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## A Prince of Our Disorder, The Life of T.E. Lawrence

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significantly altered the world power structure. In sum, this work constitutes a landmark in the writing of diplomatic history.

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Mack, John E. *A Prince of Our Disorder, The Life of T.E. Lawrence*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1976. 561pp.

Patai, Raphael. *The Arab Mind*. New York: Scribner, 1976. 376pp.

Considering the increasing importance that the Arabs with their expanding postoil-embargo wealth likely are to assume, it is disquieting that we in the Western World seemingly have little knowledge about their ancient culture. There seem to be few current general works about the Arabs but there are two rather recent efforts that can provide some meaningful insights.

The first, *A Prince of Our Disorder*, is the product of a practicing psychiatrist and medical school professor. John Mack focuses on the life of a much publicized, but often esoteric, Arabist, T.E. Lawrence, probably more commonly known as Lawrence of Arabia. By examining the multifaceted personality of this unique Englishman, the author skillfully guides the reader through the mysterious mental maze in which the perplexed Lawrence struggled throughout much of his life. From Mack's probe of "El Auren" (as admiring, if not worshipping, Arabs called Lawrence) we can glean useful insights into Arabic culture.

Lawrence, a driven man, wore many hats in life. He was a tormented bastard. He toiled as a student in Jesus College at Oxford University. Shortly thereafter, he began his intense relationship with the Arabs as an archeologist traveling, often alone, throughout most of the Middle East. He later served as an unofficial diplomat and military leader at the apex of his notoriety in the

region where East meets West. During his descent as a public figure, he was a publicity-eschewing recluse who changed his name and served as an enlisted man in the Royal Air Force. Between the extremes of his life, Lawrence was a prolific, if not always profound, writer. His book, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, reveals many discerning observations of Arabic culture.

Via some of Lawrence's experiences, Mack leads us through a period in Middle Eastern history that often directly relates to many of the present conflicts in that cradle of civilization. To those interested in learning more about the Arabic psyche, three chapters—"The Background of the Arab Revolt," "Arab Self-Determination and Arab Unity" as well as "Lawrence and Churchill: The Political Settlements in the Middle East"—are particularly helpful.

Mack's book is an excellent appetizer for those who desire more substantive information about the Arabic peoples.

In contrast to looking at the Arabic culture obliquely via Mack's study of Lawrence, the reader of Raphael Patai's *The Arab Mind* will be focusing directly on Arabic consciousness. Patai is a highly regarded anthropologist who has lived in the Middle East and spent a lifetime studying the area and its peoples. He examines the entire gamut of this crossroads civilization. The arts, languages, religions, mores and other Arabic attributes are explored. Not surprisingly, there is much attention to and discussion of the Bedouin and Islamic influences.

For those who are hopeful of a meaningful move toward a sustainable peace in the Middle East, a patient perusal of the section entitled *The Psychology of Westernization* can be quite worthwhile. Within that section there are two headings, "Egypt—A Case History" and "The Hatred of the West," that are ruefully revealing. This cultural background is essential to an under-

standing of such Arabic political motives and positions as Mr. Sadat's 1977 peace initiatives.

If Patai evinces any failing in his effort, it might be his unmasked admiration for the Arabic culture. However, one should expect any specialist, Arabist or other, to be enthusiastic in a portrayal of the subject of his competence. Overall, the book is very readable and instructive. It clearly is a "must read" candidate for all persons interested in the Arabic peoples and the political plight of the Middle East.

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Macmillan, Harold. *The Past Masters: Politics and Politicians 1906-1939*. New York: Harper & Row, 1975. 240pp.

Harold Macmillan was Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1957 until 1963. Succeeding Sir Anthony Eden in the wake of the Suez debacle, Macmillan ended conscription, accelerated the dissolution of empire, and brought England to prosperity. In the 1959 general election he carried his Conservative Party to triumph with the candid slogan, "You never had it so good." This book, however, is not about his time as Prime Minister, when political cartoons portrayed him in tights and cape as "Super Mac." Rather, it is about politics and politicians as he observed them from the first years of this century, when he was a schoolboy, to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, when he was an experienced politician and Member of Parliament who had not yet, however, served even as a junior minister.

Harold Macmillan's great-grandfather was a poor Scottish crofter, whose son Daniel came south to London and founded a business which eventually became the great British publishing house of Macmillan. Although he has considerable pride in his humble

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Scottish ancestry, Harold Macmillan himself grew up in the eminently comfortable and self-confident world of the British upper classes just before the First World War. In this book, written in his old age (he was born in 1894), Macmillan is inevitably nostalgic for those halcyon days of his youth, when the British Empire was at the peak of its power and prestige. Although admitting that he sees his "past masters" through the haze of passing years, he nevertheless rightly observes that these men moved on a larger stage. Since the end of the Second World War Great Britain has lost her leading role in the world balance of power, and we may wonder whether she will ever again produce statesmen equal to the commanding figures Macmillan describes.

The book abounds in astute comments on British political life. Macmillan reflects on the decline of the great aristocratic Whig tradition in the 19th century, and on the decline of the Whigs inheritors, the Liberal Party, in the 20th century. His dedication to the House of Commons and to the civilities of the British political tradition is obvious. He himself started out in the progressive wing of the Conservative Party, and as Prime Minister he proved a master at carrying out change which was more real than apparent. Never an ideologue, he observes that a successful party of the right must always recruit new strength from the center, and even from the left of center.

The book's fascination, however, lies less in Macmillan's general comments than in his sketches of politicians he has known. His assessments of Britain's two great modern war leaders, David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, are of obvious interest to the readers of this journal. His accounts of the failures of those peacetime Prime Ministers of the late 1930s, Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain, are perhaps even more pertinent today.

Before Lloyd George, British