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# Preface

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For most of the first half of this century, the academic field of Islamic or Near and Middle Eastern studies was defined for the most part by European scholars who were archeologists, philologists, historians, and theologians, not infrequently combining all of these roles in themselves. Some of them were men—together with a smattering of women—of considerable breadth of mind, vision, and experience, who perceived themselves as maintaining an honorable tradition of service to God, country, and learning, profoundly dedicated to exploring and interpreting the Islamic world to their fellow westerners. Modern social science had not as yet made its impact on non-western scholarship.

As intelligent as their vision was, their mentality remained, with a few notable exceptions, Eurocentric. They acknowledged themselves as Orientalists and, subsequently, we too labeled them as such. While mediating the cultures and religions of the Near and Middle East to their countrymen, they simultaneously endeavored to carry what they considered to be superior forms and standards of western erudition to the learned classes of the region. Meanwhile, if their fellow Western countrymen, on whom they had little impact, thought about the region at all, most embraced a stereotypical, often cheap, romantic view of decadence, heathenism, mystery, and danger, popularized by the penny (sou, pfennig) press and reinforced by travelogues and popular art. In their endeavors, these Orientalists sometimes became, in a variety of ways, the part-

ners—and sometimes the witting or unwitting instruments—of their governments, which, for motives of national self-interest and religious ideology, sought to westernize the “oriental” nations over which they had become colonial rulers.

It is the wont of each generation to refract the historical and social past through the prism of its own values and to make judgments accordingly. Thus have many of the current generation assessed the Orientalists and, in recent years, given to their Eurocentricity and identity with the colonial policies of their governments an *ex post facto* pejorative spin. This perception is in many respects justified but, at the same time, like most sweeping condemnations, it has not been consistently on the mark nor altogether fair. The Orientalists were, after all, creatures of their times shaped by the ethos of their day, as were the missions they set for themselves. If they are to be viewed objectively, they must first be taken on their own terms. Some of them, by the breadth and depth of their intellects, by their generosity of spirit—of which several of the authors in this volume claim to be beneficiaries—were too large to be encapsulated by a label like “Orientalist.”

Through whatever contemporary prism their lives and work may now be perceived, however they may be judged, their overall scholarly accomplishments cannot be denied. With few of the research and analytical tools we possess today, they broke new scholarly ground and laid a firm basis for the modern study of the region and its cultures. Perhaps of equal importance, they trained the generation whose representatives are included in this volume and who are among the great names and pioneers of post-World War II modern Middle East studies. (These authors were the students of some of the great teachers and scholars of their day, now dubbed “Orientalists”—H. A. R. Gibb, Phillip Hitti, Louis Massignon, et al.)

However, the generation represented in this volume began to split away from the traditional pattern of Orientalism for a combination of reasons. Among them were their direct personal experiences with the region, the changed ideological and intellectual milieu of the 1930s and 1940s, in which they grew up, and because the Orientalist tradition was not as strong in the U.S. as in Europe. From their altered perspectives they cut new paths to the Middle East, paths which provided direction for the generation that followed.



At the present time, the field of Middle East studies is undergoing yet another generational change. The generation that succeeded the “Orientalists”—and who constitute our link with them—trained the present generation of Middle East scholars and, in many cases, also had a hand in shaping government and corporate policies toward the region after World War II. They have now begun to retire. To preserve their insights into the past and their visions of the future for those who have not had the privilege to study with them directly, a number of major Islamic and Middle East scholars were asked to provide their perspectives and views in a short, personal “summing-up” of their careers.

This book is a compilation of their responses. It provides a unique evaluation of the last thirty or forty years by ten of the most distinguished pioneers representing key branches of the field. They have provided their perspectives on the past and present, their vision of future paths to be explored, and their wisdom drawn from decades of experience and scholarship. The contributors are all exemplars among our senior colleagues. Despite various backgrounds and professional pursuits, all these specialists possess a unique asset—a long perspective on the Middle East (and on the profession of being a “Middle East specialist”) molded by their individual professional and personal experiences.

The eminence of these authors, earned through their contributions as scholars and teachers, should in itself draw our attention to their personal development and aspirations. However, their stories are important also because their work and writings mark a turning point in the study of the Middle East. Collectively they reveal the slow and difficult evolution of Middle East studies in the United States—a process which is, as it should be, still in process. Separately each author shows us a discrete contribution to the modern incarnation of the field.

Whatever didacticism is offered in this book is neither formal nor does it stand alone. Lessons, insights, wisdom, and inspiration are almost invisibly woven into the fabric of fascinating biographical narrative told with wit, style, self-effacement, and candor. The authors have taken us into their confidence, speaking openly about their formative experiences and observations. Their stories provide a human face to the profession.



Because of the varied experiences and paths taken by the contributors, a single unifying theme for the book proved to be impossible. Therefore, it was decided not to try to structure the contributions too closely but rather to let a variety of approaches be used as a way of reflecting more truly the individual perceptions of the contributors. They come from a broad range of backgrounds. Albert Hourani was born to Lebanese parents and grew up in Manchester, England. Charles Issawi and Pierre Cachia were born in Egypt. Issawi's parents were Syrian and Cachia's were Maltese and Russian. Halil Inalcik was born in Turkey and Farhat Ziadeh in Palestine. Dankwart Rustow was born in Germany but spent his later youth in Turkey, where his father had gone as a political exile from Nazi Germany. J.C. Hurewitz was born in the U.S., where his father, an Orthodox Rabbi from Poland, and his Lithuanian mother came (like the parents of other of our authors) so that their children could live in a democracy. Don Peretz was also born in the U.S., but his father came from Palestine, and members of his family served in early Israeli governments. George Makdisi and Ernest McCarus were born in the U.S. as well, but their parents were Lebanese. For most of the authors in this volume, living in a mixture of cultures and languages was a normal part of their lives.

Their lives also encompassed a broad array of educational experiences—Azhar and American missionary schooling in Cairo and Beirut in the 1930s; Oxford in the 1930s and 1940s; the University of Ankara during and after World War II; Jesuit schools in Lebanon before and after the war; Hebrew University in Jerusalem during the Israeli struggle for independence; the Sorbonne in post-war Paris; and a variety of American universities, principally Columbia and Princeton. Many were involved in the development of the early centers for Middle East studies, most notably at Princeton (Ziadeh, Rustow, and Issawi), Columbia (Hurewitz, Issawi, and Rustow), and St. Antony's College, Oxford (Hourani). Hourani also contributed to the development of centers at Harvard and Chicago. Peretz went on to establish a center at SUNY Binghamton, and Ziadeh established a center at the University of Washington in Seattle. (Our late colleague, Bayly Winder, who died before his contribu-

tion to this volume was completed, established a center at New York University.)

Other commonalities emerge. All led interesting lives *before* they turned their minds to scholarship. They were well traveled, broadly educated, and linguistically sophisticated. (All speak several languages, some being fluent in six or more. Charles Issawi, for example, mentions his knowledge of French, Arabic, English, Italian, German, Spanish, Polish, Russian, Persian, and some Turkish—and his field is economic history!) They are also intellectually curious, avid readers, ambitious, and disciplined. Not surprisingly, they supplemented their formal education with a considerable amount of self-training. Most of them served in the military during WW II or held sensitive wartime government posts. As they contemplated careers, only one of them (J. C. Hurewitz) set out to become a Middle East scholar. Serendipity, coincidence, life's little accidents, and war-time service all helped focus their final career choices on the Middle East.

These authors, having determined to undertake careers that centered on the Middle East and Islam and trained for the most part in an older tradition of scholarship, emerged in 1945 into a new political and social order that included enormous new intellectual challenges. The received tradition of scholarship that shaped their minds—a tradition which had already been on the threshold of change when the war broke out—was rapidly being displaced. Novel techniques of teaching (most conspicuously in language training), new ways of organizing and conducting research, fresh analytical approaches, and the development of new tools of analysis were all part of this change.

But these novelties were only concomitants of the shattering of the old order in a process of change that was breathtaking in its complexity, scale, and pace. The rapid post-war achievement of independence by former mandates and colonies was accompanied by the universal, sometimes violent, rejection of the ethos and ideologies of imperialism just as the evolving post-war era was shaping itself into something of a gigantic paradox—the world was fragmented into an unprecedented number of self-governing, often fractious nation-states while at the same time, on a macrocosmic strategic level, it coalesced roughly into the two opposing ideological camps of communism and democracy. Emblematic of the two blocks were their superpower leaders, who locked into a deadly nuclear competition. The emergence of two “superpowers” capa-

ble of imposing their preserve over or destroying vast portions of the earth was in itself unexampled and a defining force of the new order. Later a third bloc, formed of the non-aligned nations representing a variety of political systems, tended to play one superpower off against the other. Finally, two other unprecedented realities of the post-war world had an impact on all nations: the threat of nuclear annihilation on the one hand and global interdependence (economic, scientific, technological, and cultural) on the other. Both were intensified by a revolution in communications.

For scholars and other regional specialists such as the contributors to this volume, the intellectual challenge of the transformed world lay in the need to develop new perspectives, concepts, theories, and techniques of scholarship—no less than a new sociology of knowledge and learning—if they were to cope with the swirl of change in which their generation was caught up; they had somehow to manage the vast flow of new information, data, and, above all, ideas which forced them to reassess the historical past, view the present with a different set of critical eyes, and, in the end, to make sense of and explain it all. They and their peers met the challenge and in the course of so doing, helped to redefine and strengthen their fields as part of the general burgeoning of new academic disciplines and area studies. This achievement, perhaps more than any other, distinguishes them from those of us who came later.

How did these scholars and their peers reshape the fields of Islamic and Middle Eastern studies? Foremost, they responded by accepting and encouraging change; by opening their minds to new ideas, perspectives, disciplines, and techniques and then absorbing them critically; and by producing new analyses, interpretations, and syntheses. They implanted these values in their students. They pioneered in opening new branches of Middle Eastern studies, particularly in the social sciences (especially anthropology, sociology, and modern economics), linguistics, folk literature, and Islamic art and architecture. They gave these disciplines as much standing as more traditional focuses of study on the Middle East, such as philology, history, and religion, by emphasizing the necessity and importance of interdisciplinary studies.

Reflecting the need for innovation in adapting to new conditions in higher education, they embraced the idea of organizing non-western studies into interdisciplinary language and area studies centers where students would be required to learn the substance and tools of more than one field of specializa-

tion and, most importantly, to learn at least one major language of the region. They contributed significantly to the internationalization of education by helping to create and direct the first wave of area studies centers not only at the few universities where the field already existed (usually as an adjunct to religious studies or archeology) but also at others in locales spread around the country (where the introduction of a stand-alone Middle East program was truly a novelty); by awakening their colleagues in the established disciplines to the importance and interconnections of Middle East studies (and of all non-western studies) to their own; by modernizing and diversifying Middle East studies curricula and in so doing introducing significant changes in the breadth, depth, and organization of the field; by stimulating the interest and support of governments, foundations, and the corporate community in the revamped anatomy of Middle East studies; and by creating professional organizations, such as the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), for the promotion of the field.

Integral to these developments was the building of important research libraries on the Middle East, some at institutions where such collections never existed before, thereby ensuring the future presence of the field in some form or other at a greater number of universities than at any time in history. With the larger number of programs came an unprecedented number of students who chose to specialize in the region, and, because of new cross-disciplinary offerings (which not infrequently included professional schools), had career options opened to them that only a generation ago were not even contemplated.

These changes were necessitated by and reflect the radical alterations in the way the generations who are succeeding these authors were socialized and educated in an era of revolutionary advances in communications and computer technology. The ubiquity of television brought the world into their homes and schools in previously unimagined coverage and delivery; they grew up more visually oriented in their reception of information. For those who paid attention, the world became a little smaller, more immediate, perhaps a little more familiar and less 'foreign' as they grew into maturity. Along with these developments, jet propulsion transformed air transportation, linking the regions of the globe even closer and making travel more affordable and comfortable. At the same time, opportunities for student travel increased dramatically. Those

young sojourners who seized the chance for travel were exposed to other cultures and languages and offered new perspectives. So too were their peers who found themselves overseas by virtue of serving in the military or Peace Corps. The usual result of such travel for most of them was that old stereotypes broke down and their experiences often had a formative impact on the shaping of their minds and values, particularly those who served in the Peace Corps.

In some respects, the generation of students taught by our contributors were as well or even better traveled and experienced than our authors at a comparable age. Moreover, they have had more opportunities while still students for conducting thesis research in the region itself. Our authors not only helped to create the new order within their professional realm, but they have inspired their students to emulate them in taking the field in a forward direction and have instilled a willingness to experiment and change course as events and opportunities demand.



With this general context in hand, this may be the appropriate juncture to address the reader's curiosity about such questions as how the particular contributors to this volume were chosen, why women are not represented, and what the authors were asked to do?

We began with a loose set of criteria for whom to approach as potential contributors—each must have had at least twenty-five years of academic experience or an equivalent professional experience in, for example, the foreign service, have earned a generally recognized high standing in the field by virtue of the significance of their publications and teaching, and, as far as possible, have played in some fashion a pioneering role in modernizing the field.

At the outset we were prepared, if necessary, to produce two volumes of biography in order to be inclusive. However, a number of factors militated against our original intentions—among them the problem of obtaining sufficient foundation support for a project of such size and duration, and the reluctance of various presses to gamble on a very large single volume, let alone two volumes of the same nature. But the most difficult obstacle proved to be the prospective authors themselves. All of those whom we hoped would participate—whether or not technically “retired”—are still intellectually vital and



working hard, with a full slate of professional obligations, a schedule of deadlines for publications, and an agenda for polishing off unfinished projects postponed until retirement.

For all but a few of those we approached, the notion of writing a brief autobiography for publication was a novel one and was not accorded a very high priority even if the inclination were there. Thus the task of persuading them to add our project to their list of deadlines proved very difficult for those who agreed and impossible for others. Some, who agreed initially, withdrew later because of time constraints, and one died before he wrote his contribution. However, there is a glimmer of hope that those who declined might, if they are approached again on a future occasion, be willing to contribute to such a volume at a later date. Despite their reluctance to do so now, upon reflection most admitted that the idea has a certain attraction. (Who among us does not have even a trace of immortal longing?)

Virtually all of the women who met the criteria were approached. Unfortunately, this number was small since relatively few women of that generation had been active in the field. It is only relatively recently that significant numbers of women have joined the ranks of Middle East specialists, having had the way paved by that earlier generation of women. During the post-war period academia, government service, and the corporate communities were almost the exclusive hegemony of men. It was precisely because those women had to be exceptionally committed and have strong personalities in order to be undaunted by such a barrier and able to enter the profession against heavy odds that we especially wanted their contributions. As talented as their male peers, their gender alone made them pioneers. To our extreme disappointment, none of the women scholars we asked to contribute agreed to do so. They demurred primarily for the same reasons as their male counterparts, but, (and unlike many of the men), they uniformly insisted that few would be interested in their lives!

There is another group of women who should probably be more clearly represented in this volume. These intelligent, perceptive, talented, and generous women played a difficult amalgamation of roles that were crucial to our authors—as colleagues, confidants, editors, typists, hostesses, guardians of access and time, mediators, and more. We refer, of course, to wives, several of whom abandoned their own careers to raise children and lend support to the

careers of their husbands. Their contributions to the histories that follow are hereby gladly, warmly, and respectfully acknowledged.



Like the criteria for selection, the frame of reference suggested to our authors was also fairly accommodating. They were invited to choose any point of departure they wished, such as the earlier parts of their lives or the time at which they began their training, and to consider from the perspective of their individual experiences and ideas what and where the field was then, where we have come, and how we have got here and to weave into the narrative their own roles and what it has all meant to them in an amalgam that combined in some kind of balance the personal and professional. In so doing, they were encouraged to discuss teachers, colleagues, students, and other individuals who played a significant role in their lives, to analyze successes and failures, to discuss what they think needs to be changed, and to provide a few words about future directions.

In sum, it was decided that the best summing up would be what each contributor wanted it to be and that each chapter should be, above all, a task of enjoyment and satisfaction to the writer. The authors were asked to use the guidelines to the extent they wished but to write what gave them pleasure, and thereby we would all be the beneficiaries.

Finally, it may be appropriate to summon up the words of two early readers of this volume. Nowhere else, one of them observed, have the intellectual and personal experiences of such a group of distinguished Middle East specialists been captured in a single volume. "Accounts of their personal experiences," the other stated, "and the expression of their personal views make up a document for historiographical studies that are yet to come ... taken together, they [the authors] are among the founding members of the distinctive field of Middle East studies." It should be borne in mind that this volume is intended not as an ending but, rather, as an experimental beginning in the hope that it may inspire future imitators.

## Spelling and Transliteration

Because each chapter represents its contributor's unique personal experiences and perceptions, editing was kept to a minimum in order to preserve each distinctive voice. The individual authors' preferences in spelling, grammar, and language usage were respected, as were their use of diacritical markings and conventions of transliteration. Some authors provided footnotes and complete bibliographical references; others mentioned works casually in passing. No effort was made to force authors to conform to a specific style.

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In addition, it is not only fitting but an utter necessity to avow the vital role of another woman in the production of this volume—Shirley Smith, my associate editor. She is a consummate professional, a gentle editor who possesses the skills of a polished diplomat—an essential editorial skill since it is rare to encounter authors who do not brood over their words like hens over chicks. She has an unusual critical eye and great patience. She is also fearless and unflappable in the face of computer and software obstructions. It is doubtful that this book would have appeared in as good shape or timely a fashion had Shirley Smith not been on hand.