly due to the fact that the city has the shrine of the 12th century Sufi master Ahmed Yasavi, built in the late 14th century by Timur. However, focusing in a very detailed manner on the religious semantics and practices performed only in one city may not provide the reader with a general picture. The author frequently makes generalizations using words such as "Kazakhs" and "Kazakh religion," even though the theme of his book is limited to the local practices of Turkistan's Kazakhs. This raises an internal contradiction, because the author himself clearly states that "Kazakh religion" (*not* the religion of Turkistan's Kazakhs) should be analyzed in comparative perspective. According to the author, "[i]f Kazakh religion is to be understood, its similarities with and divergences from Muslim lifeways must be engaged in detail" (p. 14). Even though throughout the book Privratsky provides examples of similar experiences from other Muslim societies, one must consider the fact that Islam is practiced differently not only in different countries, but also among the people of one country, even one city. In this sense there may be an inevitable limitation to the explanatory power of Privratsky's findings.

As a final note, it must also be pointed out that in the book there is not even one short summary section on either Ahmed Yasavi's life or of his teachings. This is a shortcoming of the book, considering the importance of Yasavi's legacy and his shrine in Turkistan.

Korkut A. Ertürk, ed., *Rethinking Central Asia: Non-Eurocentric Studies in History, Social Structure and Identity*. Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 1999, vi, 202 pp., index. ISBN 0863722407, \$49.50.

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At first glance this volume offers an unexpected orientation: each paper presents an attempt at comparing the results of the author's personal research or readings on Central Eurasian societies with data from the history of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. Most of the contributions are revised and updated versions of papers originally presented at the Central Asian Republics and Turkey conference held at the Middle East Center, University of Utah, July 14-16, 1994. As such, the

whole volume bears testimony to a state of the art at a specific stage of Central Eurasian studies, in the immediate aftermath of the dislocation of the Soviet Union.

In his general foreword, the editor rightly points out the lacunae in "Western" research on Central Asia, a region which has often been studied, indeed up till recent times, with no great care for its specific and richly documented history (pp. 1-9). However, judging by the very late date of the

volume's publication, it would perhaps have been more pertinent to point out, at least in the introduction, the significance of the past decade's "Western" (North American and German, in particular, to say nothing of Japanese research) contributions to a general reappraisal of "historical heritages" in the study of Central Eurasian societies, medieval and modern. Although Eurocentric approaches to the Central Eurasian world remain a reality even now, the weight of such approaches, especially since the mid-1990s, should have been relativized. More subtlety in this matter would have been permitted by the use of the rich recent "Western" bibliography, which was almost completely ignored. And yet this bibliography is mostly based on the study of primary, manuscript or oral sources, whereas several contributions to the present volume satisfy themselves with a survey of the existing academic literature.

Several papers in the volume consist of short résumés of books or other works published before 1999 by the same authors. Such is the case with Andre Gunder Frank's contribution, "Re-Orient: From the Centrality of Central Asia to China's Middle Kingdom," which develops an earlier thesis that until the Industrial Revolution, when the flow of goods and money was reversed, the Europeans were only able to take part in an Asia-centered economy thanks to the African and American resources accumulated through the slave trade (see the same author's well-known monograph: *Re-Orient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*). We also find such a synthesis of previously published works in the brief contribution by İsenbike Togan, "Patterns of Legitimization of Rule in the History of the Turks." The author here analyzes how major changes in the legitimization of rule among Central Eurasian nomads, especially among Central Eurasian Turkic societies, have coincided with periods of rupture in internal redistributive patterns where the questions of local redistribution versus accumulation in the center reappeared (see Togan's *Flexibility and Limitation in Steppe Formations*).

In a paper on "Central Asian Societies and the Oral Literature of Epic Heroes," Lois A. Giffen identifies three stages in the evolution of the Central Asian Turkic (not "Turkish," a terminological confusion common in the whole volume) oral epic literature: 1) the heroic folktale; 2) the classical heroic poem or epos — tribal or "feudal"; and 3) the epic romance of later "feudalism." This paralleling of a classical hierarchy of production systems with that of systems of oral creation has been adapted

from N. K. Chadwick and V. Zhirmunskii's *Oral Epics of Central Asia*. Less starchy approaches to the global history of medieval and modern literatures of Central Eurasia are still being awaited — many "Western" specialists continue, in this matter, to find their inspiration in Soviet encyclopedias.

Sharon Baştuğ, in "Tribe, Confederation and State among Altaic Nomads of the Asian Steppe," concerns herself with understanding the specific structure of the patrilineal descent system among the Altaic peoples. On this question she offers us a walk through the theoretical literature and through some studies on the area. She argues that the traditional form of descent of the Altaic pastoral nomadic peoples was the segmentary lineage system. With strict genealogically defined units of exogamy, the processes of group formation and dissolution were played out within an ideological framework of two competing kinship-based sources of loyalty — genealogical closeness on the one hand, and affinal obligations on the other. These processes operated in a cultural environment in which political alliance was equated with kinship, consanguine or affinal, but which also provided mechanisms for the transformation of non-kin to kin. Such extremely dynamic patterns of group formation and dissolution are attributes not limited to nomadic societies — as I have tried to suggest in my own works on the functioning of Bukhara's *qawms* or *ta'ifas* during the colonial period. This raises the question whether such a general perspective on descent systems and their role among the Altaic peoples, when lacking comparison with the sedentary world, may lead to a substantialist view of a transhistorical non-periodized past of nomadic societies.

Şerif Mardin's "Abdurreshid Ibrahim and Zeki Velidi Togan in the History of the Muslims of Russia," shows how the intellectual tone within the Jadid movement in the Volga-Urals region of Russia shifted from Islamic cultural renewal to Turkic nationalism in the span of a few decades. In spite of the paucity of primary sources used for this paper and the author's lack of interest in the main "Western" as well as "Eastern" research works on both Ibrahimov and Velidi (e.g., those by E. Lazzarini, F. Georgeon, H. Komatsu, I. Türkoğlu), his article shows a relatively new attention, inspired by the reading of Hamid Algar's reknowned paper on Shaykh Zayn-Allah Rasulev (1992), to the heritage of the Naqshbandiya Mujaddidiya in early modern and modern Central Eurasian intellectual circles. The author has meritoriously tried to measure the respective influence of Mujaddidi

affinities and genealogical affiliations — which are both merely sketched here — among the early modern Bashkorts, notably through the emergence of local history writing (see recent works by A. J. Frank and M. A. Gosmanov (Usmanov)).

Although Mardin rightly underlines the significance of the memory of the Urals 18th century “uprisings” in the constitution of modern local and regional historiographies during the following century, the specific relationship between the spoken and the written, of which these early modern chronicles bear the testimony, remains to be studied. Besides, the description of these historiographies as a “potent mixture of clan memories, Western philosophy and Islamic reformism,” although astute, does not take into account a rich historiographical manuscript literature now well studied by Allen Frank, in particular, which bears no trace of a reformist trend (1998).

Whether “Western” or not, most studies devoted to the history of “Jadidism” continue to take into account only “positive” sources on this movement; they ignore the mass of documentation pertaining to more “traditionalist” trends. The same dialectics seem to be at work in Jadid studies in both “Western” and self-proclaimed non-Western academia — the apology of Mujaddidiya being now, probably for different reasons, one of the most striking common points of both. Let us conclude by noting that the author does not show great interest in such an appealing phenomenon as the unprecedented multiplication of autobiographical texts throughout Islamicate Central Eurasia in the years and decades following the Bolshevik revolution — although autobiographical writings, especially Togan’s published *Hâtıralar* [Memoirs] (1969; a highly problematic kind of primary source), make up the bulk of the first-hand documentation which has nourished this contribution.

The next paper, by A. Aydın Çeçen on “Uzbekistan between Central Asia and the Middle East: Another Perspective,” provides the best possible illustration of the risks of writing at too high a level of generality. The author’s focus on the region, specific ways of modernization in Central Asia, and Uzbekistan’s historical links with the Middle East has been more sharply developed during the past decade in many other publications (for example, Menashri 1998).

Fortunately, İsenbike Togan’s second contribution to this volume, “In Search of an Approach to the History of Women in Central Asia,”

would dispense any doubt that one may have of the validity of the academic postulates of the present volume. In her paper, which can be read as a corrective to previous publications, the author tries to identify those historical dynamics, rather than Islam *per se*, that have been responsible for fluctuations in the intensity of patriarchal domination of women among various Turkic peoples. In Togan’s account, patriarchal domination and private property intensify in Central Asia at a time when political power weakens in the center and tribes re-emerge as powerful autonomous forces. Beginning with the dates of the execution of the last ruling queens (1457 in Herat, 1651 in the Ottoman Empire, 1695 in Eastern Turkistan), Togan sketches comparative perspectives on the reinforcement of patriarchy in various pre-modern or early modern Central Eurasian societies, at times when women were obliged to withdraw from public life. Through the comparative study of the status and public role of women in the “Turkic” world, the author manages an exceptional contribution to a global understanding of Central Asian societies. We may of course regret that the current period, which has been exceptionally interesting for the observation of a permutation — or at least a deep re-definition — of sex roles, has been generally neglected in the present volume. Nonetheless Togan’s paper with its appeal for comparative gender history as a key to global history, and to a general dissociation of ideas on Islam and Islamicate societies, is a major contribution to a necessary rupture with the ethnic and religious substantialism which dominates in the discourse of Western media (more than in Western academia) on the “Islamic worlds” in general. In this sense the present volume perfectly fulfils many of the goals that its editor assigned to it.

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Boris Rumer, ed., *Central Asia: A Gathering Storm?* Armonk, NY, and London: M. E. Sharpe, 2002. xiii + 442 pp., map, index. ISBN 0765608626, \$75.95 (cloth), \$29.95 (paper).

Reviewed by: **Michael Kaser**, Emeritus Fellow, St Antony's College, University of Oxford, UK, michael.kaser@economics.ox.ac.uk

Since 1996 M. E. Sharpe has been publishing symposia on Central Asia funded by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation; the present volume is the fourth edited by Boris Rumer of the Davis Center at Harvard University. Of his nine chapter authors all but two are native to the region, while the two Russians are closely connected with it; Konstantin Syroezhkin is on the journal *Kontinent* in Kazakhstan and Stanislav Zhukov is Central Asia specialist in the Moscow-based Institute of World Economy and International Relations (known by its Russian acronym IMEMO). With about half the text devoted to security and foreign policy and half to the domestic polity and economy, the book takes account of the two external events which thrust Central Asia into world prominence — the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington of September 11, 2001, and the US invasion of Afghanistan the following month. None of the contributors perceived Iraq, the ensuing object of invasion, as relevant to those events: the index has no entry for that country, but 40 on Iran. Saddam Hussein is mentioned only as an ally of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, whose partisans were the main recipients of weapons for the anti-Soviet struggle in Afghanistan.

But it is of course the US-led occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq in the name of a war against Islamic-inspired terrorism which render the book of topical significance for a wide readership, particularly for its chapters by Evgenii Abdullaev and Bakhtiar Babadzhanov (Babadjanov) on the place of Islam in national politics. Each rejects the

facile attributions of "Islamic fundamentalist" and "Wahhabi" revolutionaries; Abdullaev argues that "oppositionist Islam" is generally characteristic of ex-Soviet Central Asia, while Babadzhanov notes the poles of conflict over religious practice between the Wahhabi and Hanafi schools. Abdullaev finds that greater moderation in religious practice is due to Central Asians' embracing what traditionally has been the least theocratic form of Islam — the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam, with much Sufi influence. This does not of itself explain a lack of radicalism; the present-day Taliban are Hanafi Sunni. Abdullaev argues that moderation emerged because Central Asian Islam for most of its 13-century history has had to coexist with other powerful societal forces — Zoroastrianism until the 10th century, Manichaeism until the 12th, Nestorianism until the 15th and Russian colonization since the 19th century. Under Russian, and still more under Soviet, rule, "Central Asia increasingly found itself on the periphery of the Muslim world, its religious life consequently becoming more secluded" (p. 248). Contrasting the Turkic tradition in which power was exercised by a secular, often military, state, with the caliphate model for Arab Muslims and the theocratic model for Iranians, Abdullaev leads the reader to the authoritarian presidential regimes of the present. On the theocratic model, a politicized Islam gained control in Iranian-populated Tajikistan (1997), as it had in Iran (1979) and Afghanistan (1992). Abdullaev offers many insights into the ethnic, linguistic, social and economic patchworks of the five republics, but may underestimate the danger

constituted by external (mainly Saudi) funding of religious schools while public expenditure on secular education shrivels, as Rumer's own "Overview" stresses in describing the many strands of contemporary pauperization.

Babadzhanov traces the regionally distinctive adaptability of Muslim practice back to the 12th century teachings of a local theologian, Burkhan al-Din al-Marghinani. Closer to today, he describes a divergence which began as Soviet power was consolidated in the 1920s: anti-Bolshevik *Basmachi* who conducted guerrilla warfare, and those who sought an "Islamic socialism" within a Soviet state (albeit with many "neutrals" in between). Reflecting the latter, republican civil codes contained Islamic provisions as late as 1932, but the anti-religious purges of 1933-53 eliminated both extremes. When Soviet tolerance reemerged — starting, as for Russian Orthodoxy, during the Second World War — the chosen organizational form was the Spiritual Administration of Muslims in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Its Mufti in the 1950s, Ziya ad-Din Babakhan, fought Hanafi liberalism to the point that even today some Hanafi *ulama* "hold that [he] was 'the first official Wahabite'" (p. 306). When this reviewer met Babakhan in 1957 during a UN mission to Tashkent, he was uncompromising in his opposition to religious schools, which, Babadzhanov shows, with other underground networks, have been a major generator for a "purified" Islam and the overthrow of the conformist Muslim establishment.

The authoritarian presidential rule under which the four Turkic republics have fallen since independence leaves no overt space for political parties, Islamist or secular, in a closed polity; in two of them, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, it has imposed a largely closed economy, earning foreign exchange from cotton extracted from farmers at below world prices. Stanislav Zhukov describes the state in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as the predominant economic agent whose fiscal resources shape capital formation toward import substitution. The other two are drawn toward globalization by their export potential, Kazakhstan in oil, gas and mineral-ore extraction, and Kyrgyzstan in gold-mining, but with many attendant risks, which Eshref and Eskender Trushin delineate. They summarize their policy recommendations in ten imperatives, in the execution of which international agencies could play an important counseling role. "Overcome the import-substitution bias" would be supported by World Trade Organization membership, which only Kyrgyzstan has. "Strengthen financial stability" is

the nostrum of the International Monetary Fund, but the Turkmen and Uzbek presidents reject Fund conditionality. "Reverse the decline in foreign direct investment" would be helped by the co-finance of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, but the latter is deterred by its statutory commitment to work for democracy in tandem with capitalism.

No urgings toward democracy are, however, promoted by the four powers which vie for regional influence. In his opening chapter Boris Rumer analyzes the "provisional equilibrium" that Central Asia reached between China, Russia and the United States in the 1990s, but equilibrium swung towards the United States after September 11, 2001. Sultan Akumbekov shows in a detailed survey of the conflict in Afghanistan that it strengthened the hands not only of both Russia and China in the region, but also of the republics' own rulers, while creating a power vacuum in the majority-Pashtun areas of Afghanistan. Rustam Burnashev postulates an earlier "geopolitical vacuum" immediately after the break-up of the USSR, which Russia, in his view mistakenly, declined to fill, being preoccupied with ties to the United States and the European Union. Both he and Konstantin Syroezhkin, discussing "Central Asia between the gravitational poles of Russia and China," cite as a major error the Russian termination of the ruble zone, which forced four of the republics (Tajikistan maintained a ruble link) into separate currencies, although neither of the economics chapters re-examine the 1993 currency shock. In a recent special symposium in *Comparative Economic Studies* (Winter 2002), which has contributions by former Russian Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Yegor Gaidar, his key Western advisers and the IMF chief of the time, the latter, John Odling-Smee, explains that with the Russian Cabinet then divided on whether to abandon the ruble zone, the IMF could not politically advise one way or the other. The present reviewer, who advocated CIS currency independence during an informal discussion of the issue in the EBRD at the time, concurs that some Russian ministers, with the weight of the European Commission behind them, were keen to maintain a currency union.

The European Union's role among Central Asian states in 1992-93 is explained by Murat Laumulin as derived from "an absolutely erroneous conclusion" that the EU should encourage intraregional integration (p. 237). Since the monetary scission, EU policy has been to deprecate "any kind of anti-Russian alliances" while fostering

a "belt of stability" to separate the region from Russia to the north and an unstable Islamic zone to the south, through which Caspian oil can flow to European markets. However, his forecast of "the EU as the new centre of geopolitical force" (p. 224), has since been nullified by the division of the

imminently enlarged EU between the UK and Poland on the one side and France and Germany on the other over the UN's exclusion from "regime change" in Iraq in spring 2003. The place of Central Asia in the geopolitical configuration post-Iraq must be the topic of Rumer's next valuable symposium.

Abstracts

Shoshana Keller, *To Moscow, Not Mecca: The Soviet Campaign Against Islam in Central Asia, 1917-1941*. Westport, Conn., and London: Praeger, 2001. xvix + 277 pp., maps, glossary, bibliography, index, ISBN 0275972380, \$64.95.

Abstracted by: **Walter Comins-Richmond**, Department of German, Russian and Classical Studies, Occidental College, Los Angeles, Calif., USA, richmond@oxy.edu

In *To Moscow, Not Mecca*, Shoshana Keller provides an encyclopedic account of the systematic destruction of the Central Asian Islamic communities in the Soviet Union. Making extensive use of archival material, Keller outlines both the theoretical and practical aspects of Soviet cooptation and betrayal of both liberal and conservative Islamic groups, providing a full picture of a process that was previously understood only in general terms.

Keller begins with a discussion of the reformist trends within the Central Asian Islamic community on the eve of Soviet conquest. While much of this material has already received attention in other works, Keller uses it to establish the context within which the Soviets began their efforts to destroy Islam. Soviet strategies were carefully planned, based upon the actual trends present upon their rise to power, and Keller's subsequent description of Soviet exploitation of the cultural context in early 20th century Central Asia is intricately tied to this introductory chapter.

Keller's account of the gradual and inexorable assault upon Islam in the 1920s is highly detailed and not only paints a comprehensive picture of this process but also provides a blueprint of duplicity, deception and betrayal that the Soviets used effectively to consolidate their power throughout their realm. Their alliance first with Islamic liberals, then with conservatives, then with secularized Muslims whom they ultimately exterminated, is mapped out precisely and objectively. The multifaceted campaign to impoverish the Islamic communities and destroy their juridical influence is also clearly described.

Keller marks 1928 as the "watershed" year in which the Soviets felt sufficiently powerful to launch a full assault on the Islamic clergy, to whom they previously gave verbal support while carrying out a covert economic war against them. In the chapter "Discussing the Problem," Keller argues that regardless of the actual strength of oppositional nature of the Muslim clergy, the Soviets redefined them as a direct threat to the socialist state and enacted policies designed to eliminate the clergy's ability to function in civil society.

Once direct means of destroying the Islamic clergy were decided upon, the Soviets began to use legal means to impede the private practice of Islamic rituals. Chapters Five, Six and Seven describe the process of crushing Islam not only in the mosques and madrasas but also within the communities of Central Asia. Keller highlights the disorganization and ineptitude of the local groups charged with this campaign, and the central government's belligerence and unreasonable demands, a combination which led to a distorted picture of the actual state of the Central Asian Islamic community in the 1930s.

The Soviets did more damage to Islam in 75 years than the Russian Empire did in more than 400. Keller's chronicle of the "carefully planned and utterly chaotic" campaign against Islam in the 1920s and 1930s provides a clear picture of Soviet anti-Islamic policies that will be of value to political scientists, anthropologists, religious scholars, and cultural historians.

Rafis Abazov, *Historical Dictionary of Kyrgyzstan*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2003. xxxiv + 336 pp., maps, tables, glossary, index of names, ISBN 0810848686, \$75.

Abstracted by: **Jamilya Ukudeeva**, Department of Political Science, Cabrillo College, Aptos, Calif., USA, jaukudee@cabrillo.edu

This is a much-needed contribution to Kyrgyz scholarship, as this publication is the first reference book on Kyrgyz history in English. It begins with a concise but comprehensive introduction highlighting the important events in Kyrgyz history in the 19th and 20th centuries, including the current debates on Kyrgyz identity and the current rethinking of Kyrgyz history. The book is a well laid out list of approximately 300 entries on prominent figures, traditions, institutions and events that have defined the history of Kyrgyzstan.

To assist the interested researcher in learning more about Kyrgyzstan, the comprehensive up-to-date bibliography of titles, dated from as early as the 19th century, provides an overview of scholarship on Kyrgyzstan in the English, Kyrgyz, Russian, and Kazakh languages. A comprehensive name index is also a useful feature, providing an enormously valuable research resource. Maps, tables, glossary, and a list of abbreviations make the dictionary useful and easy to use.

As a political scientist, the author devotes considerable attention to political aspects of Kyrgyz history by providing thorough up-to-date details on political parties and non-governmental organizations. The dictionary reports the most

current economic data and identifies Kyrgyzstan's main regional security issues. Abazov has compiled hard-to-find biographies of many Kyrgyz statesmen from the early 1920s up to and including current appointees. The coverage of contentious issues, such as the origin of the word "Kyrgyz" and the antiquity of the nation are handled with circumspection and care. The calm and cerebral tone of entries on the most controversial issues and individuals (i.e., border delimitation, the Aqsı (Aksy) conflict, and Azimbek Beknazarov) provide facts rather than heat.

The dictionary needs to be expanded to include more entries, as it currently lacks records on such political figures as Tashtanbek Akmatov and Abdikerim Sidiqov (Sydykov). To be sure, they are not major figures but not lesser than many whose biographies are included in the dictionary. Of course, what to include is a question of judgment. Nevertheless, the academic community, the press, and decision-makers in various governments who have frequently seen Kyrgyzstan through the eyes of Moscow and who now have to deal with a new political entity, need the new source of information that this publication provides.