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Elites in the Middle East

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sets the stage nicely for further inquiry. U.S. arms sales policy will be the more coherent, and persuasive, the more it reflects the range of issues suggested by Whynes, including in particular innovative deterrent strategies, the overall "productivity" of alternative weapons systems, and the bridging effects of military programs.

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Zartman, I. William, ed. *Elites in the Middle East*. New York: Praeger, 1980. 252pp.

One of the most unfair things that a reviewer might do is to wish that the author had written a different book (which is not at all the same as wishing for a better book). So as not to be accused of falling into this trap, let it be said at the onset that *Elites in the Middle East* is not an up-to-date descriptive treatment of those in power in the Middle East. Instead this is a book expressly intended for political scientists dealing with Middle Eastern politics. Its foci are largely theoretical and conceptual, and its explicit object is to take stock of the present state of elite studies and to indicate or intimate new directions that might be taken by the academic specialist. Of its seven chapters, four are more likely to hold interest for the scholar than the informed layman. However, three of the chapters are of wider appeal, and it is those chapters that will be highlighted in this review.

Charles Butterworth provides a competent overview that contrasts the normative underpinnings of Western and Middle Eastern philosophies of government. While readers are not likely to be surprised by the author's treatment of such well-known luminaries as Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, his discussion of the work of Alfarabi (A.D., 870-950), Averroes (1126-1198), Nizām al-Mulk (1018-1092), and Kai

Ka'us may provide a unique introduction to the work of these Islamic philosophers. Butterworth clearly shows that while the Western philosophers of politics concerned themselves with the form of governance (e.g., democracy vs. autocracy), their Middle Eastern counterparts were more likely to concern themselves with the relative goodness of a government as measured by the quality of its goals rather than its form (although it must be added that their view of politics as an art capable of mastery by few led them to conclude—or assume—that rule by the one or the few was preferable). Accordingly, what we encounter is an emphasis upon the proper behavior and skills of rulers. This is all of more than passing interest as the work of these Moslem thinkers is, according to Butterworth, often standard fare in the universities and secondary schools of the Middle East. The only criticism that might be made of Butterworth is that his 38-page chapter only mentions the work of one of the greatest of Arab philosophers, Ibn Khaldun, but he is still to be applauded for introducing his readers to the work of men who are likely to be obscure for many.

The centerpiece chapter of *Elites in the Middle East* is a provocative theoretical statement by I. William Zartman, a well-known scholar of Middle Eastern (and especially North African) politics. "Toward a Theory of Elite Circulation" treats the absorption, cooptation and exclusion of those who aspire to positions in the elite strata. While fair treatment of Zartman's work is not possible in a short review, it may be suggestive to note that he sees elite circulation as a developmental process that tests the incumbent's ability to cope with the continuing realignment ("bunching") of aspiring elites brought about by the political decisions (and nondecisions) of the elite. Zartman's rich exposition treats the clusters of challenges that may lead to the

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realignment of the political elite as a result of differing generational, regional, ideological and socioeconomic interests. These interests are in turn related to the natural history of independence enjoyed by a respective country. While Zartman's chapter is decidedly preliminary, he does offer a number of essential insights toward understanding the process of elite circulation. And after all, the smoothness with which elites move into power is at the very essence of political stability. We need not be reminded of the importance of the latter, especially in the Middle East.

The final chapter of concern is of considerable merit and appeal. Marvin G. Weinbaum's "Structure and Performance of Mediating Elites" is a superbly written discussion of that most typical Middle Eastern role—the mediator. In a society marked by stark distinction in statuses, omnipresent codes of modesty and honor, and widespread illiteracy, the performance of mediatory functions (*wasita*) is essential, and those that do so display a mark of elite status. The role of the mediator may range from arranging a marriage, acquiring routine or exceptional government assistance, interpreting or amplifying communications to a target audience (e.g., a village), or exercising control (e.g., collecting

taxes). Weinbaum explains the functions of local, party and legislative, special interest, administrative, military and media elites with respect to their roles as intermediaries between the rulers and the ruled. Of particular note is his emphasis on the influence that mediating elites have upon societal change. For example, the ubiquitous transistor radio illustrates the potential significance of media elites for affecting the masses' attitudes towards government policies. Also there is the enhanced significance of local mediators who can interpret and amplify the news (and who often do so very subjectively). While the role of a given elite as mediator is not immutable, given the differing circumstances of the respective Middle East states, Weinbaum makes it quite clear that the mediation institution will endure because its "indispensability ultimately rests on the enduring material and psychological gap that exists between masses and elites in the Middle East."

While some readers may be put off by the academic wrappings, *Elites in the Middle East* does offer some rewarding nuggets for those who choose to persevere.

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All three divisions of the Pentagon's "strategic triad" (land-based ICBMs, intercontinental bombers, and ICBM submarines) are being geared for first-strike capabilities. Contrary to what most Americans believe, or want to believe, "counterforce" has risen to replace "deterrence" as the prevailing