

the Qur'an. Likewise, *Sürülp kasaba gittik/ Kanarayı meskân* [should read *mesken*] *etik* is clear and vivid enough. Why not give the obvious meaning, "We were dragged off to the butcher/ we made the slaughterhouse our dwelling" instead of "*a la voie, nous nous sommes abandonnés/ nous nous sommes résignés au sacrifice*"? (p. 232).

The last chapter of the book, "Réactualisation," is perhaps the most interesting, for it discusses the permutations that Bektashi/Alevi identity has recently undergone as the result of large-scale migration to cities in both Turkey and Europe. Syncretic malleability has become a disadvantage in an age and an environment given to sharply defined ideologies. Mélikoff notes dispassionately attempts made by Kemalists, leftists, and Kurdish nationalists to co-opt these migrants (pp. 263–69), but she is alarmed by the embrace of Twelver Shi'ism made by some Bektashis/Alevis, which "threatens to give rise to an uncontrollable fanaticism" (p. 269). However, the spectacle of an Alevi *dede* in Germany donning the garb of Santa Claus has her approval, as does the swift integration of Alevi women into the European environment, shown by their wearing of "tight-fitting garments and skirts." This contrasts with the misery of Sunni women, "held back by an attachment to the traditions of a dogmatic Islam" (pp. 262–63). The Sunni environment in which Bektashism/Alevism has existed over the centuries goes largely unnoticed and unexamined throughout the book, except as a threatening mass of medieval fanatics; this presumably justifies in her eyes the exclusion of Sunnis made by Bektashi/Alevis from the otherwise all-embracing tolerance she attributes to them (pp. 229, 257, 276). The final chapter of her book ends in a crescendo that is both Atatürkist and Gallic: "properly channelled, Alevism can, and indeed must, become an element of progress, a barrier to fundamentalism (*intégrisme*)...thus helping to ensure loyalty to Atatürk as the symbol of secularity (*laïcité*) and enlightened nationalism, and the triumph of secularism (*laïcisme*) over the forces of obscurantism" (pp. 276–77).

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GEOFFREY REGAN, *First Crusader: Byzantium's Holy Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001). Pp. 288. \$29.95 cloth.

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First Crusader is a semi-scholarly, semi-popular work aimed at demonstrating that the Byzantine Empire under Heraclius (610–41) provided the initial impetus for the crusading/holy war and even the jihad ideal common to Latin and Orthodox Christianity as well as to Islam. This is a bold thesis, which Regan seeks to demonstrate with a lively narrative of the life of Heraclius, which is sandwiched by briefer histories of Byzantium both prior and subsequent to his time. It cannot be said that he proves his thesis. Regan's notes are sketchy, and he does not seem to be aware of the basic scholarship on the subject. Although Walter Kaegi's volume on Heraclius was published after *First Crusader*, it is surprising how few of Kaegi's fundamental studies on this period are cited. Sparse though Regan's sources are for the Byzantine section of the book (which this reviewer is not competent to discuss), they are abundant when compared with the latter third of it when he discusses the early Muslim conquests. For this critical time period, for which sources translated into English and other scholarly languages abound (despite their problematic nature), he only cites Muir's *The Life of Mohammed*, Benjamin Walker's *The Foundations of Islam*, and Butler's *Arab Conquest of Egypt*. All of these sources are long out of date or are substandard and do not reflect the current state of scholarship concerning the conquests. In addition to these problems with the

scholarly source material, it is clear even to one who does not know Byzantine history very well that Regan has supplied a great deal of interpretive local color to fill in gaps. The book is filled with statements such as “must have been,” describing the attitudes or perceptions of historical characters who simply cannot be known. We learn, for example, that Heraclius’s eldest son Constantine “had longed to be at his father’s side instead of waiting restlessly under the stern looks of his tutors” (p. 125). Material of this nature, abundant in this book, is on the level of a historical novel.

These serious deficiencies taken into account, Regan’s thesis is still an interesting one. It is common for Byzantinists to divorce the Byzantines from the fervor of the holy war present in Latin Christianity or the Muslim jihad. Regan can be given credit for casting some doubt on the historical justice of this claim. His choice of Heraclius as the progenitor of some of the ideas of a religiously driven war is probably sound. I think that Regan does prove his basic point (although without the decisive and deep evidence that a scholar would like to see) that the Byzantine–Sasanian War of 602–29 was a holy war of this type—at least, from the Byzantine perspective. Regan thinks that those elements of the war, such as the Sasanian looting of the relics of the True Cross and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem, which provoked Heraclius’s holy war of revenge (622–29) were probably not planned. The speeches of Heraclius that Regan cites and the manner in which Heraclius planned and carried out his campaigns and maintained his political position in Constantinople are consistent with a holy war or a crusade. But, of course, a scholar would probably ask whether these elements are always common in a war of desperation, which the Byzantine–Sasanian War clearly was from the Byzantine perspective.

Regan is at his best when he is describing the strategic situation and empathizing with the dilemmas of the various protagonists of this otherwise senseless war. Military history is his forte, and it shows throughout the book, since in the ostensible discussion of the genesis of a military–religious doctrine such as holy war he cites very few religious texts or art to bolster his argument. The campaigns of the Byzantines, the Sasanians, the Avars, and the Muslims are all detailed carefully, although—at least, with regard to the Muslims—without the benefit of contemporary scholarship.

First Crusader is basically a historical novel with some interesting ideas that should probably be pursued further by Byzantinists. For the scholarly study of the Byzantine–Sasanian War and the early Muslim conquests, it is worth a skim but not much more because of the outdated nature of the sources and ideas that the author uses.

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JUAN COLE, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shi‘ite Islam* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002). Pp. 254. \$22.50 paper.

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Juan Cole’s history of Shi‘ism is the right book at the right time. It is essential reading for anyone—scholar, policy-maker, or concerned citizen—who hopes to follow the next few years of Middle East developments. Unfortunately, readers who have no background in Islamic and Middle Eastern matters are likely to find it hard going.

The history of English-language writing on Shi‘ism makes the need for Cole’s book evident. Dwight M. Donaldson published *The Shi‘ite Religion* in 1933. Thirty years later, when I was starting graduate school, it remained the only book on Shi‘ism available in English. Another